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# **Designing a Kickstarter Crowdfunding Campaign**

CASE: IMPRO THE BOARDGAME

DEGREE PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT  
2021

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	<p>Number of pages 52 + 15</p>	<p>Language of publication: English</p>
<p>Title of publication Designing a Kickstarter Crowdfunding Campaign: Case Impro – The Boardgame</p>		
<p>Degree program Degree program in International Tourism Development</p>		
<p>The objective of this project-based thesis was to plan and design a crowdfunding campaign and a Kickstarter webpage for a company called Tulenkantajat Oy, and their project Impro – The Boardgame. While I was doing this thesis project, I worked for Tulenkantajat Oy (Ltd) as their social media manager. I was given the task to study and research crowdfunding, webpage design, marketing, and social media to formulate a picture about how the project could be conducted successfully. Other funding options were explored in case the crowdfunding campaign in Kickstarter would end up failing. The initial plan was to publish the Kickstarter webpage and campaign 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2021. The launch was postponed to 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2022, due to issues with manufacturing and shipping of the game that would have occurred if it had launched 1<sup>st</sup> of August.</p>		
<p>The outcome of this project-based thesis was a Kickstarter webpage and a marketing plan for their social media during the campaign. I first started to explore Kickstarter as a platform, different types of crowdfunding and research successful crowdfunding campaigns. Then, the webpage started forming based on the knowledge I gained and the themes and guidelines that were suggested by my team members in Tulenkantajat Oy. The webpage is currently ready for launching and can be found in its entirety in Appendixes. After the webpage was done, it was time to move to suggestions for their social media marketing during the campaign.</p>		
<p>The result of this thesis was usable Kickstarter webpage, that Tulenkantajat Oy will be able to launch when they decide to run the campaign. Social media suggestions were based on research about other successful Kickstarter campaigns and social media marketing strategies, platforms and my own experience working on their different social media platforms. The conclusions were that they should focus their marketing during the campaign to their most popular social medias that have most followers. Activity, audience engagement and sustaining the momentum by using different techniques to keep the followers interested during the campaign are key elements to success.</p>		
<p>Key words crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, social media, marketing</p>		

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The objective is to plan a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign based on theoretical background. My task is to design a Kickstarter website and give suggestions for marketing in social media before and during the Kickstarter launch. Tulenkantajat Oy (ltd) designed a new boardgame back in November 2020, that they want to launch in the Kickstarter crowdfunding website. The Kickstarter campaign will be done in co-operation with Active Life USA.

This thesis is project-based. The concrete outcome will be a Kickstarter website for Impro boardgame and a plan for the marketing campaign. The launch on Kickstarter will last for 4 weeks. During that time, they will need to get enough backers, meaning buyers for the game, for it to be profitable to produce. Otherwise, the game will be too expensive to produce, and the backers will get their money back if it does not go to production. This thesis explores other funding options for small businesses as well, in case the Kickstarter campaign ends up not meeting its funding goal. By exploring other funding options for small businesses, the commissioner will have something to start from when it comes to looking at other funding options, in case the Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign ends up not being successful.

Crowdfunding has become a relevant funding option (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2) during the past decade with growing number of websites devoted to it (Mollick 2014), due to the instable finance markets and the fact, that when a product launch is crowdfunded, there are no strings attached to for example investors or banks. In the starting phases of a business, previously bank loans have been the most relevant option, but with crowdfunding it is possible to launch a product independently. (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 39.) In 2019, the global crowdfunding market was valued at 13.9 billion US dollars, and it is predicted to triple its value by 2026 (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2).

In 2020, Kickstarter pledged over 233 million dollars for successful tabletop game campaigns, the biggest one of them being 13 million dollars for a game called “Frosthaven” (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). A polished Kickstarter page, together with creating proper pre-launch buzz are the keys for a campaign’s success (Website of Woodshed Agency, 2021).

Tulenkantajat Oy was looking for soon graduating, higher education student to do their thesis about their Kickstarter launch and to help with their social media management. I managed their social media accounts part-time in return for work compensation. By managing the social media accounts, I got more insight to the project. I got a picture of their current followers, possible target customers group and recognizability.

## 2 OBJECTIVES

The research task is to create a Kickstarter website and give marketing communication suggestions for a new boardgame, called Impro. The outcome of this research task is to have the actual Kickstarter website ready by February of 2022 and provide them with a sufficient marketing plan for that time. The goal of the campaign and the website is to get as many backers as possible for the project, in order the game to go to production. Aim for Tulenkantajat Oy is to launch a marketing campaign for the Kickstarter and make the website as optimal as possible. It will be done from marketing point of view, and the entire process is described.

Crowdfunding and Kickstarter as a platform are introduced and similar board game campaigns are assessed, to give the commissioner best possible campaign and keys to succeed. They did not have the time and resources to do it by themselves, so they were looking for someone to do it as their thesis. Especially if the Kickstarter ends up being a success, this thesis can act as a guideline for others wanting to launch a product with a support of a crowdfunding campaign. If the Kickstarter does not meet its funding goal, in the thesis there are also other funding options explored. That will give options

of a possible future direction for the commissioner when it comes to funding options, since success in Kickstarter is never guaranteed.

This task is limited to the Kickstarter website design and suggestions for their social media channels. The theoretical framework is limited to crowdfunding, small business funding options, website design and digital marketing, their basic concepts, and practices. It should explain how to plan a digital marketing campaign and how to create a Kickstarter webpage.

### 3 COMMISSIONER

Tulenkantajat Oy is a therapy and wellbeing services company in Pori. It consists of five partners that offer therapy services to private people, companies, and communities. Back in November 2020, they decided to create a boardgame, with therapeutical elements, humour and insight giving questions and tasks. They came up with their first commercial product, called Impro Boardgame. (Website of Tulenkantajat Oy, 2021.)

The prototype and all elements of the game are ready, and the final version for the launch is fine-tuned by the end of 2021. The game is supposed to come to Kickstarter 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 2022. The Kickstarter website needs to be ready a few weeks before that. The basic idea of the game is that it is a classic boardgame, with cards. The cards include categories such as tasks, self-knowledge, emotions, mental health evaluation and creativity. Their idea is that public would not necessarily connect therapy to it in any way, but rather view it as a fun boardgame for parties and friendgroups. The game will be published in English and Finnish. The ultimate goal for the game is to reach international audience and markets and for the Impro boardgame to become its own, independent company separate from Tulenkantajat Oy. (Website of Tulenkantajat Oy, 2021.) Kickstarter campaign will be done in co-operation between two different companies, Tulenkantajat Oy and Active Life USA. The connection between Tulenkantajat and Active Life USA was established through network that

Tulenkantajat Oy had, and they decided to ask if Active Life USA was interested in helping with this particular project. Active Life USA has had many previous successful Kickstarter campaigns and running the campaign in co-operation with them gives better chances of succeeding.

## 4 FUNDING OPTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Funding can be viewed as the “fuel” for any new business or product launching (Website of Bisnes.fi 2021). Often, small, and medium sized enterprises are linked together when speaking of them, and they are referred to as SME’s (Small and Medium Sized Businesses). Small business is defined as a business, where there is 50 or less people employed. Business is considered medium sized when there is 250 or less employees working. Business is considered as micro business, when there is 10 or less people employed within the company. (Website of European Commission, 2021.) 99 percent of Businesses in Europe are considered small or medium sized (Website of European Commission 2021), and the same situation dominates in the US, where in 2020, most of all businesses were considered small or medium sized (Website of Oberlo Statistics 2021).

Financial choices that are made in the starting points of putting the company together, will affect the future strategical choices and forth opportunities (Vinturella & Erickson 2013, 1-2). The first costs that need to be covered and considered are the costs of getting a trade name, joint-stock or other business form, and it can be done nearly always online. It is the first step towards your own company. (Website of Bisnes.fi 2021).

### 4.1 Loans and grants

A long-term loan is one of the basic options for funding, when starting a small or medium sized business (Holopainen 2013, 109; Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen,



2021). Without own savings and with no desire to ask for external investments from your acquaintances, a bank loan is the most obvious option. However, if the applied loan is a bigger amount of money, getting it can be harder than anticipated. Banks oblige the business founder to have existing collaterals and they must be credit worthy. Typically, small and medium sized businesses apply for loans to fund their investments. (Website of Yrityksen perustaminen, 2021.)

Banks get their profits from interests and other expenses that they charge for handling the loan. They also profit from the businesses capital that lays on their account in the bank as well as delivery fees and different types of provisions. (Holopainen 2013, 109; Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen, 2021.) The interest consists of the banks marginal and reference rate. In addition to that, separate opening fees and handling fees can be charged. Instead of focusing on the percentage of interest, it would be wiser for the entrepreneur to focus on the yearly actual costs of the loan. (Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen, 2021.)

## 4.2 Investments

Some businesses require notable investments before they can start functioning (Holopainen 2013, 106). An example of a business, that requires a significant amount of funds before they can start operating, are industries that require expensive machines to produce or operate (Website of Bisnes.fi, 2021). The business starter will almost without exceptions make their own investment, but also other investors are usually welcome (Holopainen 2013, 106).

The capital, that the people who decide to start businesses themselves invest in starting the company is important for at least two reasons. Firstly, investments made need to be very significant in some cases, at least 20 percent of all the capital required to start the business. That will help in kicking off the project. Secondly, when the business starters, whether it was one or multiple persons, invest a significant amount of money to the project, it secures their commitment to the project. Also, it shows other potential business partners and investors that they are surely worried about their own invested

money, which means that they will work hard to get other investors money back as well. (Holopainen 2013, 106-107.)

### 4.3 Venture capital

Venture capital is very similar to bank loans, but with certain reduced costs, but the price is not very different from a regular bank loan. It can be a very viable option when compared to a regular bank loan. (Holopainen 2013, 113; Vinturella & Erickson 2013, 175.) Venture capital can offer savings in liabilities (Holopainen 2013, 113), and it can bring valuable professional point of view from outside of the company (Vinturella & Erickson 2013, 180). Examples of well-known companies that have received their first funding from venture capitalists are Google, Microsoft and Ebay (Vinturella & Erickson 2013, 177).

Companies that rely on venture capital are more likely to take the company towards a more professional direction, for example by hiring people to higher positions due to added funds. Venture capitalists are investors, who are constantly browsing for potential businesses to invest in on early stages of the businesses journey. Their investments are usually quite high risk but also high reward. A small tension and clashes between venture capital investors and business owners are always possible, since there are two groups with their own views what would be best for the business. (Vinturella & Erickson 2013,177-180.)

#### 4.3.1 Finnvera

Finnvera is a Finnish government owned entity, that offers funding options for starting companies in Finland (Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen, 2021). Finnvera can offer companies loans, financial capital investments, collaterals, export credits and interest levelling. New companies can apply for any of those online, via Finnvera's website. You can also seek for advice for starting your business for free. (Website of Finnvera, 2021.) With Finnvera, you can seek funds for starting a business, buying an existing business or expanding already existing business. For a bit bigger existing companies

Finnvera can offer funding for internationalization and export. (Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen, 2021.)

There are some requirements that need to be fulfilled, to get funding from Finnvera. First, the one applying for the loan needs to be person in charge with signing rights or if the funding is applied for business that does not officially exist yet, the business owner. The company should also have a detailed business plan. Minimum loan sum is 30 000 euros, and payback time is usually from 3 to 15 years. (Website of Finnvera 2021; Website of Yrityksen Perustaminen, 2021.)

#### 4.3.2 Start-up money

Start-up money is a grant to support new entrepreneurs in Finland. It is admitted by TE-services, also known as working life services, that is a government owned entity. (Website of TE-services, 2021). The idea of start-up money is to support new entrepreneurs living while they start running a new business, and most likely cannot afford to draw a paycheck for themselves yet (Website of Uusyrityskeskus 2021). In 2021, the amount of start-up money, that one can receive, was 33,78 euros per day, that is the same amount as one would get of unemployment basic compensation. You can receive the money from up to five days per week, and it is paid monthly according to one's application. (Website of TE-services 2021; Website of Uusyrityskeskus 2021.)

There are quite strict rules about who is qualified to receive the start-up money. First, TE-services must evaluate your idea to be profitable. Secondly, they will look, if you have a background or experience of being an entrepreneur or if you have a suitable education, for example degree from entrepreneur schooling programme from University of Applied Sciences. Another rule is, that you are not qualified for the start-up money, if you have another source of income to secure your livelihood. (Website of TE-services 2021; Website of Uusyrityskeskus 2021.)

## 5 CROWDFUNDING

Crowdfunding has grown significantly during the past decade (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 41), and become popular option (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2) with the help of connectedness of internet and increased number of websites devoted to it (Mollick 2014). It is a relevant way for inventors, small businesses, artists, and all kinds of people to have access to money raising with a clear, direct, and legal way. Without crowdfunding, many ideas would not have been carried out. (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 41; Rich 2014, 1; Young 2012.) It became a considerable alternative to traditional funding market options after digitalization created new demands for service producers, and financing markets were no exception (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 42-45; Rich 2014, 2.) Due to its fast growth, it has risen many legal questions worldwide and in Finland, there is a national law that regulates crowdfunding (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 53). Online platforms, such as Kickstarter and Indiegogo, offer possibilities to launch a reward-based or presale-based campaign for product funding and they are constantly evolving to a more accessible and user-friendly direction (Rich 2014, 1-2.)

The basic idea of crowdfunding is to get your innovation or product funded with the help of backers, who decide to pre-purchase the product (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 40; Rich 2014, 2-4) or receiving financial resources in donation form, in exchange for some type of reward (Mollick 2014). Inspiration for crowdfunding was originally drawn from crowdsourcing and micro-financing (Mollick 2014 1-16). Crowdfunding platforms are the channels, through what investors and others interested, for example your acquaintances or niche target can find your product and support it. In crowdfunding, the people who have decided to support your project financially are called backers. (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 40; Rich 2014, 2-4.) However, rather than thinking that crowdfunding could replace all the traditional funding options, it should be evaluated as another alternative that anyone can have (Young 2012).

In crowdfunding, so-called backer is a person, who decided to pre-purchase the product for its desired market price. The company sets a goal of how many backers and how much money they need for the product, so it can go to production. If the

campaign ends up failing to get enough backers, proceeding to production will be too expensive and not profitable. In case that happens, the backers will not get charged and their money is returned. After that the project ends or in some cases the project creators may get the chance to run the campaign again. (Young 2012; Website of Kickstarter, 2021.)

### 5.1 Why crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding has always the same reasoning behind it; the funds of the company are limited, and therefore they cannot afford to make the necessary investments or cover running costs. It is a way to get resources available, that would not have been possible otherwise or it would have taken a significant amount of time. (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 39.) It is built around social concept, that requires the backers to promote the project as well (Mollick 2014 1-16). As crowdfunding has many valuable benefits for entrepreneurs, for example feedback from the backers before launching to wider audience, increasing number of people are turning towards it as a funding option (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2).

Crowdfunding campaign, that is hosted on a platform, starts with the idea. The campaign is given its own webpage on the platform and a website address, that are the basis for managing the campaign. That is all the help that the platform itself will give the product, along with statistics of its proceeding. The rest is up to the product inventor. Kickstarter campaign can require a significant amount of effort in marketing communications to engage the target audience and get them interested. Typically, the product marketing requires at least a promotional video, social media marketing and website design with elements such as photos, infographics, and marketing texts. Then, the desired target audience needs to be reached through media channels and traffic to your webpage needs to be drawn. Promoting, advertising, and managing the campaign also includes communication with the potential and actual backers. (Rich 2014, 3-4.)

## 5.2 Benefits of crowdfunding

The benefits of crowdfunding are dependent on projects getting the required resources (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 22; Young 2012). Crowdfunding enables financial independency for a new project, and you do not have to give up any percentage of the ownership (Kallio & Vuola 2018, 41; Young 2012). Technically, you are collecting donations in return for rewards, most often the product itself, from the project backers (Young 2012). High commitment from the backers is required, as they rely on the project creator to deliver the promised rewards and product. The time before they receive the product, can end up being years in some cases. (Young 2012; Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2.)

The biggest pro factor, when it comes to crowdfunding, is the ability to keep control over the product, campaign, and all related decisions. When seeking for crowdfunding, the project creator gets to be in control for all costs, creative visions, marketing channels, and customer interactions. It can be a lot to handle, but on the other hand, the project owner does not have to compromise on anything. The project is a complete projection of the creator's vision. (Young 2012.)

A very small financial risk is one of the benefits in crowdfunding. Most websites for crowdfunding do not charge for the campaign launch – they make money by charging a slice of backer's pledge percentage. At its best, crowdfunding campaign can cost only the creators time, where they technically risk nothing. (Young 2012.)

Crowdfunding allows the product to test the demand and if it has one (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021, 2; Young 2012). The backers and people interested will give feedback on the project (Wessel, Gleasure & Kauffman 2021), and you can quite quickly figure out some minor changes to the product that you might need to add. That way, you can make the product even better. The changes are most often related to details or additional options that can be still modified during the campaign. The best thing about the feedback is, that whereas traditionally you would need to pay testers for their opinion about your product, crowdfunding enables it for free. There is a possibility, that many people might love your product so much, that

they will want to help with the product marketing by sharing it in their own social media channels and recommend it to their acquaintances. (Young 2012.)

### 5.3 Disadvantages of crowdfunding

The biggest realization with crowdfunding, that as great as it might sound, is that it does not always work. Success stories of crowdfunding are widely available, but the reality is that over 50 percent of launched crowdfunding campaigns end up failing. (Faralli, Rittinghaus, Samsami, Distant & Rocha 2021, 2; Mollick 2014; Young 2012.) Most of the campaigns that fail, end up reaching only 20% or less of their initial funding goal (Forbes & Schaefer 2017, 398-403). If the campaign ends up being unsuccessful, many major crowdfunding sites allow to run it again. When compared to traditional funding options, crowdfunding does not usually establish a loaner or client relationship. When having potentially thousands of backers, or even more, with diverse expectations and demands, it can require a lot of hard work to keep up with. (Young 2012.)

Planning and running a crowdfunding campaign are work, where you must be available around the clock, every day. Unlike traditional funding options, you will constantly have to be ready to answer questions and put work into it even at the same time as you are working on your current job. People are often interested in you as the project creator, and you will need to give a lot of yourself to public display. Personal exposure will create trust between your potential customers, and that is something that the project creator needs to be prepared for. (Young 2012.)

Campaign success seems to be highly linked to quality of the project, and social media visibility via networks online (Mollick 2014, 1-16; Young 2012). Campaign marketing will be hard work, and the project creator needs to be aware of the most relevant marketing tools, such as social media. To run a successful crowdfunding campaign, the social media needs to be constantly updated and the engagement level of followers must be kept high – this helps to sustain the momentum during the campaign. (Young 2012.)

#### 5.4 Modern crowdfunding models

There are four so-called modern crowdfunding models. These models are reward-based, that is most widely recognized (Mollick 2014), donation-based, that is commonly known as “charitable giving” and lending crowdfunding, meaning that the lenders get a provision of the funds collected. The fourth model is equity-based crowdfunding. (Forbes&Schaefer 2017,398-403; Shneor,Zhao & Flåten 2020, 26.) All crowdfunding models consists of three basic elements: the online platforms, backers/donors and the campaign founders (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 142). The models that are based on financial return are lending-based crowdfunding and equity-based crowdfunding. Reward-based and donation-based are based on return, that are non-financial. In Figure 1, all the modern crowdfunding models are introduced and categorized, based on whether they are motivated by financial or non-financial return.

Crowdfunding based on financial return	<b><u>Equity-based crowdfunding</u></b> - External motivation based on economical reward
	<b><u>Peer-to-peer lending</u></b> - External motivation based on financial return
Crowdfunding based on non-financial return	<b><u>Donation based crowdfunding</u></b> - Endogenous motivation of investors based on social return
	<b><u>Reward-based crowdfunding</u></b> - External motivation based on material gain (reward)

Figure 1. Modern crowdfunding models.

Reward-based crowdfunding can be considered as the most widely and publicly known crowdfunding model (Mollick 2014; Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 142). Reward-based crowdfunding relies on getting supporters with attractive rewards, such as extra products. Reward based campaigns can be for individuals, organizations or products, and the investors need to accept the risk of the campaign possibly not being able to deliver its promises. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 142.) The great thing about reward-based crowdfunding is, that it can serve as a marketing tool as well. Crowdfunding



campaign can serve as tool to create reputation and get visibility for the brand. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 142; Bui, personal communication on 14.4, 2021.) Reward-based crowdfunding motivation for pledgers is material gain, as stated in Figure 1.

Donation-based crowdfunding provides an opportunity for donors to donate money for new enterprises or products in need without physical strings attached. When thinking from the perspective of a money raiser, they get bigger efficiency in interactions with donors, scope and lower costs because transactions and coordination are done online. Types of projects that get funded with donation-based crowdfunding are for example documentary film productions, independent journalism, educational work support and scientific research. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 145-146.) Most of donation-based crowdfunding campaigns are looking for funding for their non-profit or otherwise “do-good” projects. The best side of donation-based crowdfunding, when compared to traditional charitable giving, is notably cutting the costs associated with collecting donations. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 147.) Donation-based crowdfunding and why pledgers choose to support projects, is social return, as classified in Figure 1.

Equity-based crowdfunding usually starts with contacting the platform and them seeing, whether the product is suitable for the platform and equity-based crowdfunding. The funnel for pre-selecting is very strict and highly selective towards new ventures. In 2017, only 6% of applicants for these platforms were seen as qualified and ended up running a campaign. If the campaign runs successfully, and reaches its minimum target, it receives the funds invested. If the campaign is unsuccessful, the funds get returned to investors. Most of investors in equity-based crowdfunding are not professional investors, but also some are venture capitalists who are looking for diverse opportunities. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 115-118.) Motivation for pledgers to take part in equity-based crowdfunding is economic reward, as shown in Figure 1.

Lending crowdfunding is based on the lenders giving borrowers funds, in return they get a provision percentage of the funds that they manage to raise. The borrowers need to consider credit risks, and the lenders need to be quite informed about investing. The lending platform is online, and the lenders get a client account to that platform. The lending crowdfunding platforms are automated to the point, where they have a

system to automatically match lenders with pre-selected loan criteria. (Shneor, Zhao & Flåten 2020, 63-70.) Lending-based crowdfunding and its motivations for pledgers are monetary based rewards, as classified in Figure 1.

### 5.5 Kickstarter

Kickstarter is a website, launched in 2009, that brings funders and new innovations together. This way, the product can be launched and funded without strings attached to investors, donors, or grants. The creators of the product have a full control over it. After a product gets funded, it can proceed to production with a reasonable price to enter the markets. (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). Currently, Kickstarter is the market leader of all crowdfunding platforms (Faralli, Rittinghaus, Samsami, Distant & Rocha 2021, 2; Martínez-Climent, Costa-Climent & Oghazi 2019) and its drastic growth is expected to continue until 2023, by the newest predictions (Faralli, Rittinghaus, Samsami, Distant & Rocha 2021, 2). A feature, that distinguishes Kickstarter from other crowdfunding sites is its all or nothing- policy. It means that the goal must be met to get the pledged money. Some of the other crowdfunding platforms, for example Indiegogo allows the project hosts to collect the pledged amount even if the goal was not met. (Qiu 2013, 2.)

Kickstarter gives chance to raise funds for products or services with a clear goal. This “one off” goal means, that after a successful campaign something concrete will be produced or published. Therefore, funds for ongoing business expenses cannot be collected via Kickstarter. (Qiu 2013, 1-2). Campaign creators get to choose the length, goal, and reward tiers, that are determined before the campaign (Qiu 2013 1-2; Website of Kickstarter 2021). Kickstarter offers various categories, in which you can seek funding – for example games, food and art (Voelker & McGlashan 2013, 11-22; Website of Kickstarter 2021).

## 5.6 Benefits of Kickstarter

Kickstarter is not tied to venture capital. In Kickstarter ideas, products or enterprises can get funded with no external strings attached. All funds collected in Kickstarter come as a pre-purchase of a product, service or as a donation. (Voelker & McGlashan 2013, 11-22.) Kickstarter as a platform, when comparing to other crowdfunding platforms, is currently the largest, most popular one (Faralli, Rittinghaus, Samsami, Distante & Rocha 2021, 2). After the funding goal has been reached, Kickstarter allows people to still pledge, meaning that there is not limit on the amount of money that you can collect. Backers do not get charged anything, if the project ends up failing. That means a lower risk for backers, which can be attractive for people thinking about backing a project on Kickstarter. (Qiu 2013.)

Kickstarter can serve as great promotion for the product or service seeking for funding. When a Kickstarter project is created it forces the project starter to build a brand, marketing tactics and target audience. After the Kickstarter campaign, the project usually has gained a designated audience. (Voelker & McGlashan 2013, 11-22.) If Kickstarter picks up the project and organically lifts it up to their front page of campaigns, it can explosively grow in a very short time (Hilli 2021, personal communication on 29.4.2021).

## 5.7 Disadvantages of Kickstarter

Maximum limit for a duration of Kickstarter campaign is 31 days (Website of Kickstarter 2021). If the pre-set goal is not fully met within the time limit, the project owner does not get any of the funds collected, even if it was close to the target. (Faralli, Rittinghaus, Samsami, Distante & Rocha 2021, 1-2; Website of Kickstarter 2021).

According to Hilli 2021, CEO and experienced manager in Kickstarter campaigns, the first few days of the Kickstarter campaign are crucial. Kickstarter is based on algorithms, which pick up the campaigns that start doing well within the first few days. If the goal is not even nearly reached during those first days, the campaign is

more likely to fail. (Personal communication on 29.4.2021.) There are many examples of successful Kickstarter campaigns, and they can make it look easy. It takes a large pre-existing audience and marketing efforts to be that successful. (Voelker & McGlashan 2013, 11-22.)

## 5.8 Kickstarter campaigns

Designing, creating, and running a Kickstarter campaign requires a significant amount of effort in planning and marketing. Most often, a prototype of the product needs to be made as well. Campaigns that have turned out successful have usually had a promotional video. Successful Kickstarter campaigns often have so-called “stretch goals” that are additional promises of actions or goods that will be added-on after reaching a certain funding goal. The length of the project is non-essential matter, whether the campaign lasts for 14-31 days. Choosing the right medias to market the campaign in is important, since it has been studied that marketing in for example Twitter and Youtube does not have a very big impact on project’s success. (Chen, Jones, Kim & Schlamp 2013.)

Running the first crowdfunding campaign in Kickstarter can be beneficial in many ways since majority of people view it as the most trustable. It has also been described to have reputation, that is way superior from other similar platforms. (Forbes & Schaefer 2017.) Something to be noted in Kickstarter campaign design is, that the so-called “momentum” needs to be sustained throughout the whole campaign but especially during the first few campaign days (Childres 2020). Many experienced Kickstarter investors have commented that they will only look at projects, that have met or are about to meet their initial funding goal within the first few days. Whereas extra rewards, such as T-shirts might be nice addition to the reward tiers of the campaign, the focus should be kept at the product itself. (Forbes & Schaefer 2017.)

### 5.9 Example of a successful crowdfunding campaign

The most successful funded game in Kickstarter, “Frosthaven”, managed to pledge nearly \$13 million dollars during their campaign. Frosthaven is a strategic tabletop board game; playing it is a commitment itself, since one game can last for several hours. Even though the game was launched during the CoVid-19 pandemic, it managed to break records and become the third biggest Kickstarter across every category. (Gebhart 2020; Murray 2020.) The final number of backers ended up being over 83 thousand. The funding goal for Frosthaven was \$500,000. To get the game itself, the required pledge amount was \$100, but for only one dollar a backer could purchase access to “Pledge Manager”. (Website of Kickstarter 2021). Designer of the game, Isaac Childres CEO of Cephalofair Games announced the Kickstarter project in the fall of 2019 and made it a sensation even before the launch. Frosthaven is a sequel to Cephalofair Games another hit game, Gloomfall that came out in 2015. (Gebhart 2020.)

Citing Isaac Childres (2020), they wanted to make the campaign “one giant, month-long party”. The game was made a sensation even before the launch. Their fans were excited about the game, even after the CoVid-19 breakout. (Gebhart 2020.) The strategy for Frosthaven promotion during the campaign was a new announcement each day, to keep the audience engaged and buzz going. A puzzle for each day was made for people to remain entertained and a community-driven campaign a week before the Kickstarter launch was promoted (Childres 2020.) The content that Frosthaven provided pre-launch was another key to their success. The whole campaign was solely designed to reward the previously built community and people were able to participate in it from home. Stretch goals were set and all of them were achieved very quickly. Getting the community together and excited for the launch is crucial because they do not only act as supporters of the project, but also as promoters. (Gebhart 2020.)

## 6 DIGITAL MARKETING

Defining digital marketing should begin with digital media definition. Digital media, as we currently know it, includes different digital platforms, such as web, internet, the smart phone, and television, as they act as communication channels for various kinds of content (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 9). Social media has grown its userbase during the past years rapidly. Social media, the array of webpages with applications designed to interact with whomever whenever (Brown 2012, 19.), connects businesses with their customers in an effective way (Brown 2012, 23). Social media specifically helps the business to gather straightforward information from the customers and its critical for success (Brown 2012, 78.)

Digital marketing aims to identify, predict, and satisfy the customer needs and maximize the profitability of one customer (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 14). Simply put, digital marketing is applying data, technology, and different medias available on digital platforms and using them to achieve marketing goals (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 9). Digital marketing strategy is the first step into developing company's visibility in modern digital media. As the digital marketplace evolves and changes all the time, it is important to understand how it relates to your company and which channels you should put most of your efforts marketing efforts towards. Digital media channels help to tackle the challenges of traditional marketing channels, and you can reach much wider audiences at any time-zone from any location – as well as a very specified niche target market can be easily reached. (Ryan 2009, 21-22.)

### 6.1 Marketing channels

The media marketing channels are direct mail, radio and TV advertisements and print press. Digital media channels are defined as equivalents to the traditional marketing channels, located online. They allow communication tactics, with the intention of engaging the customer and ultimately affect positively in the customers purchasing decision, whether the product or service is online or offline one. Marketing channels

online require the company to provide interesting, relevant content in order to keep the customer interested and engaged. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 26.)

In digital marketing channels, such as social media platforms and applications, algorithm is a term that is often brought up. Algorithm means all the application specific rules, that influence the post's visibility. For example, Facebook tends to favor posts with pictures and videos, rather than posts with just text. (Virtanen 2020, 102.)

Multichannel marketing combines traditional and digital marketing channels and they are used to communicate with the potential customers and distribute the service or product. The aim is to reach the customers in different points of their purchasing decision. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 10.)

## 6.2 Segmentation

Segmentation or grouping customers helps to acknowledge, what is the motivation for one's behaviour online (Brown 2012, 79). A definition of clear target market and directed focus of the campaign will assist in reaching the most potential customers. A few aspects of the targeted customers should be defined. The aspects include variables that have an influence in the response, the main characteristics in values, demands and behaviours, insight of the potential customer type. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 371-373.)

Based on the factors mentioned above, a specific targeting approach can be selected from different communication tools online, for example email marketing, allocated advertisements of different social media channels or website advertisements with search engine marketing. There are many variables in targeting, such as demographics, behaviour, risk, and value when buying, relationship with the company in case, stage in the products or services lifecycle and value of the customer from company perspective. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 371-373.)

### 6.3 Marketing communication

The benefits of effective marketing communication plan and organizing are unquestionably salient for companies (Ruskin-Brown 2006, 143). Communication before the customer becomes a customer is equally in a key role. Planning marketing communication begins, after the specific target group is defined. (Ruskin-Brown 2006, 136; Ryan 2009, 267.) As there are many ways to get messages across about the company or product, and the means in which they are used in the company's or products lifecycle needs to be considered. A particular message is decided upon, that the company wants to drive forward, with the most suitable promotional methods. The objectives for promotional means are gaining awareness, meeting information requirements, such as realistic picture of the company or product, providing practices that build trust with the customer, such as demonstrations, references, and trials. Ultimately, all the means mentioned above, will merge positively into the final purchasing decision of the consumer and keeping the customer happy. (Ruskin-Brown 2006, 136-139.)

Digital marketing communication is built based on the reaching the customer, company's acts, conversions, and engagement level of customer. Catching the customers attention is the first step. It is done by building awareness online (and offline). After the customers attention gets drawn towards your product, it is time for the company to act. That means engaging the audience with product, on its online presence, for example social media. It is the first step in customer persuasion with the goal of bringing the customer to the purchasing decision. Acts are followed with conversion, with working marketing tactics. After conversion is achieved, sales are generated offline or online. After customer has purchased the product or service, it is time to engage again; by building a fanbase and sustainable customer relationships over time. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 27.)

While some publicity might be free, it might not all be good, as that is what has been previously believed. Resources need to be put to the type of publicity, that is most beneficial for the company or product. (Ruskin-Brown 2006, 139-140.) Social media changed the traditional public relations. The essential elements of public relations,



such as effective communication strategy, understanding your potential customers, deciding on core marketing message, and making it clear, remain the way as they were before. Digital media has grown so much, that for companies, digital silence is simply not an option anymore. Managing the company brand and reputation online are very important tasks, as most purchasing decisions are made based on information found online. (Ryan 2009, 264-267.)

#### 6.4 Brand experience

Brand experience for the Impro game will be important, since they need to build a deep connection with their audience, for them to get the person to buy the product. Brand experience is defined as the engagement of the brands audience, as it describes the depth and constancy of interactions. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 505.) Brand experience is based on marketing the big “Why” the product was made (Newbery & Farnham 2013, 15), as the consumer is interested in the product values, ideas and notions (Newbery & Farnham 2013, 30). With the age of quickly consumable media channels, marketing the modern brand has become the key for a products success (Newbery & Farnham 2013, 29).

Content: text, design and graphic elements; form the webpage. Content marketing, as (Chaffrey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 508) describe is the key to get potential customers engaged and it should be done through multiple digital and non-digital medias, as it aims to fuel the demand (Chaffrey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 325).

#### 6.5 Google analytics

Google analytics is a tool that is used in the Kickstarter website as it helps to track the traffic drawn to the site. Kickstarter recommends adding Google Analytics pixel. (Website of Kickstarter 2021.) Three most important steps when beginning to use Google Analytics is to first understand the analytics process, then implement and modify the codes to your personalized use and lastly, to set up Google Analytics interface. The codes should be modified to your needs and interface will then help

analyze the results that the codes provide. (Waisberg 2015, 28.) Google analytics helps analyze the effectiveness of the websites. It can measure the source of traffic, which means where the visitor came from, for example direct visit, search engine visits or in-link entries, the effectiveness of the entry. The effectiveness of website visits can be also easily measured with Google Analytics, for example length of the sessions and the visitor's behavior on the site (adding items to cart, purchasing). (Plaza 2011, 477-481; Website of Google Analytics 2021.) Google Analytics provide detailed information about the website visitors, with automated insights and customized insights. The automated insights can detect trends and uncommon changes in your data, and it notifies you automatically within the Analytics platform. Custom insights require you to create conditions, that describe the changes in your data that you find important. When the conditions are fulfilled, they are shown on the insights board, and you can opt to receive notifications of these changes. (Website of Google Analytics, 2021.)

Google analytics campaign tracking or adding of campaign parameters for collecting performance information (Website of Google Analytics, 2021) could be useful for running the Kickstarter campaign. The campaigns report in Google Analytics will help determining a standardized amount of source codes as it defines the referral source value (Chaffrey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 381). With Google analytics, you can see which social media sends the customers that create most revenue (Website of Google Analytics, 2021). In Impro Boardgame case, that would mean which social media sends the most backers to the Kickstarter page via advertisements.

## 6.6 Social media's role in marketing

The main recognized social media channels for the public eye are the channels within a country, that have most active users such as Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Facebook and Pinterest. However, while the ones mentioned above are essential, there are other aspects for businesses that need to be considered as well such as UGC (known as user-generated content) meaning reviews and ratings and customers communities. Marketing in social media is created by basing it on interactions between customers, increasing awareness of a brand through paid and "organic" updates on different platforms (known as social media amplification) while decreasing negative

associations of the brand to minimum. Social media marketing obligates the company to take part in discussions and content creation for it to work. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 238.)

The feature that is the key to a company's success in social media and effective marketing are creating UGC and encouraging customers to share thoughts, interact with the company, participate, and engage (Brown 2012, 33; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 238). To increase awareness of the brand in the long run, it is relevant, that the engagement and interactions between the company and customers should be regular. (Brown 2012, 34). Listening to the discovered voice of customers is the way to bring the popularity of the service/product forward (Brown 2012, 34). Investing resources in planning the businesses social media message and interactions will help in managing their customer relationships and creating pull-factors (Brown 2012, 35).

Choosing the right channels for your company might be tricky, since new social media services are invented all the time, but some of them die as fast as they were born. The choosing of channels should be done based on your target audience, and what they use most. After choosing the most relevant channels for your company, you should make sure that it is up-to-date and looking good. (Virtanen 2020, 36-37.) At its best, social media helps you gain the trust of your audience, align with your brand, like and know the company. Key elements in the social media content are entertaining, useful, talk-worthy, and heartfelt content. The content should be engaging, awake emotions, credible, consistent, transparent, and professional. When all these values are kept in mind in the social media content, they make the company likable, valid and help in gaining attention. They help in giving a trustworthy picture of the content and therefore the company. (Barry 2015, 1-11.)

### 6.6.1 Facebook

Facebook is the social media, that most people think of first, when the talk turns to social media channels. Facebook has been around for the longest time of all social media channels and to this day, it reaches largest number of audiences. (Chen 2021; Virtanen 2020, 15-16.) The average age of a Facebook user has progressively

increased over years and the biggest marketing potential is at the age demographic of +30-year-olds (Chen 2021; Virtanen 2020, 15). However, Facebook still sustains its place as the most popular social media. With a total advertisement revenue of \$20,7 billion in 2020, Facebook has proven itself to be a modern social media channel that reaches the large masses. (Chen 2021.)

Facebook groups are a good way to reach out to more customers (Virtanen 2020, 19), since billions of people are using them every month (Chen 2021). You can find a Facebook group for nearly any topic, locally or globally (Virtanen 2020, 19). Facebook groups are a great tool for companies to engage their audience more, and now more relevant than ever as the need for staying connected online increase significantly due to the CoVid-19 global pandemic. (Chen 2021.)

#### 6.6.2 Instagram

Instagram is a mobile application, that has developed into an optimal platform for businesses to present their products or services visually, with pictures or videos (Virtanen 2020, 23; Aquair 2021). To back that claim, Instagram's statistics state that 83% of more than billion monthly users are utilizing it in search for new services or products (Aquair 2021). Using hashtags, especially niche tags or specific hashtags to describe your company is important, for right kind of people to discover your company. The hashtags should be kept clear and descriptive – even niche. (Barnhart 2019; Virtanen 2020, 23.) Rather than blasting the super popular hashtags with millions of posts under them, trying to entreat into your target audience would be more beneficial for the company (Barnhart 2019). With Instagram's business tools, such as tracking the success of posts, creating a strong and recognizable brand is relatively easy. (Barnhart 2019; Virtanen 2020 24.)

Instagram stories are a feature on Instagram, that are visible for 24 hours at a time and can be great for audience engagement (Aquair 2021; Virtanen 2020, 27). Instagram stories have many features that are optimal to communicate with your audience, such as quizzes, questions, and polls. The results of the mentioned interactive features can be later shared in your story, if desired. You can also add to the story other descriptive

components, for example tagging another user, hashtags, location, countdown to a certain event, gifs, or music. (Aquair 2021; Virtanen 2020 28.) Sharing “behind scenes” content or more lighthearted things can be more interesting to your audience than non-authentic, posed, and edited pictures or videos. Stories can bring your brand to a day-to-day level, as it helps your audience relate to your company. (Aquair 2021.)

Keeping the marketing message clear is essential, and that can be done by creating user-generated content (UGC) (Aquair 2021). User generated content is something that your fans or customers have created, that you can use as an asset by publishing it on your own Instagram page. The popularity of UGC should not be overlooked. (Aquair 2021; York 2018.) Good interactions and customer experiences are very important to companies, and user generated content enhance that (York 2018). Reposting pictures of your product or service that your followers have shared, customers reactions to your service or product are interesting to your audience as they can see it in action. Other types of UGC are contests, campaign hashtags, giveaways and takeovers that engage the audience and show your product in a realistic light. (Aquair 2021; York 2018.) Afterall, posts that are written by “real people” behind the accounts appeal to your followers as they give a face to the post and give your marketing message more accurate tone (Aquair 2021).

## 6.7 Marketing campaigns

Marketing campaigns aim to attract and engage new and previous customers. The goal is to provide value and build trust with the customers. Customer’s attention should be earned, by having content that they find useful about the company. Engagement with the customers is an essential part of marketing campaigns, and it can be done for example via digital networks. The customers should be able to engage with the company through their favorite channels at the most suitable time for them. (Decker 2020, 9-10.)

Marketing campaigns are strategic, sorted out and organized and they have a defined goal. The aim is to reach potential customers in multiple different ways through multiple channels, often in the digital media but also in traditional media. A specific

product for example is promoted. A marketing campaign, or more specifically inbound marketing campaign, that aims to attract more customers is based on the client profile, product and message or idea. Creativity makes the campaign unique and separates it from the competitor's campaign. Inbound marketing begins with considering the target group and customizing the campaign to them. Integrated tools are used to create a customized experience to the target group. (Decker 2020, 11-18.)

Websites have many functional parts, such as meeting standards and coding. Coding has become easier over the years, and simply put coding means giving commands to the computer. Nowadays, there are plenty of programs on the internet that help with creating the codes, or commands – to the point where it is just a matter of copying and pasting. (Pipes 2011, 7-8.)

Designing any webpage is about creating interaction and balance between the elements of a website. Websites also have a lifecycle, as they can only be minorly updated before they need to be renewed again. Websites have trends coming and going, just like any other products. Good design lasts time and trends. An organic feeling in a website is often appreciated and it can be created for example by rounding corners and rotating elements. (Beaird & George 2014, 99.) The website should be functional for the user, as well as visually pleasing. The process of designing a website itself is between solving problems, a bit of science and art. (Beaird & George 2014, 2.)

## 7 WEBSITE DESIGN

The website should represent its host. The information that is available to the designer should be visible from the design. The first step of designing a webpage is called “exploration”. It means analyzing the information about the company who the website is for. The content that is necessary for the website is organized and the website starts forming its structure. After the exploration comes the implementation phase, where the layout is put together. The technology associated with website design should be

still put aside. A few possible layouts should be tested and then decided one that seems the most suitable and visually pleasing. (Beaird & George 2014, 4-5.)

While design and visual elements are essential and designed to please the user, the content is what draws people to the website. The website should be as practical as possible and content should be descriptive, informative and clear. The main navigation system should be easily found and used, and descriptive titles help with that. Outgoing links and search fields should not be the main features of the page. All pages of the site should fit the overall design of the website. An organic feeling in a website is often appreciated and it can be created for example by rounding corners and rotating elements. (Beaird & George 2014, 6-7.)

## 7.1 Color and texture

Humans experience colors in an individual way. For example, the color black can bring up negative associations in some people, such as evil and death, when on the other hand it can be viewed as a symbol of elegance and power. While the psychology between the colors defines some colors “non-optimal” for use in for example advertisements or websites, the most important thing is that they work together and represent the company. Many companies and website designers decide to choose a monochromatic color scheme that consists of one base, dominant color and a few shades or tints of that color. Analogous color scheme, that has contrasting colors can be beautifully made as well, and for some it serves the purpose better. (Beaird & George 2014, 54-59, 62-70.)

Texture in website design means feel of an object or design surface or distinctive appearance. Evoking memories of real materials can be an advance for a website. Related patterns, lines, volume, and shape can awake the feeling of a real material. It is an element in a website, that gives it a final touch and customizes it. For example, dots of pixels can be used to build a graphic element to a website. Horizontal or diagonal lines, shapes, rounded corners, patterns, shadow and light, proportions or rotated elements can be used to create the “material-like” feeling for the user. Some examples of material like designs are “rustic” that refers to nostalgic, weathered style

that emphasizes people's emotions and memories or clean design, that can be associated with professional feeling. (Beaird & George 2014, 89-119.)

## 7.2 Typography and imagery

Website is designed to communicate something to the audience. Typography means arranging the text in a visually pleasing way, that appeals to the reader. It considers font style and structure of the text and aims communicate certain things and emotions to the reader. (Beaird & George 2014, 124-125). Usually, headlines should aim to be bold and clear while the supporting text font is a contrast of the headline (Beaird & George 2014, 157).

Imagery means the visual images that are there to elevate the website. There are some practical concerns when it comes to images. Image resolution, legitimate image sources and file types all need to be considered carefully, in order to avoid mistakes or even legal issues with copyright. Design principles of the website are the basis for choosing the imagery elements. Relevancy, appeal, and the interestingness of an image are the basics that each chosen image should include. (Beaird & George 2014, 160-163.)

## 8 METHODS

The basic difference between a research based and project-based thesis is, that a project-based thesis produces a concrete output, for example a guide or brochure. (Salonen 2013, 5-6.) The entirety of project-based thesis is essential, and all its parts need to fit together (Vilkkä & Airaksinen 2003, 83-84). Project-based thesis also has multiple operative people involved, the most important one being the student themselves. Project-based thesis is in a dialog kind interaction, that includes conversation, giving and receiving feedback and constant evaluation. It is also tied to



a pre-defined schedule. (Salonen 2013, 5-6.) The report of a project-based thesis is almost like telling a story; it clarifies the subject of the thesis, what are the problems solved in the thesis and how they are answered (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2003, 82).

Characteristics of a project work are it being unique and one of a kind, it has a defined goal, subject and content, it is planned and during it a new output is developed. Projects focus on benefits and usability. Some options of proceeding with a project-based thesis are for example linear model or spiral model. Linear model has four steps: defining goals, planning, executing and evaluation. Spiral model on the other hand forms a circle, that includes tasks that are argued, organized, executed, and evaluated. Reflectivity, interaction, and evaluation are in important role. The documentation of a project-based thesis needs to be done in a way, that the reader can see the logic behind the proceeding of the project. The proceeding is to be documented step-by-step. Adequate number of different materials needs to be used and produced during the thesis process. The sources and theories utilized should be presented clearly and they should somehow serve the outcome of the thesis. The thesis report is a written description of the project that was done. The actual output is located at the end of the report or as an appendix. The thesis report is more than the actual output; an overall description of understanding the development work, field-specific professional skills, the personal learning of the student and innovativeness of University of Applied Sciences. (Salonen 2013, 12-25.)

## 9 CASE IMPRO CAMPAIGN

The goal was to create reward-based Kickstarter campaign with the actual game being the most important reward, as well as naughty R18+ card deck. The task of creating this campaign and the Kickstarter website began in March of 2021. In multiple meetings, the team went through their ideas and visions for the actual website design and layout. Also, the image and core message were discussed and confirmed that they were clear for everyone.

The initial goal was to launch in August of 2021, but due to issues in manufacturing and shipping caused by CoVid-19 it was postponed to March of 2022. The campaign success and customer satisfaction depend a lot on the fact if the product would get sent and delivered to the customers within the promised timeline and everyone within this project agreed, that it was a key factor that we wanted to achieve. The timeline that was initially planned was to launch the campaign August 1<sup>st</sup>, run it for the whole month and in case it had ended up being successful, the products should have been shipped by December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021. However, in this case, it was deemed impossible and that is why the timeline was altered.

### 9.1 The Kickstarter Website

The Kickstarter website consists of basics, rewards, story, people, payment, and promotion (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). The elements that are visible for the audience are the basic information, rewards, and story. With these elements you are supposed to convince the audience that your project is worth supporting, so their layout, design and language are very important. In Appendices 1-15 you can see the full layout of the website that will be launched in Kickstarter in March 2022.

Payment, people, and promotion sections are operational sections that will not be visible for the audience. To people you can add collaborators, demographics or linked Uniform Resource Locators. Payment section is for filling in your contact information, bank information and other practicalities that need to be handled before launching the project. For example, you determine, which bank account the money goes to in case the campaign end up being successful. Promotion section is for filling in the official project URL, setting the pre-launch page into active mode and adding Google Analytics tracking ID, in case the traffic needs to be followed Kickstarter more closely. (Website of Kickstarter, 2021.) Based on the information of chapter 5.5 about Google Analytics, it was concluded that a Google Analytics tracking would be beneficial in order to follow the traffic on the website accurately and therefore one was created and added.

### 9.1.1 Basics

The planning for the Kickstarter website began by filling in the basics, that the site asks you to do. The basic information required in Kickstarter are setting a descriptive project title, choosing an attractive picture that describes the project and awakes interest, uploading project video and setting project category (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). You also need to determine location and funding goal, set a launch date and campaign duration (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). Launch date of the Kickstarter campaign for Impro – The Boardgame campaign is March 1st, 2021. Campaign duration is the longest possible option, 31 days. The funding goal that needs to be met in order to get Impro – The Boardgame into manufacture is 15 000 dollars.

Project title for Impro the Boardgame is Impro – A twisted party game. It describes the nature of the game in an interesting and fun way and aims to awake the interest of potential backers. A more descriptive subtitle is: “A twisted board game for adults developed by psychotherapists. Gather your friends for a round of laughter, revelations and surprises.” The location for Impro – The Boardgame project is Pori, Finland. The Project category is Games – Tabletop Games.

The project image (Picture 1) and video are maybe the most important elements of the Kickstarter website. The video that Impro ended up using is created by a team of filming and editing professionals. The project picture was made in Canva, in collaboration between I and other team members (Picture 1.)



(Picture 1. Official project image.)

The design of the official project picture began with following the common guideline that the website of Kickstarter sets. *“Add an image that clearly represents your project. Choose one that looks good at different sizes— it’ll appear on your project page, across the Kickstarter website and mobile apps, and (when shared) on social channels. Your image should be at least 1024x576 pixels. It will be cropped to a 16:9 ratio.”* (Website of Kickstarter, 2021.)

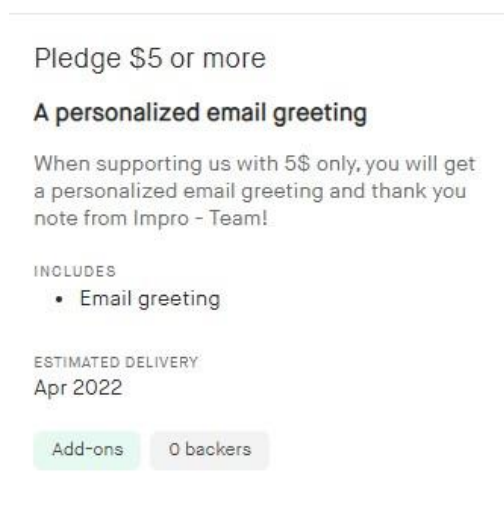
In the Kickstarter website they give insights about what types of images you should avoid: Images with excessive banners, badges or very small text should be avoided. In case you end up making one of the mistakes mentioned above with the project image, you can be penalized by social media algorithms and that can decrease your chance of making it to Kickstarter homepage or newsletter features.

The design of the official project image (Picture 1.) is molded from the packaging colors and the product name. It has interesting colors, and it has the product itself presented as the main element that is noticeable. The size is adjustable and fits well to all platforms and is clear in smaller sizes as well.

### 9.1.2 Rewards

The so-called rewards in Kickstarter are the physical or non-physical things, that the backer gets for supporting the project in case the campaign succeeds. In case the campaign does not meet its funding goal, backers get their money back. Kickstarter guideline for rewards is *“Most creators offer 3-10 reward tiers, which can be physical items or special experiences. Make sure to set reasonable backer expectations.”* (Website of Kickstarter, 2021.)

With Impro, we decided to make a pre-launch marketing campaign of \$1 pre-deposits, with what you can purchase the game from Kickstarter for cheaper than what it is offered to and get a limited edition, R18+ card deck for free. For that we decided to make an own, separate reward tier that states it is only for the ones that have made the \$1 deposit. This was done to create hype and excitement around Impro internationally, and to get people engaged to the game early on. This way, people who have made the \$1 deposit are more likely to purchase the game once the campaign launches and they are getting a special reward with the game that is not available to other backers. In Picture 2 and 3, you can see how the reward tiers appear to the potential backers on Kickstarter website. In picture 2, a lower price reward tier is presented. In Picture 3, reward tier that includes the actual game as well is presented.



(Picture 2. Reward Tier. Screenshot from Impro the Boardgame Kickstarter campaign website.)

Pledge \$42 or more

**Impro game & PG18 rated card deck**

For first 100 backers, that have not made a 1 dollar pre-deposit of PG-18 rated card deck, this is a limited edition offer! Pledge now and get Impro - A Twisted Party Game and naughty limited edition PG-18 rated card deck for free!

INCLUDES

- 100 first backers offer!

ESTIMATED DELIVERY Jun 2022

SHIPS TO Anywhere in the world

Add-ons Limited (100 left of 100)

0 backers

(Picture 3. Reward Tier. Screenshot from Impro the Boardgame Kickstarter campaign website.)

Reward tiers (Pictures 2 and 3.) are often varyingly priced products of experiences, with what the backer can support the project by the amount of money that they choose. In case of Impro – The Boardgame there are 8 different reward tiers. Impro crew wanted to make sure that the backer expectations are kept reasonable and sustainable. The reward tier prices for Impro vary between \$5 and \$320. The first reward tier is worth \$5 and by backing the project with that amount, you get a personalized email greeting. For \$10 the backer gets a signed digital picture from Impro crew. These are smaller rewards that do not include the actual board game and are made for people who do not want the actual game but would like to support the project with a smaller amount of money.

For \$39 the people who made the \$1 deposit, get a copy of Impro – The Boardgame and a R18+, limited edition card deck. For \$42 dollars we decided to make a special offer for 100 first backers only. That \$42 includes the board game for cheaper price as well as the limited-edition R 18+ rated card deck. This offer is for the ones who did not make the \$1 deposit but want to get the game for cheaper price. Also, it is limited to 100 pcs which creates hype and rush for people to purchase. As mentioned previously, the first few days of the campaign are most important, and this can be a

helpful way to get people to back the project as early on as possible. With no special offers or deposits one copy of Impro – The Board Game costs \$45. For \$110 you can get 3 copies of Impro. \$175 gets you 5 copies of Impro and for \$350 the so-called “retailer package” can be purchased which includes 10 copies of Impro – The Boardgame.

### 9.1.3 Story

The story is the other, most important part of the Kickstarter website. Kickstarter suggests forming the story in the following way: *“Describe what you're raising funds to do, why you care about it, how you plan to make it happen, and who you are. Your description should tell backers everything they need to know. If possible, include images to show them what your project is all about and what rewards look like.”* (Website of Kickstarter, 2021.) It should tell the audience why they should get excited clearly and briefly.

For the layout of the story of Impro I decided to use headlines that catch the viewers’ attention, as shown in Pictures 4 and 5 below, and then shorter descriptive texts below them. Key words within the text are highlighted and pictures of the game were added to enhance the reading experience and for the potential backer to get as clear of a picture of the game as possible.

**Impro - a party game  
you've never seen before**

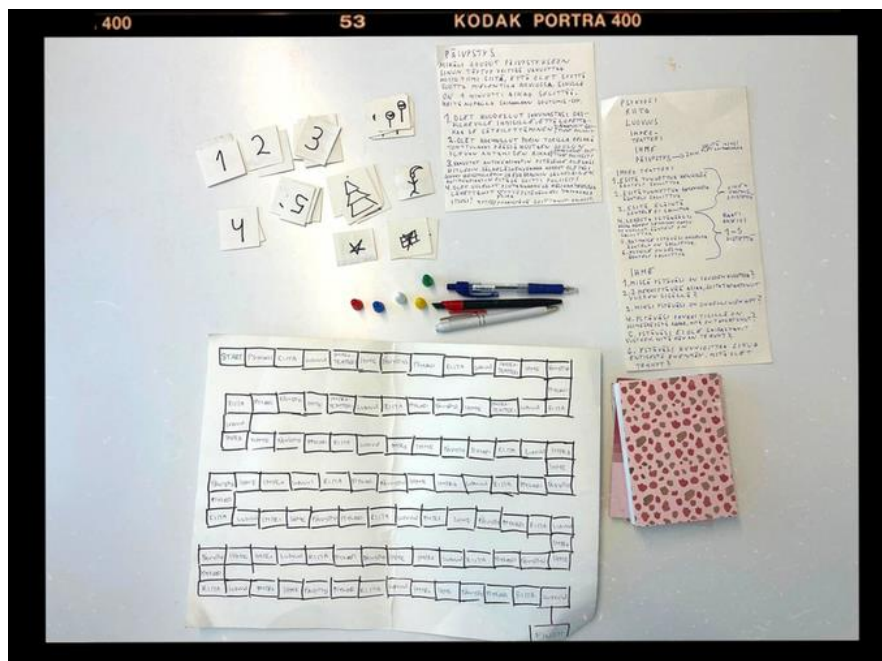
(Picture 4. Example of a headline.)

**Introducing  
the game creators** 

(Picture 5. Example of a headline.)

As you can conclude from Pictures 4 and 5, the headlines are written in clear font and the same colour theme carries out through the whole website. In the story part, elaborate pictures were utilized.

All the pictures were taken and edited by me or a member of the Impro team. The pictures for the Kickstarter website were mostly edited with Canva. Elements from research about website were utilized when thinking about the final layout for the Kickstarter website. Elements of the development of Impro – The Boardgame were added to increase the audience’s interest towards the game and its origin. In picture 6 you can see the first version ever created of Impro- the Boardgame.



(Picture 6. The first version ever made of Impro.)

Having history included in the Kickstarter site, as you can see from Picture 6, makes potential backers feel more connected to the game creators and their story. The game and Kickstarter campaign was created in co-operation between two different companies, Tulenkantajat Oy and ActiveLife USA. In picture 7 both companies get faces through a virtual handshake between key stakeholders of both companies, Dr. Stephen Bui, owner and creator of ActiveLife USA and Samuel Hilli, partner in Tulenkantajat Oy and mastermind behind Impro- The Boargame.





(Picture 7. Introducing the faces between the co-operating companies.)

All the creators that were developing Impro are introduced in descriptive, fictional pictures of them in order to make them seem fun and approachable. Each of the game makers have their own fictional “character” that is introduced in the Kickstarter website. These characters have had their own role in developing the game and are based on the personalities of the game creators, not full reality. Videos of the characters are included as well below their pictures, as you can see from Appendix 6. In picture 8 you can see an example of Impro – The Boardgame creator “character card” that was edited in Canva. These cards are easy and quick to read, but they help the potential backer to relate to the game makers.



(Picture 8. Game maker character card.)

Having a lot of interesting and colourful pictures, like Picture 8, keep the website interesting and easier to read. Different kinds of images, videos and animations were utilized to keep the website interesting and interactive. The website is sort of a dialogue between pictures and descriptive texts. Appendixes 2, 3, 4 and 5 present the website layout accurately, where you can detect the dialogue of pictures and text. Picture 9 is an important element in the Kickstarter site, because it presents what elements the backer receives, in case they decide to go for pledge that includes the boardgame itself.



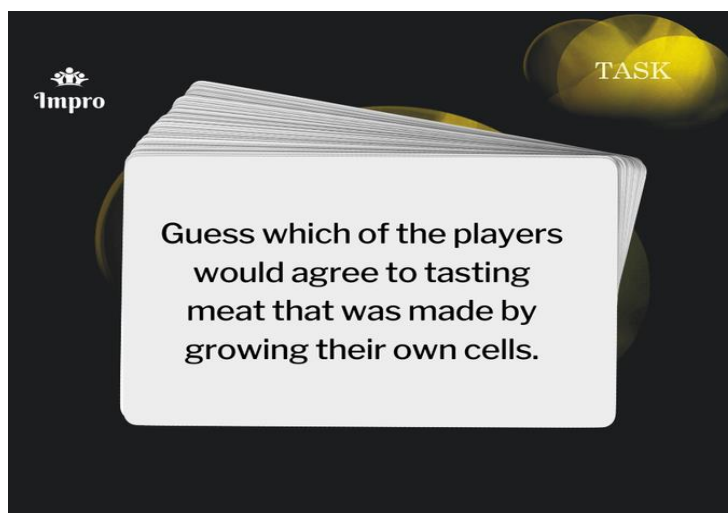
(Picture 9. The contents of the game package. Kivioja 2021.)

After presenting and describing the contents of the game package with a picture (Picture 9) and a short, descriptive text, the site moves on to describing the categories of the game more closely. In picture 10 you can see all the categories. In Appendixes 8, 9 and 10 you can see examples of each of the categories, like in Picture 11.



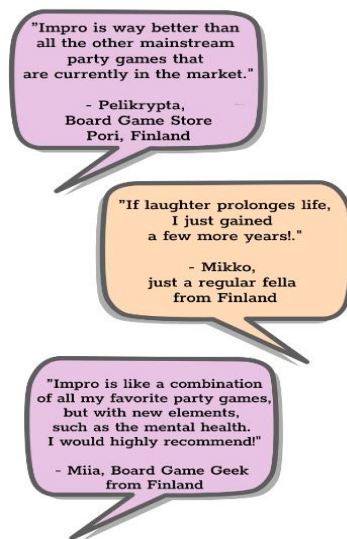
(Picture 10. Categories in the game. Kivioja 2021.)

All of the categories are presented and described in the Kickstarter website with a short, descriptive text and an example of one card that is included in the game. This was done because the game can be controversial for some people. That way, the backers get a realistic picture of what the game is all about. The pictures of the example category cards were created on Canva, and they are based on the real layout of the category question cards. For example, Picture 11, “Task” is described in the Kickstarter website in the following way “Task: In this category the player gets asked a Yes/No-question and the challenge is to try to guess what the co-players will answer to the question....”.



(Picture 11. Example of a category.)

In Appendix 10 you can see the description of the naughty PG-18 rated card deck, that comes as an add-on to some of the reward tiers. It was targeted to people who are looking for more excitement and value for their pledge. Feedback from the game play testers was included in the Kickstarter website. It increases the reliability of the game and its promises. The quotes were collected from real play testers, and some from professional board game collectors or enthusiasts. Picture 11 shows how the feedback was presented in the Kickstarter website. The quotation was taken straight from the people reviewing the game and they gave their permission to use their real names and titles in the feedback section. Having the real names of people who reviewed and liked the game increases the trustworthiness of the claims and promises that are made of the game in the Kickstarter website and Impro – The Boardgames social medias.



(Picture 12. Feedback from play testers.)

In Picture 12, the same colour schemes continue as in the headlines (Pictures 4 and 5). Same and similar colours were used to keep the page coherent.

#### 9.1.4 Stretch Goals

Stretch goals are set to give the backers something extra to look forward to and to appeal them to pledge. The idea of stretch goals is to create more hype around the launch and funding goals, by offering the pledgers something special and unique to

look forward to in case the goals get met. By setting these additional goals on top of the funding goal, more pledgers might get interested and the word gets spread when you have something different to offer. In Appendix 12, 13 and 14 you can see the entire list of stretch goals that were set. Picture 13 presents the stretch goals up to \$30 000.



(Picture 13. Stretch goals.)

The Impro team decided to set stretch goals based on research about other successful campaigns, such as Frosthaven that is presented in chapter 4.9. Every stretch goal was planned with the fact in mind that they might be actually achieved and Impro team is ready to execute them, if the set goals are met. Unrealistic expectations should be avoided, since they can end up disappointing fans and raising negative publicity.

### 9.1.5 Marketing communication plan

The marketing of Impro – The Board Game began as early as April 2021. Impro is established in many different social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit and Tiktok. Impro – The Boardgame has gained most followers on Facebook and Instagram, and the current audience is most engaged in them. The most important social medias when launching the campaign are Facebook and Instagram, since Impro has established its position in them within their niche target group. As I worked in the social media content creation and marketing of Impro, I discovered that content has the most potential of reaching people in Facebook and Instagram. Getting established in other platforms turned out to be much more difficult. Impro – The Boardgame has a quite a niche audience, that consists mostly of boardgame fans but also from friends and family that are interested in supporting the project. The audience can be reached through carefully considered, targeted and relevant hashtags, such as #kickstarter, #crowdfunding, #partygame, #boardgamecommunity, #tabletopgames and #improtheboardgame.

Building a community before the campaign launches is key to success in any sort of crowdfunding, as concluded in Chapter 4. Getting a crowd and gaining followers on different social medias supports the campaign when it is time to launch. Fans of the project and people who have already tested the game are in key role when marketing the campaign during the launch. Organic and non-paid attention are very valuable at that point as well as people sharing the project in their own social medias. When the campaign is launched, the money that has been saved for marketing should be put towards advertisements on different platforms during the first few days of the campaign. After the first days, it can almost certainly be determined whether the campaign will be successful or not, as concluded in Chapter 4.7.

On the campaign launch date and even a bit before that, it would be important to reach out to the fans of Impro, play testers and friends and family and get them to share the project in their own social media platforms, as chapter 4 concluded. In chapter 4, multiple sources consolidated, that existing audience can be great help when running the campaign. The first few days of the campaign launch are the most crucial, and

therefore then activity and engaging with people in all Impro's social medias is very important. During the first days, if a campaign does well and meets its funding goal, it can be picked up by Kickstarter algorithm and get posted on their front page (Website of Kickstarter, 2021). Actively answering messages and questions in social medias during the first few days of the campaign is something that the Impro team should be prepared for, because different kinds of backers might have any types of questions about manufacturing of the game, shipping, or payments. Being active and interactive in different social medias during the campaign is very important since the social media platforms are linked to the Kickstarter website and the Impro crew can be most easily reached through them.

Involvement of pledgers and community in crowdfunding projects is essentially important. Sustaining of momentum means keeping the campaign active, visible and interesting during the whole running time, which in Impro's case is 31 days. That can be done by having interactive things, such as quizzes, competitions, question and answering sessions in the different social media platforms. Offering people something that they can get involved in increases interest towards the project and the Kickstarter website. A community-driven campaign in social media for example a week before the Kickstarter launches could be an idea to consider. Tools such as puzzles or quizzes that keep the community engaged and involved in social media would be useful during the campaign, for example a new small quiz or task published each day would keep the interest towards the campaign going.

## 9.2 After campaign

After the campaign is completed with whatever result, keeping in touch with the pledgers and project supporters is something to be considered. If the campaign ends up failing, it is important to thank all the projects supporters anyhow and inform them of possible re-running of the project. In most cases, as determined in Chapter Kickstarter lets you run the project for a second time in case you end up not meeting the funding goal during the first time.

If the campaign is successful and the funding goal is met, keeping the backers posted about the next steps towards the manufacturing and shipping of the product is wise. Being honest about possible delays is important, so the backers can be sure that they will be receiving their reward at some point. After the campaign, different social media channels that were used during the campaign can act as a tool to communicate with the backers. Keeping the audience posted about the future of the company and game can be done with these social media channels.

## 10 DISCUSSION

This thesis project took place from March 2021 to December of 2021. The initial timeline for the project was supposed to be from March until August, but it was altered due to issues with the product manufacturing and shipping.

In this chapter observations, conclusions, ethics and reliability, commissioners' feedback and reflection are presented. Reflection presents the expertise that was gained during the thesis process and professional growth.

### 10.1 Observations and conclusions

During the project there were changes made to the timeline of the project, which made moving forward with the project challenging at times. The initial launch date was supposed to be August 1st of 2021, but it got postponed to 1st of March in 2022. This was done due to difficulties in estimating delivery time of the games. Promises to backers about the delivery time would have been impossible to make, since at first the plan was to ship the games by December 24th, 2021, but many shipping companies that were contacted by Impro team informed us that there has been significant delays and difficulties in delivery due to CoVid-19 restrictions.



The project was long and challenging at times but being able to come up with an actual useful outcome for a company has been very rewarding. Learning to incorporate certain elements and pre-determined themes into a solid entirety was interesting and a valuable learning experience. Professional skills that I gained during this project are related to website design and social media marketing, which are potential careers that I would like to pursue in the future. Expertise that I gained in website designing was specific to the Kickstarter platform, however it can be applied to other kinds of websites as well. Social media marketing and managing principles remain similar, regardless of the type of site or field in question. Things related to audience engagement and organic growth that are important in any platform can be applied for any type of company, organization or private account.

The Kickstarter website reflects the spirit of Impro – The Boardgame with descriptive texts, colourful and interesting pictures as well as insights of the contents within the game. As I worked on the social media team of Impro, I learned a lot about the audience who might be interested in backing Impro on Kickstarter and was able to utilize that in designing the Kickstarter website. The Kickstarter website is ready for launch whenever the Impro team decides to do it. The pre-campaign page has not been published yet, so that is why there is no link to the website. The layout of the website can be seen in its entirety in the Appendices, and it is presented in chronological order.

Suggestions for social media were made based on the theoretical background that was assembled. The special features in crowdfunding and Kickstarter were taken into consideration when making the suggestions, to make them support the success of the campaign in the most important social media applications as well. I gained valuable knowledge and insight about specific things related to crowdfunding and Kickstarter, and how those can be utilized in social media marketing. Keys to social media marketing during the launch turned out to be community involvement, keeping the audience engaged and sustaining momentum with different tools, for example contests.

## 10.2 Ethics and reliability

Transparency about the ethical dimensions in thesis projects is important for various reasons. These reasons are ensuring professional conduct, making research outcomes better and handling topics that are sensitive in nature. Managing ethics in research projects can bring out various dilemmas when it comes to moral conduct. The dilemmas depend on the nature of the study. The most common dilemmas in research related to business management are for example how participants are portrayed in the final work, how thoroughly they get informed about the nature of the research or in which manner they are brought to the project. (O’Gorman & MacIntosh, 2014 196-197.)

Business-related research projects are often not viewed as sensitive topics, but what is classified sensitive depends on the person. In making ethical choices, differences in perspective should be considered. Ethics, while considered properly, can improve the quality of the research. Evaluation of relevance and merits can be used to assess reliability of the research. Professional conduct and affiliation are important because they go beyond the present moment and individual. Practice and research are most often expected to align by organizational standards. Good practices in thesis research can help the student to get a status of practitioner in the future. Code of ethics and reliability include collegiality, conflict of interest, accountability and responsibility, honesty and integrity, fairness, respect, confidentiality and privacy and avoidance of personal gain. (O’Gorman & MacIntosh, 2014 197/199.)

This project was done while I was working for the commissioner at the same time. It can create a reliability issue since I was always in a close co-operation with Tulenkantajat Oy. I was advised by them every step of the way and was let in with confidential business details. I believe that doing this project in such a close co-operation with all the members of Impro crew ensured that they got exactly the outcome that they wished for. Method was a project-based thesis, that was to be documented and described through theoretical base and then move on to the actual project and outcome.

This thesis can act as an example about how to create a website to Kickstarter. However, due to changes in timetable of the project, I was not able to evaluate the efficiency and results of the Kickstarter campaign. The suggestions for their social media campaign can be utilized in any Kickstarter or other crowdfunding campaign. Seeing the results of the Kickstarter campaign would have been helpful in order to determine some changes that could have been done to the Kickstarter website and to be able to give more accurate suggestions for their social media marketing after the campaign.

### 10.3 Commissioner feedback

Tulenkantajat Oy's feedback: Thesis co-operation in creating a Kickstarter website and starting marketing in social media.

Overall, the co-operation went very well – The schedules that were agreed with Vilma were met and she was able to figure things out quickly even in surprising situations. In creative tasks, Vilma showed skills in flexibility and was protean based on the feedback received from our team. (Hopeakangas 2021.)

Several social media accounts were created for marketing of Impro. From these Facebook and Instagram have turned out to be the most profitable ones and as a result of Vilma's work, our following in these is commendable and we will be able to utilize them during the Kickstarter campaign. (Hopeakangas 2021.)

The greatest merit and most important thing for us about this thesis is the usable Kickstarter website based on which our team can continue working towards the launch. This new field coup went smoothly and more flexibly for our company due to Vilma's contribution. She communicated easily and clearly with our co-operating company, Active Life USA to the United States as well. (Hopeakangas, 2021.)

## 10.4 Reflection

The thesis subject is not directly aligned with the field of study, international tourism development. However, International Tourism Development is under the faculty of service businesses, and financing and marketing were included in the degree programme. This thesis included research on crowdfunding, marketing, social media, website designing skills and the actual project part.

The project started with only ideas about the Kickstarter website and the possible themes and layouts. The final layout took a lot of different versions of text, pictures, and ideas of the content. The best ones were picked by constantly developing and coming up with new ideas, as well as unbiased discussions about what kind of styles, themes and contents would be most suitable for this particular game. The goal was to awake people's interest towards the project with influential, funny, and accurate Kickstarter site.

Other funding options for small businesses were explored in the beginning of the thesis, as a backup plan for Impro in case the crowdfunding would end up failing. Crowdfunding was explored from negatives and positives point of view – as well as Kickstarter as the platform of choice. Marketing, two different social media platforms and website design were combined and explored for this thesis, due to the commissioner's wish about suggestions for their social media marketing during the campaign launch.

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KICKSTARTER [Enable sharing](#) to send this preview to others and gather feedback.

Exit preview

### IMPRO – A TWISTED PARTY GAME

A twisted board game for adults developed by psychotherapists. Gather your friends for a round of laughter, revelations and surprises.



Tabletop Games | Por, Finland

\$0  
pledged of \$15,000 goal

0  
backers

31  
days to go

Back this project

Remind me [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Email](#) [Code](#)

This project is not live  
This is only a draft that the creator has chosen to share

Kickstarter connects creators with backers to fund projects.

Rewards aren't guaranteed, but creators must regularly update backers.

You're only charged if the project meets its funding goal by the campaign deadline.

Campaign    FAQ    Updates    Comments    Community

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STORY

RISKS

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS


## Story

# Impro - a party game you've never seen before

With components of Dark Humor from the therapy world, we can guarantee that Impro party game is something that has not been seen - or played before. Impro the Board Game is outrageous, and players should **expect the unexpected!**

The gist of the game is the five different categories which will challenge the players all in different ways. The most **unique feature** is the Mental Health which takes the player in totally bonkers situations and then leaves him to talk himself out of being committed to the Psychiatric hospital! Impro integrates the mental health aspect into casual board game in a way that is truly intriguing. It presents hypothetical scenarios that only a twisted mind can cook up, and then makes you talk yourself out of that mindf\*ck situation.

In addition, Impro the Board Game is very versatile as **each category can be played independently** - meaning you can just take any deck of cards with you on a camping trip and play the deck without carrying the whole game with you!



Dr. Stephen Bui, DPM, FACFAS  
First created · 6 backed

Hello supporters, My name is Dr. Stephen Bui. In collaboration with a Finnish therapy- and wellbeing company called Tulenkantajat Oy, we... See more

Support

Make a pledge without a reward

\$ Pledge any amount

Pledge \$5 or more

**A personalized email greeting**

When supporting us with \$5 only, you will get a personalized email greeting and thank you note from Impro - Team!

INCLUDES

- Email greeting

ESTIMATED DELIVERY  
Apr 2022

Add-ons    0 backers

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cook up, and then makes you talk yourself out of that mindf\*ck situation.

In addition, Impro the Board Game is very versatile as **each category can be played independently** - meaning you can just take any deck of cards with you on a camping trip and play the deck without carrying the whole game with you!



Impro A Twisted Party Game

Pledge \$5 or more

**A personalized email greeting**

When supporting us with \$5 only, you will get a personalized email greeting and thank you note from Impro - Team!

INCLUDES

- Email greeting

ESTIMATED DELIVERY  
Apr 2022

Add-ons    0 backers

Pledge \$10 or more

**Signed digital picture**

If you decide to back us with 10\$, you will get an awesome signed photo from our Impro team. It is guaranteed that it will leave a smile to your face!

INCLUDES

- Signed Digital Photo

ESTIMATED DELIVERY  
Apr 2022

Add-ons    0 backers

Pledge \$39 or more

**Impro game for PG18 deck DEPOSIT**

When you have made a dollar deposit for the

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## What is Impro and why are you reading about it?

This is a crowdfunding campaign for a board game, that will make your head spin and maybe piss yourself a bit. It's called **Impro the Board Game**. Impro has five different categories and let's just say that if you don't have a dark sense of humor, you might be rolling your eyes after a round. The categories make the players ask insightful questions, mimic different feelings and express themselves in all sorts of weird. You are guaranteed to learn surprising stuff about you co-players - and yourself!



When you have made a dollar deposit for the PG-18 rated card deck, with this Reward Tier you will get it for no extra charge!  
NOTE! This Reward Tier is only for those who have made 1 dollar deposit before this live campaign. We will check who have actually done it. In case you decide to purchase this Reward Tier, but have not made the deposit, you will be getting just a copy of Impro - The Board Game.

INCLUDES

- Klännityksen tehneiden Reward Tier

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

Add-ons    0 backers

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**Pledge \$42 or more**

**Impro game & PG18 rated card deck**

For first 100 backers, that have not made a 1 dollar pre-deposit of PG-18 rated card deck, this is a limited edition offer! Pledge now and get Impro - A Twisted Party Game and naughty limited edition PG-18 rated card deck for free!

INCLUDES

- 100 first backers offer!

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

Add-ons    Limited (100 left of 100)

0 backers

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## The origin of Impro - the Board Game


Impro is brought to the World by mad Finnish therapists and mental health professionals, and let's face it – we all could use a little therapy and pitch-black humor in our life! Especially if they are both wrapped in one tight, entertaining package. The creators of Impro the Board game aim to break the taboos and diminish the stigma that is often connected to mental health issues and dealing with them.

### How was Impro the Board Game born you ask?

Let's hear it straight from the Mastermind Samuel himself:

*"About 4 years ago I wished a certain board game for Christmas, but it was sold out in all the local stores. "Well it can't be that hard to make a game!?" I thought to myself. So, I ended up putting together my own game so that we would have something to play with my family during the holidays.*

*I recruited my sister to craft the pawns and the game board. Although the mark I of my board game was not necessarily a beauty to look at, playing it told me that it clearly hit a nerve and I was onto something. The thought of designing my own board game was thus planted in the back of my head to brew until I had more time to make it a reality.*



Pledge \$45 or more

**IMPRO - A TWISTED PARTY GAME**

Now it is your chance to back the greatest party game in the market!

Impro - The Board Game is a party game, which will blow your mind. With categories that have elements from the therapy world and pitch black humour, impro is something that you have NEVER experienced before.

Impro is the perfect board game for any gathering with friend or family, and it is guaranteed that you will be ENTERTAINED.

When you purchase this Reward, you will get an English version.

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

Add-ons    0 backers

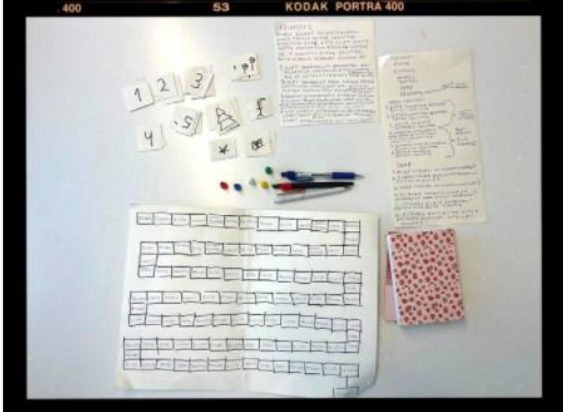
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*The Mark I of IMPRO the Board Game*

*It is common for me to throw parties and get togethers in my circle of friends, so one time I dug up the mark I and with a few twists and turns it evolved to mark II. Even though the first time it was played, people were of their tits and didn't know which way was up – the game worked well. It was then played again during the holidays, and my family was thrilled about it – they even played it again even though I was not there. After getting all the enthusiastic feedback from my family and my drunken friends, the thought came back to me even stronger – I was onto something!*

*A few weeks later I brought up the game and the idea of getting the project funded to my therapist colleague Virni. She pretty much fitting her character – not excited about the*

Impro is the perfect board game for any gathering with friend or family, and it is guaranteed that you will be ENTERTAINED.

This offer brings you a great value for purchasing 3 copies of the board game! Impro - The Board Game is the ultimate perfect gift for your friends or family.

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

Add-ons    0 backers

Pledge \$175 or more

**5 copies of Impro - The Board Game**

Now it is your chance to back the greatest party game in the market!

Impro - The Board Game is a party game, which will blow your mind. With categories that have elements from the therapy world and pitch black humour, impro is something that you have NEVER experienced before.

Impro is the perfect board game for any gathering with friend or family, and it is guaranteed that you will be ENTERTAINED.

This offer brings you a great value for purchasing 5 copies of the board game! Impro - The Board Game is the ultimate perfect gift for your friends or family.

INCLUDES

- IMPRO - A TWISTED PARTY GAME (Big Family Pack)

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

# APPENDIX 5

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**STORY**

**RISKS**

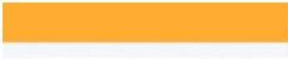

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS**

*A few weeks later I brought up the game and the idea of getting the project funded to my therapist colleague Virpi. She, pretty much fitting her character – got excited about the idea and here we are. At your mercy.*

*I work as a mental health professional and have worked in a closed mental institution. Working in this field is very rewarding at its best, but it can be extremely hard and emotionally challenging, and you know the saying – work hard, play hard. This is what happens with the sense of humor in this field, you tend to laugh at the most surprising things ...Humor and laughter are well working coping mechanisms, and the darker the subject, the darker becomes the humor that is thrown around. That's how the pitch black humor entered my life and I reckon it's a one way street, no going back to vanilla!"*

## The Impro crew

We have worked on this project and it has been a collaboration between Active Life USA and Tulenkantajat Oy from Finland. We have been a good match in this co-operation, because of our shared values and goals. Our common goal overall is to help people physically and psychologically. It is our mission to improve people's overall welfare and health. If your mental wellbeing is not doing so well, then also your physical health will suffer.

**Family Pack**

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

[Add-ons](#)   [0 backers](#)

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**Pledge \$320 or more**

**10 copies of Impro - The Board Game**

Now it is your chance to back the greatest party game in the market!

Impro - The Board Game is a party game, which will blow your mind. With categories that have elements from the therapy world and pitch black humour, Impro is something that you have NEVER experienced before.

Impro is the perfect board game for any gathering with friend or family, and it is guaranteed that you will be ENTERTAINED.

This "RETAILER PACK" offer brings you a great value for purchasing 10 copies of the board game! It is perfect for retailers, who want to take the most awesome party game to their selection.

**INCLUDES**

- IMPRO - A TWISTED PARTY GAME (Retailer Pack)

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

[Add-ons](#)   [0 backers](#)

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**STORY**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS**

We have worked on this project and it has been a collaboration between Active Life USA and Tulenkantajat Oy from Finland. We have been a good match in this co-operation, because of our shared values and goals. Our common goal overall is to help people physically and psychologically. It is our mission to improve people's overall welfare and health. If your mental wellbeing is not doing so well, then also your physical health will suffer.

Virtual handshake between Dr. Bui and S. Hilli

game! It is perfect for retailers, who want to take the most awesome party game to their selection.

**INCLUDES**

- IMPRO - A TWISTED PARTY GAME (Retailer Pack)

ESTIMATED DELIVERY: Jun 2022    SHIPS TO: Anywhere in the world

[Add-ons](#)   [0 backers](#)

Introducing the game creators 

<b>Sick Mastermind</b>	<b>SUPER POWER</b> Innovator genius pitch black humor
	<b>MOTTO</b> "Best ideas are born in the deepest waters"

Sick Mastermind - Samuel



<b>Princess</b>	<b>SUPER POWER</b> Golden touch
	<b>MOTTO</b> "Beauty comes from my magic wand"

Princess - Lina



<b>Ms. Gyver</b>	<b>SUPER POWER</b> Multitasking
	<b>MOTTO</b> "Everything gets done with light speed"

<b>Consigliere</b>	<b>SUPER POWER</b> The Fine skill of SCHEMING
	<b>MOTTO</b> "Snitches bathe behind the sauna"

### Contents of the game package



Impro Gameboard and Components

- Game board
- Hourglass and dice
- Hourglass
- Psychiatric hospital card (representation of a psychiatric hospital)
- 6 notepads and pencils
- Instructions
- Creativity, Self-knowledge, Tasks and Mental Health –cards (40 cards each)
- 20 Emotion cards

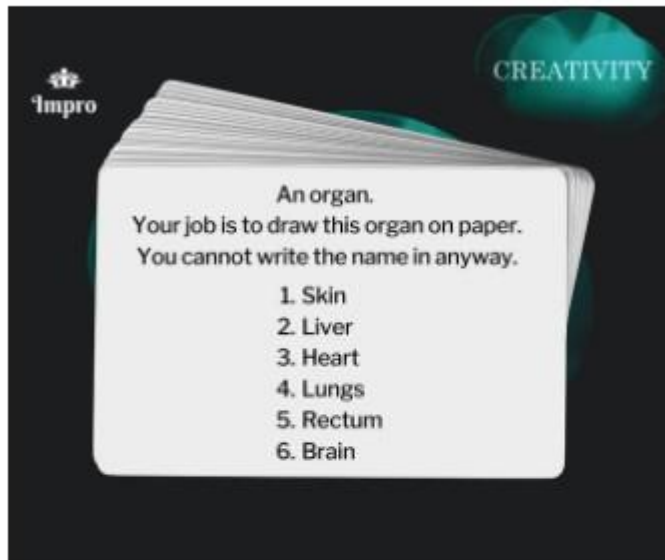


Impro Game Box and Gamecards

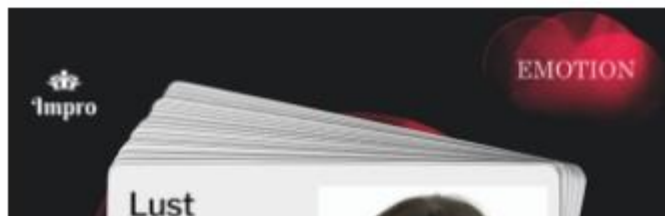


## APPENDIX 8

**Creativity:** This measures the player's ability to express themselves using their bodies or by drawing. Player might be prompted to draw a specific item or act as a meal. The variety is vast, and creativity is indeed needed.

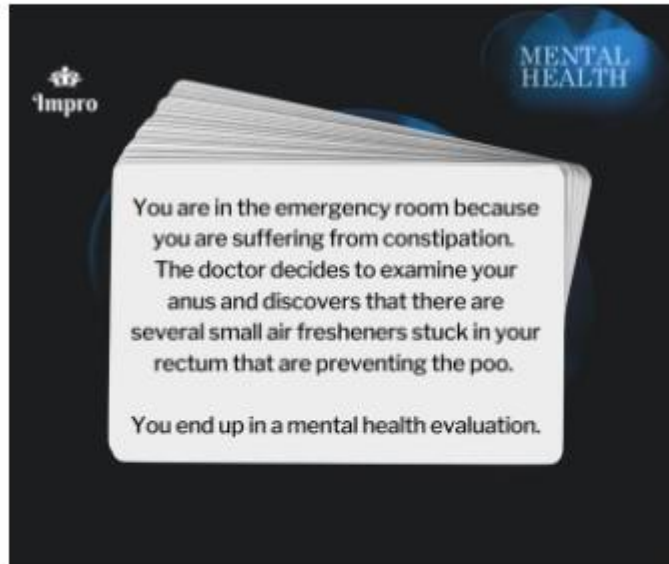


**Emotion:** Players practice their ability to express and identify their emotions by mimicking the emotion on the card by using only facial expression. Co-players write down the emotion they think the player is trying to mimic. Whoever gets it right, gets to move forward. And the one who mastered the emotion gets to move as many steps forward as there were correct answers.



## APPENDIX 9

**Mental Health:** A preposterous situation is depicted, and the player needs to talk itself out of being committed to the Psychiatric Hospital. The player needs to convince the co-players that what was done was totally normal and made perfect sense. The co-players can ask questions to get more specifics before they decide whether the player gets committed or sent home.



## APPENDIX 10

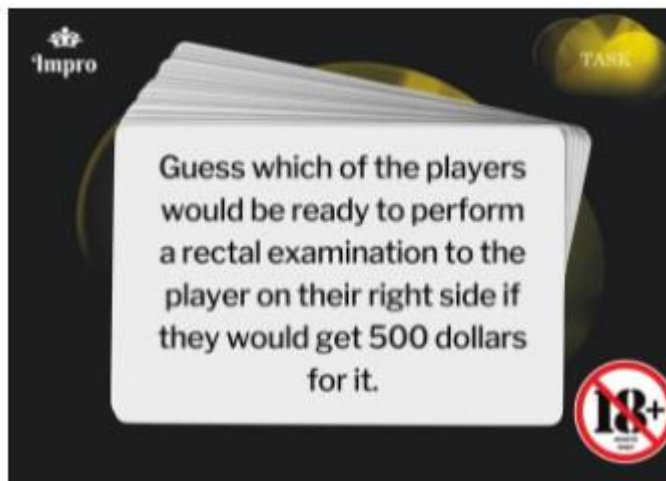
Over the course of a game, your imagination and creativity will be stretched beyond apprehension. You'll get to know things about your friends you would never dare to ask. And they will learn things about you too! It's exciting! Ridiculous! Outrageous! And never ever the same twice!

If the trial rounds can predict anything – You will be entertained! And You will be begging for more!

### Naughty R18+ extra card deck

These naughty cards are designed just for the dirtiest little F\*\*\*\*s out there and they are definitely not suitable all the Karens out there. The questions in these cards will give shivers even to the dirtiest of minds.

Cards are well suited for bachelor parties, pre-christmas parties and wild get togethers with friends. PG18 cards can also be used separately without the main game.



## APPENDIX 11

Naughty add on contains:

- 13 Naughty Mental Health cards
- 13 Naughty Creativity cards
- 13 Naughty Self-knowledge cards
- 13 Naughty Task cards
- Instructions

### Feedback from test players

The feedback we have received after shedloads of trial games has been positive, a bit hysterio and enthusiasio, seems like people can't wait to get their hands on this board game!

"Impro is way better than all the other mainstream party games that are currently in the market."

- Pelikrypta,  
Board Game Store  
Pori, Finland

"If laughter prolongs life, I just gained a few more years!."

- Mikko,  
just a regular fella  
from Finland

"Impro is like a combination of all my favorite party games, but with new elements, such as the mental health. I would highly recommend!"

- Miia, Board Game Geek  
from Finland

## STRETCHGOALS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! **15 000\$** THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!  
**Project is fully funded!!!**

 **18 000\$**   
We will make additional special rules to turn Impro into a drinking game!

 **20 000\$**   
We will replace all the plastic pawns with metal pawns!

 **25 000\$**   
Our emotion cards will be in full colours!

 **30 000\$**   
We add 8 extra cards to our game!

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**STORY**



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**RISKS**



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**ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMITMENTS**



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 **35 000\$**   
We will plant one hundred Christmas trees



 **40 000\$**   
All pledgers get a special video greeting from  
Impro Team's famous Lawnmower Man

 **50 000\$**   
We add another  
8 extra cards to our game!

 **60 000\$**   
We add another  
8 extra cards to our game!

 **70 000\$**   
Lawnmower Man (aka Samuel),  
will perform a bungee jump!

 **80 000\$**   
We add another  
8 extra cards to our game!

 **90 000\$** 

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**90 000\$**  
We add another  
8 extra cards to our game!



**100 000\$**  
One lucky pledger will win a lawn mowing from  
the Lawnmower Man anywhere in the World!

## FOLLOW US

[Instagram page](#)

[TikTok page](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

[Impro website](#)

### Risks and challenges

Possible delays in deliveries. While unfortunate - this is still possible, when it come to a project this soale.

#### OVERVIEW:

We have extensively play tested and prototyped the game already. All we need to do is hit our Kickstarter goal and we are able to bring Impro- The Board Game. After some final details, where everything is perfected, our game will be ready to be shipped to YOU to enjoy.

#### THINGS CAN CHANGE

We have nearly completed the design and layout for this game, some adjustments might need to be made. In addition, some of the text used in the game (including rules) are subject to change. Main components of the game will remain the same.



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**SHIPPING AND DELIVERY** Our goal is to deliver Impro - The Board Game to you no later than 31.01.2022, but hopefully even earlier. Please note that shipping is not charged until after the Kickstarter campaign concludes, and it is not built into the pledge price. All shipping & handling costs will be paid by backers through our BackerKit Pledge Manager.

Links to this pledge manager will be sent after the campaign ends. The BackerKit pledge manager is a third-party crowdfunding platform used to finalize orders and shipping outside of Kickstarter. Kickstarter is not responsible for shipping Impro- The Board Game. Shipping prices will vary depending on the shipping location. Before your order is shipped we will ask for a verification, that your shipping information is correct. It is your responsibility to confirm that your order information is updated and accurate. In case we ship to the address you provide, and the package is returned to us as undeliverable, you will be required to pay the full shipping cost to receive your pledge at a different address.

If the tracking status shows as delivered, but it is lost or stolen after delivery, you may be required to pay the full cost to ship the order again. If your shipment is held in customs, you may be required to contact your customs agency or government and arrange for the package to be cleared and released at your expense. We are not responsible for any additional customs fees, refunds, or reshipments due to customs or a government agency.

**INVOLVEMENT.** If you're missing part of your order and it cannot be fulfilled for some reason, we will provide you with a prorated refund for that portion of your order. Depending on where you live, other fees may apply. We are currently unable to ship to ...???

[Learn about accountability on Kickstarter](#)

**Environmental commitments**

Visit our [Environmental Resources Center](#) to learn how Kickstarter encourages sustainable practices.

**Long-lasting design**

Impro the Board Game packaging is made with good quality products and it should last for decades. The game can be played in multiple different variations, and each game card deck can be played separately.

The questions in the game last time and for example self-knowledge never goes out of style. The same cards can have multiple outcomes, and every play session is different.

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Questions about this project? [Check out the FAQ](#)