VIRAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN PLAN AND ITS RESULTS

Relationship Games Ltd.

Alena Alisa Komendova

Bachelor’s thesis
November 2013
International Business
ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
International Business

Alena Alisa Komendova
Viral Marketing Campaign Plan for Relationship Games Ltd. and Its Results

Bachelor's thesis
47 pages
November 2013

Relationship Games Ltd., the commissioner of this thesis, is a globally operating online company based in Helsinki, Finland. Relationship Games provides its customers with services to improve already existing interpersonal romantic relationships. The main goal was to promote Relationship Games Ltd., to attract attention and to gain new customers for Relationship Games via viral marketing campaign using the social media platforms.

The objective of the thesis was to plan, develop and execute a viral marketing campaign that would effectively help Relationship Games to reach the goal of raising awareness and gaining new customers. As the main services of Relationship Games are provided for free, the purpose wasn't directly to increase sales in the sense of monetary value, but rather to increase the attention and time customers, both old and new, spend on the Relationship Games application page.

The chosen form of viral marketing campaign - an online Facebook event - wasn't exactly virally successful. Despite reaching wide audience through paid advertisement, the response was minimal. The final form of the event was in line with the general idea of how the services of Relationship Games are provided, however, following the general guidelines for successful online events could attract more attention and bring in more customers. Also, only one event was successfully conducted. The campaign should be an ongoing activity to constantly attract the attention of both old and new customers.

Keywords: viral marketing, campaign, planning, online business, social media
# CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................. 5  
   1.1 Company description ................................................................................................ 5  
   1.2 Background of the thesis ....................................................................................... 6  
   1.3 The goal and the objective of the thesis ............................................................... 6  
2 MARKETING ....................................................................................................................... 7  
   2.1 Marketing plan ........................................................................................................... 8  
      2.1.1 PEST and SWOT analyses ............................................................................... 8  
      2.1.2 Market and customer analysis ........................................................................... 9  
      2.1.3 Competitive analysis ...................................................................................... 10  
      2.1.4 Marketing mix ............................................................................................... 11  
   2.2 Implementation and Control .................................................................................... 13  
3 VIRAL MARKETING ........................................................................................................... 14  
   3.1 Main social media platforms .................................................................................... 16  
      3.1.1 Facebook ........................................................................................................ 16  
      3.1.2 Youtube .......................................................................................................... 17  
      3.1.3 Twitter ........................................................................................................... 18  
      3.1.4 Blog................................................................................................................ 18  
   3.2 Examples of viral phenomena ................................................................................... 18  
      3.2.1 Youtube videos ............................................................................................... 19  
      3.2.2 Viral memes and photos ............................................................................... 21  
      3.2.3 Viral stories ................................................................................................... 23  
      3.2.4 E-books ......................................................................................................... 24  
      3.2.5 Online events ............................................................................................... 24  
4 MARKETING OF RELATIONSHIP GAMES ...................................................................... 26  
   4.1 Situation analysis of Relationship Games ............................................................... 26  
      4.1.1 PEST analysis ................................................................................................. 27  
      4.1.2 SWOT analysis ............................................................................................... 28  
   4.2 Customer and market analyses ............................................................................... 29  
   4.3 Main competitors and their social media presence ................................................. 30  
   4.4 Relationship Games marketing mix ........................................................................ 32  
      4.4.1 Product ........................................................................................................... 32  
      4.4.2 Price ............................................................................................................... 32  
      4.4.3 Promotion ...................................................................................................... 32  
      4.4.4 Place ............................................................................................................... 33
5 CAMPAIGN OUTLINE AND PROPOSALS .......................................................... 34
  5.1 Video campaign proposal........................................................................ 34
  5.2 E-book campaign proposal..................................................................... 35
  5.3 A series of photos campaign proposal ................................................... 35
  5.4 A combination of various media campaign proposal............................ 36
  5.5 An online event campaign proposal....................................................... 36
6 CAMPAIGN, EXECUTION, DATA AND ANALYSIS..................................... 38
  6.1 Campaign planning ............................................................................... 38
  6.2 Execution .............................................................................................. 39
  6.3 Data ...................................................................................................... 40
  6.4 Campaign analysis and recommendations .......................................... 40
7 CONCLUSIONS ......................................................................................... 43
REFERENCES ............................................................................................... 44
1 INTRODUCTION

Viral media, viral marketing and conducting a business online is a quickly emerging business field based on the concept of word-of-mouse; the viral version of classical word-of-mouth. The traditional communication is direct in one way from the business to the customers through media and influencers. The viral communication, on the contrary, is interactive, immediate, open to anyone, and flows both ways between the business and its customers. These are the main factors the online marketers must account for and adapt to.

1.1 Company description

Relationship Games Ltd. is a Finnish company operating online on four main social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter, blog and a web page. Relationship Games, a service provided by Relationship Games Ltd., is a social media game played in real life by spouses to enrich their relationship and bring back the spark to their lives. The spouses join the game together and play by choosing missions they will do for their spouse. They collect points for completing each mission to progress to another level and to request rewards from their spouse. The game is for free.

The IT team is located in Bulgaria and is employed by Alkuvoima East. The team located in Finland – mainly formed by trainees – focuses on development of the service and related features, media, PR and communication in the form of Facebook company and app page, Twitter account, a blog and a web page. The services are provided in English and Finnish languages, with main focus on English language.

Relationship Games targets all couples 18+, more specifically couples of age 20-40 years actively using social media and somewhat using social media games, familiar with online purchasing of goods and services and financially secured. Initially, the main aim is on women. The online presence and presentation of Relationship Games via social media are designed to be attractive and interesting to women as they are more likely to join and try out the game. Consequently, they invite their partners. Currently, the 'Most
Popular Age Group' of Relationship Games on Facebook, as provided by 'Page Insights', is an age group of 25-34 years. This age group of Facebook customers of Relationship Games corresponds well with the target age group of 20-40 years.

1.2 Background of the thesis

During the author’s 5-months internship at Relationship Games Ltd. in 2012, where the author focused mainly on media, especially social media, the task of developing a viral marketing campaign suitable and adequate for Relationship Games came up among various other tasks from the media and communication field.

Naturally, Relationship Games is constantly trying to grow its customer base by reaching and attracting new potential customers. Considering Relationship Games operates online, the process of reaching new customers needs to mainly happen on the used social media platforms via viral marketing campaigns. The best and most suitable form of the viral marketing campaign would be developed regarding the type and style of services provided by Relationship Games and regarding the target audience as each age group and audience segment has a different way of using and interacting on the social media platforms.

1.3 The goal and the objective of the thesis

The general goal of the thesis was to raise awareness and to attract attention to the Relationship Games services, and therefore new customers. The company is constantly seeking new ways how to widen its customer base to increase revenues through on-page advertisement and business-to-business cooperation.

The objective of the thesis was to plan a viral marketing campaign that would help Relationship Games to achieve its goals. Considering Relationship Games is a free social media game, the main aim behind the viral marketing campaign is to attract attention and customers, and using the phenomenon of “going viral” would be the most effective way.
2 MARKETING

The following chapter will deal with the topic of marketing process, what it is, why it is important for business, the use of various marketing concepts and their execution. In order to establish a successful business, it is important to understand the basic marketing concepts, their value and importance, and how to use them properly. Marketing is a process beginning with identifying the unfulfilled wants and needs of customers so the company can successfully create a product or a service to meet the customers' needs, making it available when and where the customers want it and for a price the customers find adequate to pay. The outcome of this process of planning needs to satisfy the objectives of both of the customer as well as the objectives of the company (AMA 2012). A marketing strategy, a marketing plan, its implementation and control are all vital aspects of marketing process and creating a detailed strategy where and how to focus marketing efforts.

Marketing strategy revolves around and explains the main business goals the company strives to achieve with its marketing efforts. Marketing strategy establishes what needs to be done. A marketing strategy should answer questions e.g. what is the external marketing message, what are the short-term goals and objectives, and what are the long-term goals and objectives (About.com: Marketing Strategy vs. Marketing Plan 2013). Once the goals are established, a corresponding marketing plan is developed in order to guide the company through the process of how to do it. Marketing plan consists of several external and internal analyses to provide information about the company situation internally and in regard to its business environment. The company must identify its goals, focus, economical, socio-cultural, political and technological environments, its strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities, its customers and competitors, and details about the product, its price, the distribution channels and what promotion will be used. All these concepts are to give the company a realistic image of the competitive business environment it operates in and to give the company an idea of its competitive advantage. The marketing process is an ongoing process that needs to be constantly monitored and the gathered data analyzed so it can be adjusted even during the implementation of the marketing plan to optimize the product and the communication, and therefore assure the sales and customers' satisfaction.
2.1 Marketing plan

A solid and useful marketing plan can be only established if a proper marketing strategy serves as a base for the plan. While the marketing strategy establishes what needs to be achieved, the marketing plan lists marketing actions that need to be taken to achieve those goals. A marketing plan consists of decisions for actions based on thorough analyses of several business factors and environments, both internal and external. Unlike marketing strategy, the marketing plan is usually short-term focusing on one product.

In the frame of the marketing plan, the objectives, strategies, and tactics should be developed and included. The objectives of a marketing plan tell the reader what needs to be achieved, the strategies of a marketing plan describe how to achieve them, and the tactics of a marketing plan identify the execution. (Luther 2001) The strategies and tactics of marketing plan are developed based on the various internal and external analyses; PEST and SWOT analyses, target market analysis, competitive analysis, and marketing mix. Also, means of monitoring and analyzing the implementation process of the marketing plan need to be established to it can be adjusted and improved whenever necessary. These changes and adjustments are executed in order to meet the customers’ demands, improve the services, and increase the sales. (Gerson & Shotwell 1991.)

2.1.1 PEST and SWOT analyses

The PEST analysis helps the company identify the external environments the company is affected by on daily basis. The abbreviation PEST stands for political-legal, economic, socio-cultural, and technological environment. Sometimes, also the competitive environment is covered in this section as part of the external analysis. However, in this paper the competitive analysis is discussed separately in chapter 2.2.3. The political-legal environment analysis covers the topic of the country (countries) the company is located in, the political situation and stability, and legal system in said country. The economic environment analysis deals with the factors affecting customers purchasing decisions and power, economic stability of the country, the type of market in the country, etc. Socio-cultural environment identifies the society of the country in regard of values, preferences, behaviors, and perceptions. These features generally affect and define the
customers’ decision-making process and purchasing habits. The technological environment analysis provides the overview of the situation in R&D of new technologies, the customers’ and government’s attitude about new technologies and market opportunities for new technologies. The PEST analysis can help the company make necessary precautions (e.g. in case of unstable political and economic environment), and utilize the possibilities of the marketing macro environments. (ZeePedia: Marketing Macro Environment 2013.)

The SWOT analysis is used by the company to identify its own strengths and weaknesses (internal analysis), and opportunities and threats (external analysis). Strengths are generally the company features giving the company advantage over the competitors and making it unique from its competitors from the customers’ point of view. Weaknesses, on the other hand, identify the areas in which the company stays behind its competitors, and areas that need to be developed and improved if possible to prevent the competitors from benefiting on them. Opportunities describe any external factors that could be turned into beneficial features for the company, and things the company could utilize and monetize on. As the counterpart to opportunities, the threats identify as external factors that can potentially jeopardize the company’s operations and profits. By conducting the SWOT analysis, a company can get a clear image of its position and relations to the competitors, and determine the actions that can be and should be taken to improve the company position in regard the competitors. (Gerson & Shotwell 1991.)

2.1.2 Market and customer analysis

One of the challenges marketing has to deal with is establishing the target customer group. Every product has its specific features, values and benefits which may limit the number of potential customers. To choose the right price, distribution and positioning of the product, the organization has to determine the target customers quite accurately to find and reach the most profitable customer group. This can be achieved by asking the right questions, e.g. how large the customer group should be, what type of customers should be approached, what are the main values of those customers, what kind of decision process do they follow, etc. (About.com: Marketing Strategy vs. Marketing Plan 2013). The organization also needs to decide whether it will focus its efforts on only
one market segment, or cover all market segments, or start with reaching one market segment and over time including other segments.

In general, market segmentation is the process of identifying groups of customers with similar or same wants and needs, and consequently deciding the best market segment for the product. The defining features of any market segment should be generally fitting the criteria of accessibility, identifiability, and substantiality. There are several approaches to market segmentation and establishing the target markets. A geographic segmentation covers features e.g. region, population size of the area, population density, and climate, etc. The demographic segmentation focuses on aspects e.g. age, gender, occupation, marital status, income, religion, social class and others. Psychographic segmentation focused on identifying the customer lifestyle covering activities, hobbies, opinions, interests, values, and attitudes. The behavioral segmentation regards the customers’ behavior directly toward the product e.g. what are the desired benefits of the product, how often is the product used, brand loyalty, first time buyer vs. regular, readiness to buy, and purchasing occasions. (Osmawati 2012.)

2.1.3 Competitive analysis

Identifying the main competitors and the mutual business relationship with the company can be established by answering questions, e.g. what is our and what is their market position, what are their strengths and weaknesses, what market share do we want and what market share do they have, what marketing mix strategies are they using etc. (About.com: Marketing Strategy vs. Marketing Plan 2013.)

A competitive analysis starts with listing down all the relevant direct competitors as well as non-local competitors, regarding product, services and location (both physical and online). Once the list is complete (as much as possible) the business relevant information about the competitors needs to be gathered. This information should cover topics e.g. what are the market segments of the competitors, what benefits do the competitors offer to their customers, why do the customers purchase the competitors’ products, what is the competitors’ marketing mix, etc. All this information can be obtained from the competitors’ webpage, by visiting their store, visiting their booth at a trade show, talk-
ing to the customers, searching newspapers and magazines for public information, and obtaining press releases. Once all the relevant information is gathered, it needs to be analyzed. To do so, a company uses the obtained information to find out possible overlooked market, a lack of additional after-purchase service, a gap in the product portfolio, anything the company could address and use as a competitive advantage when entering the market.

However, a competitive analysis and monitoring what the competitors do should generally serve only as an introduction into the market environment and oversight of the business situation in given market, it shouldn’t dictate every move and every decision the company makes in the future. Once the company establishes its position in the business, it should follow its own vision and corporate mission, and what the customers demand, not what the competitors do. (Lesonsky & Anderson 2001.)

2.1.4 Marketing mix

The marketing mix is composed of four variables: product, price, place (distribution), and promotion. To create an effective and useful marketing mix, decisions about each variable must be made in regard of the other three. Each must communicate the same message and correspond with the main marketing message. The product must be designed to fulfill the need of the selected market segment, the product price must be reasonable for the market, the distribution channels must be chosen in regard of delivering the product where it will be accessible by the target customers, and the promotion must support these variables and offer a solution to possible problems the customers may encounter. (About.com: Developing Your Marketing Mix 2013.)

Generally, from marketing point of view, any good, service or idea shaped to meet a customer's need or want is considered and regarded as a product. Products are developed and designed to be different from the competitors' product although they may attract the same customer target group and fulfill the same want or need. These differences are designed to correspond with the company image and corporate message, and to simply stand out from the competitors' products.
The pricing of a product must meet several requirements. The price must be competitive in regard to other similar product in the market, it also must communicate the message of the value of the product (expensive product are often perceived as luxury goods), and the price must cover the costs of production. The process of selecting the best price for a product, and how this process involves other marketing variables is shown in the following FIGURE 1.

![FIGURE 1: Finding the Right Price (SeoBook: How To Price 2010)](image)

The place variable in the marketing mix refers to the distribution channels, the means of delivering the product from the producer to the customer (FIGURE 2). Decisions about distribution channels also cover the choice of warehousing, inventory control and transportation. The type of market coverage is also determined in this section, defining the accessibility to the product for selected target customer group.

![FIGURE 2: Types of distribution channels. (Tutor2u: Distribution channels 2012)](image)
The fourth and last variable of the marketing mix is promotion. As promotion is considered how the company communicated information about the product to the customers. As the main means and tools of promotion are considered advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations. In the case of advertising and public relations, several media channels and platforms (TV, radio, print, internet, etc.) can be used to deliver the information to the customers.

2.2 Implementation and Control

At the implementation stage of marketing process, the marketing plan is executed in order to achieve the main goals and objectives. The product is launched and distributed, the promotion is delivering the information through the selected channels. At all times, the situation needs to be monitored, customer feedback and responses gathered continuously, measured, and evaluated so the product, price, distribution channels or promotion can be updated and adjusted to satisfy the customers and increase the sales. After some time, a thorough marketing research should be conducted to evaluate the success of the marketing plan and its separate parts. This information is valuable for future purposes of improving the products, customer services, and communication and distribution channels. Eventually, developing and delivering a whole new product will be demanded. The marketing process is ongoing at any given time and requires being adapted to new challenges to continuously meet and fulfill the wants and needs of customers.
3 VIRAL MARKETING

In this chapter, the author will discuss the details of viral marketing, conducting an online business, social media and their utilization for business purposes. Viral marketing is an emerging tool used for promotional and advertising purposes of a product or a service with minimum cost. It can be categorized as a special form of guerilla marketing (E-Commerce Wiki: Viral Marketing 2012) as it uses a similar tool – the word-of-mouth. However, in the context of e-commerce and internet, a new term has been put in use – the word-of-mouse. Viral marketing is not limited to, however mainly relies on social media platforms and on customers themselves in the means of advertising and spreading the word about the product of service.

The 'going viral' phenomenon starts with the original information being published on one or several social media platforms, and continues by being shared by the users of given social media platform. As it is a human nature to be a part of a social group, including the need to be heard and feel relevant, the users consequently share the information in order to promote themselves as well as the product or service and create conversation to socialize with other users of the social media platform (Elite Daily: This Video Will Have You Completely Rethink How You Conduct Yourself Online And In Person (Video) 2013). That is essentially the basic concept of social media; creating a natural, real and relevant conversation between people about a commonly shared interest. (Evans & Bratton 2008) The term “viral”, referring to epidemic spread of a virus among population, describes well the process of something – a video, picture, e-book, blog post – being transferred from one individual to others and therefore ‘going viral’. Using the social media platforms, the message can reach wider audience than basic advertising with greater effect on knowledge, attitude and behavior change, while generating an instant feedback.

The general public approaches and utilizes social media differently than a business or a company; without a plan and without a conscious purpose. The basic users of social media simply desire to socialize, start or maintain a conversation, and attract attention to themselves to feel relevant. The presence of a company in social media must be, on the other hand, well thought of, carefully planned and designed, and executed with a pur-
pose. One wrongly composed Facebook status or a tweet can cause confusion and negative response, which usually spreads much faster than a positive message. The act of containing the damage is consequently much more difficult and costly than preventing it by proper social media training, approving and monitoring. Continuously, the social media presence gains importance for businesses not only to promote a new product or a service, but also to strengthen the company image. “A firm also must decide on an effective message that breaks through the competitive clutter of the many competing ads vying for the viewer’s attention, while simultaneously reinforcing a brand message in a quick and easy manner.” (Mohr 2001.)

There are several fundamental differences between the traditional markets and classical channels, and the social media environment. When entering the social media market for the first time, the marketers must adapt and adjust their approach to advertising, PR, and marketing in general as the social media communication operates of different principles (Evans & Bratton 2008). While the traditional communication is one-way, from the company to the customers, the world of social media is based on interaction, immediate response, subjectivity and selection. Instead of simply forming a message, delivering it to the customers by chosen channels and then measuring its effectiveness, the company needs to listen to the customers first, interact with them, learn from what they share and then form the message based on the obtained data. Also, when using the social media channels, the effectiveness can be measured continuously, and the conversation can be adjusted and modified during the campaign based on the immediate responses. (Evans & Bratton 2008.)

It is the possibility of getting an instant feedback at any given time, and that makes social media so valuable to marketers. Even more so because the users of social media platforms are often unaware that their likes, shares and comments have in fact a feedback value to the companies. The usual feedback form sent via e-mail or filled as a questionnaire on the street can cause a struggle or even a negative reaction from the respondent, as it may be considered intrusive or a waste of time. However, in the case of social media, the customers give feedback as a part of joining a conversation that is appealing to them and in that case they are much more likely to express themselves in a more natural and genuine way. Also, marketers can easily analyze where online is the conversation actually taking place (e.g. with the use of search engines). Having a Face-
book page, webpage and a blog in no way means that all the customers will gather around these platforms and the conversation will take place there. Often, the online places to go to interact with the customers and influence them is discussion forums, web pages and blogs related to the topic and field of business.

3.1 Main social media platforms

Each social media platform works differently, creates different ways of communicating, attracts different kinds of users, and needs to be approached regarding those various different features and styles. Businesses and marketers need to learn how to use each platform optimally to enjoy the benefits of its full potential. Choosing the best platform(s) for given company and its products or services can be vital for the future and success of the given product or service, and in consequence of the company itself. The following social media platforms are the most used for business purposes based on their different forms and ways of use by combining various features (audio, video, text) while supporting the effectiveness of the other platforms when used correctly.

3.1.1 Facebook

Facebook is one of the most popular social media platforms used both privately and for business purposes. The usability and suitability of Facebook for businesses depends on the corporate image and philosophy as well as the products and/or services the company provides to its customers.

Businesses can use Facebook as a centre-point of their social media presence due to the utilization of messages, both short and longer, photographs/pictures and videos. Facebook is an optimal platform for announcing and hosting competitions, new products and services releases, but also for crisis management.

Naturally, as with any other marketing and PR tool, also Facebook presence needs planning and set of rules for a company to follow to use the platform to its full potential. The frequency and topics of posts should be established beforehand, the tone and lan-
guage of the posts, the approach to the customers, and the policy for dealing with ques-
tions and complaints.

A 'call to action' should be a part of every post, encouraging the customers to interact
and share their ideas and opinions. Their activity on the business's Facebook wall is
visible to all their friends and therefore providing additional exposure of the company to
larger audience. (Paper Li Community: Facebook For Business - 10 Do's and Don'ts
2012.)

3.1.2 Youtube

Youtube is a platform for watching and uploading/sharing videos. The content is both
business and user created. Youtube has over 1 billion unique visitors per month, over 4
billion hours of video are watched per month, and 72 hours of video are uploaded to
Youtube every minute. (Youtube: Statistics 2013.)

Youtube is an ideal platform for businesses with an audio-visual message to share,
however, not exclusively. Practically, any company can produce a video material of
decent quality representing the product, service, the company or even the internal envi-
ronment of the company to attract new customers and also possibly new employees.

As for other platforms, also for Youtube presence a company should have a plan and
policy. However, that is important mainly if Youtube is used as the main communica-
tion channel, not as much when Youtube is used as additional tool for exclusive and
irregular content.

3.1.3 Twitter

The main feature of Twitter is sharing short messages while using the hashtag (#) and
handle (@) symbols to optimize the search for topics and persons. The number of char-
acters in one tweet is limited to 140, which makes forming a relevant message challeng-
ing. Sharing a picture via Twitter is also possible and mainly used in connection with Instagram.

For businesses, usually the main use of Twitter is to share Facebook, blog post or web page links to reach wider audience. A company should have plan and policy how to compose a tweet, how often to tweet, and what topics to tweet about.

3.1.4 Blog

A blog is the best platform for delivering longer stories, better than Facebook for these means and purposes. It provides space for lengthy text, with the additional possibility to include pictures and videos anywhere in the text. Also, a blog is usually chosen as more personal and approachable than web page. The 'voice' of blog is usually personal, open and casual.

Posts for company blogs are usually written by a number of employees and occasionally by external guest bloggers to attract new readers and to 'freshen up' the style of the blog posts. The topics discussed in posts can vary widely - from company news, product or service information (e.g. product or service details and specifics), product trials, public statements and announcements to event reports, Q&A's, specialists' opinions to information about crises and emergencies.

Before a company launches a blog, a thorough plan for posts, topics and frequency should be formed. The main fields and themes should be selected and subgroups of topics appointed. Posts should be regular with each theme and topic having a set time spot.

3.2 Examples of viral phenomenon

With the rise of the social media and the utilization of various platforms by general public, the true potential in user-generated content became obvious. Hand-in-hand with professional equipment becoming affordable (e.g. recording hardware and software, DSLR cameras for photography and video), artists found a direct channel for presenting
their creations straight to the audience, without the need for classical media (radio, TV, print), whether those would be comedians and musicians on Youtube, or photographers and painters on DeviantArt. This has changed and reformed the way of advertising and promoting as the attention of the customers turned from classical media channels to online media and social media platforms. This is forcing the companies to also relocate to online media and update or reform the ways they approach their customers while allowing the customers to approach them in much more interactive and open manner. The following examples of viral phenomenon were chosen based on their nature and business usability, and the platforms they were published on being the main platforms used by businesses (chapter 3.1). These examples are randomly selected and the aim is to show the potential of given platforms and media for businesses to carry a message, advertise, attract attention, and create awareness of the products or services.

3.2.1 Youtube videos

A viral video usually has humorous, interesting, appealing or shocking content and essentially becomes popular through the process of sharing on various social platforms – video websites, social media and email. (Mashable: Viral Video 2013.)

A fan-made content related to video games, e.g. fan-made videos, cover versions of game songs, has been gaining popularity through Youtube. On November 29\textsuperscript{th}, 2012, an unknown artist, a young girl from Mexico with a nick name Malukah, published a cover song of a main theme from a popular video game The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim and reached 9.6 million views since the video was uploaded on November 29\textsuperscript{th}, 2011 (Youtube: The Dragonborn Comes – Skyrim Bard Song and Main Theme Female Cover 2012.) The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim game sold 10 million copies generating estimated 464 million Euro (Wikipedia: The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim - Sales 2013) within the first month after its release. Currently Malukah's channel has close to 188 561 subscribers and 21.2 million total video views (Youtube: Malukah Youtube channel 2013.) The popularity of the video among the viewers reached as far as to Jeremy Soule, the composer of the original The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim Soundtrack, providing Malukah with various job offers in given field.
The popularity of humorous user-generated content is well shown by 48.5 million views of a “How to trick people into thinking you’re good looking” video (Youtube: How to trick people into thinking you’re good looking 2010) by Jenna Marbles, nowadays a popular Youtube personality. Popularity of this video started a series of weekly videos about various social topics. The average number of views of a Jenna Marbles’ video is 6 million. To the date, Jenna Marbles Youtube channel has over 8.6 million subscribers and over one billion of total video views (Youtube: Jenna Marbles Youtube channel 2013). "Ms. Mourey would not disclose any financial details, but industry experts estimate that a star at Jenna Marbles’s level could make a very comfortable six figures from advertising revenues..." (NY Times: The Woman With 1 Billion Clicks, Jenna Marbles 2013.)

Originality was the main feature of “Five people, one guitar” Youtube video created by Walk off the Earth band featuring Sarah Blackwood. Video titled “Somebody I Used to Know – Walk off the Earth (Gotye – cover)” reached almost 145 million views since it was published on January 5th, 2012 (Youtube: Somebody That I Used to Know - Walk off the Earth (Gotye - Cover) 2013). Living room settings and average video quality did not in any way diminish the originality of the idea and quality of the performance. Walk off the Earth was a fairly unknown band until they posted the “Five people, one guitar” video on Youtube. Currently, they have almost 1.3 million Youtube subscribers and over 330 million video views in total (Youtube: Walk off the Earth Youtube channel 2013). At the end of March 2013, they went on a European tour.

A viral video phenomenon was the Kony 2012 video by Invisible Children, Inc. published on Youtube, Vimeo and own web page on March 5th, 2012, reaching more than 96 million views on Youtube (Youtube: Kony 2012 2012) and 18.4 million views on Vimeo (Vimeo: Kony 2012 2012) to the date. The Kony 2012 was created by a non-governmental charity organization Invisible Children, Inc. to inform the public about a cult and militia leader, fugitive Joseph Kony, in order to encourage the public to create pressure on the U.S. government to have Joseph Kony arrested. The viral spread of the video is the relevant feature of this case. Whether the video was ordered and planted by the U.S. government or it was a truly a non-governmental move of a charity organization is irrelevant to this thesis.
Online videos, carrying both audio and visual message, are becoming an important and useful tool for marketing and advertising in the business environment. “With platforms such as YouTube and other more subject specific publishers, the viral campaign is fast becoming part of our planet’s culture and with increasingly more sophisticated technology, including smart mobile telephone and social media conversations, the consumer is far more connected now than ever with brands.” (Viral Planet: The Importance of Viral Video Marketing and Current Marketing Trends 2012.)

3.2.2 Viral memes and photos

Another kind of viral medium is pictures and photos. The popularity of those is mainly visible on pages such as 4chan, Reddit and 9gag. “Rage comic” (Wikipedia: Rage comic 2013) is a way of delivering and sharing a message regarding personal, interpersonal, social, political, pop-cultural and stereotypical issues. Rage comic can include a simple-drawn, pre-made cartoon faces expressing a certain emotion (anger, happiness, confusion, disappointment, excitement etc.) or a screen-captured photo of a certain moment in a movie or a TV show. Usually, a quote from the given movie or a TV show is added to the screen-captured photo with additional text containing the message the user wishes to express making it original, personal, relevant and reliable. The messaging in rage comic usually uses sarcasm, irony and cynicism. While being established on separate platforms, memes are frequently shared on Facebook and used in everyday communication both online as well as in person, and the use of animated rage faces is occurring in videos, e.g. on Youtube.

The following picture (PICTURE 1) is an example of a meme originating in contemporary pop-culture. The origin of the screen-captured picture is a cartoon TV-show called Futurama. The expression of the main character of the show in this picture is uncertainty about the state of things and is often used for semi-philosophical and rhetorical questions.
Occasionally, a non-celebrity can gain publicity and popularity through rage comics, e.g. an American artistic gymnast and 2012 Olympic silver medallist McKayla Maroney became famous for her expression of dissatisfaction when accepting the silver medal.

The following picture (PICTURE 2) of McKayla Maroney is the original photography taken during the ceremony.

PICTURE 2. "McKayla Maroney is not impressed". A photo of 2012 Olympic medallist McKayla Maroney that went viral and became a meme. (Team USA, Getty Images 2012)
The popularity and reach of viral messages was clearly obvious during the official meeting between the U.S. President Barack Obama and the Olympic gymnast team, when the President posed for photos with McKayla Maroney mimicking her now-famous “McKayla Maroney is not impressed” expression. The photo (PICTURE 3) was tweeted by the White House and went viral. (CBS News: McKayla Maroney-Obama "Not Impressed" Photo Spreads Fast 2012.)

![PICTURE 3. McKayla Maroney with the U.S. President Barack Obama mimicking her "not-impressed" expression. (CBS News 2012)](image)

3.2.3 Viral stories

It can be also a simple story going viral, not only a video or a picture, however a visualization of the message is usually a part of the story.

The current social media sharing and spreading through mobile phones was especially important for the Arab Spring in 2011. In a situation when conventional media and phone lines were shut down by the government, it was the data transfer allowing sharing information and messages via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. (Wikipedia: Arab Spring 2013.)

Also during situations such as the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011 or the Hurricane Sandy hitting parts of Caribbean and east coast of the U.S. in 2012, the social
media platforms, mainly Facebook, Twitter and Skype, turned out to be of major importance for spreading information, raising awareness and getting help and assistance in affected areas (Current: Made on the Internet: 11 Most Viral Stories of 2011 2011). This gives companies the opportunity to act and react to the occurring events in desired manner, e.g. by offering financial support or needed goods and therefore attracting positive attention and creating a buzz in the media.

3.2.4 E-books

Another way to deliver a message to the audience and create a viral buzz about it is by writing an e-book. “One of the most powerful forms of word-of-mouth content is the e-book.” (Scott 2008, 13). E-books creating a viral buzz are generally available to download for free. “E-books (as viral marketing tools) should always be free and should never have a registration requirement.” (Scott 2008, 14). The e-books are not considered a products or a service as they are provided for free and are not the actual product or service provided by the company. E-books are essentially a PR and marketing tools and need to be approached as such.

Choosing a relevant subject and author's own expertise regarding given field are vital for the success of an e-book. The chosen subject should provide a problem or a series of issues and consequently a solution or various options of dealing with the issue should be provided in a clear and easy form. Attracting the interest of bloggers, topic experts and other social media users relevant to the given topic is more important than a wide exposure in one-way media.

3.2.5 Online events

Online events are a new way for businesses how to utilize their Facebook and Google+ presence as mainly these two platforms provide the necessary tools. An online event on Facebook can be used to promote a launch of a new product or service, or announce and celebrate a milestone while attracting attention to the business. Via online events, the customers are presented with new exclusive information or any other possible service of
value (Gigaom: Marketing With Virtual Facebook Events: Yay or Nay? 2010). There are several ways how to make an online event appealing and interesting. The interactivity of the event is a vital feature together with providing the participants with exclusive content, interesting discussion topic and preferably a guest host, an expert of the chosen topic. An example of popular passive online event is the annual Earth Hour. The participants confirm their attendance by joining the Facebook event, however as the main point of the event is turning off all electronic devices, there is no actual online event or interaction.

Setting up an online event requires minimum budget and is time efficient, however there are several challenges to host a successful online event. One of the most important and most difficult goals to achieve in the world of social media is to encourage discussion. Maintaining the attention of customers is yet another task to succeed at. A company should send out regular updates to attract people to the event page, however doing so too frequently may cause negative reaction by making the event participants feel spammed. (Gigaom: Marketing With Virtual Facebook Events: Yay or Nay? 2010.)

Although online events are low cost regarding budget and time, a company aiming at holding a successful online event still needs to make an effort to prepare the event properly in order to make current customers interested and to attract new customers.
4 MARKETING OF RELATIONSHIP GAMES

This part of the paper will provide a closer look into the marketing of Relationship Games. When founded in 2010, Relationship Games established its marketing strategy and developed a marketing plan to follow in order to maintain the right direction of its marketing, advertising, and promotional efforts. The main mission of Relationship Games was established as becoming the world's leading social reality games provider, and the main goal to become the world's largest social reality game company. These would be achieved by focusing on social reality games distributed online through various social media platforms.

4.1 Situation analysis of Relationship Games

A proper analysis of target market, target audience, and competitors is as vital for the classical marketing plan as it is for the viral marketing plan. Based on the target audience and the way it uses the social media, the most effective campaign can be developed. Overall, the basic goal of Relationship Games' continuous marketing efforts is to raise awareness about the company to attract new customers to become world's largest social reality game company. Considering the company operates online, all the marketing and promotional focus is pointed towards social media platforms. Social media platforms are also where the customers are to be found and interacted with, and where the main competitors conduct their businesses.

PEST analysis provides information about the environment Relationship Games operates in and the possible effects and influences of the environment. SWOT analysis helps to determine in what position and situation is Relationship Games internally and in regard to its competitors.
4.1.1 PEST analysis

The PEST analysis, an analysis of an external macro-environment affecting all businesses and all companies, provides information about external factors which are beyond control of a company and generally can’t be influenced by the business. Development and changes in these four segments – political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological – can have various effects on the business and its working; effects both positive (new technologies, new markets) and negative (economic crisis, riots).

Relationship Games is based in Finland, Europe, where the political situation is fairly stable with a small chance for any sudden changes, along with the government supporting new innovative businesses. Despite the global economic crisis in 2008 and the financial crisis in EU, Finnish economy remained stable. The Finnish culture and social environment is progressive, innovative and open-minded, especially regarding new technologies, as well as their research, development and use. This socio-cultural environment suits well the company's culture as it is innovative, customer-driven and agile. Following FIGURE 3 shows all the main points found by the external macro-environmental analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLITICAL</th>
<th>ECONOMIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Stable political situation</td>
<td>• Stable and improving economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government supports new/small businesses and entrepreneurs</td>
<td>• Stable level of disposable income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unlikely for any relevant political and legislative changes</td>
<td>• Social media operate in global market</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIO-CULTURAL</th>
<th>TECHNOLOGICAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Growing significance of social media</td>
<td>• Constant development of portable devices (smart phones, pads)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasingly hectic lifestyle</td>
<td>• Increasing internet coverage by free Wi-Fi in public spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing rate of divorce and need for private solutions</td>
<td>• Development of social media platforms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*FIGURE 3. PEST analysis of Relationship Games.*

However, the customers are not based only in Finland, but generally all around the world. While the company is directly affected by the PEST factors in Finland, the customers are affected by PEST factors in their respective places of residence. These environments would be fairly impossible for Relationship Games to affect in any possible way.
4.1.2 SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis provides information about the internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) situation of the company. Such analysis can provide a large amount of data that may need to be narrowed down, selecting only factors relevant in given time, situation and context. If analyzed and used correctly, the SWOT analysis can help a company to highlight its strengths, correct its weaknesses, use the potential opportunities and avoid or minimize the threats.

Relationship Game has the advantage of agile processes, providing an original service, being the first mover in the Finnish market and having technological know-how, however, it has a low marketing and business expertise, and there is possibly no future for the business concept due to the lack of appeal and usability for the users. The main points of the internal and external company situation analysis are summarized in FIGURE 4.

![FIGURE 4. SWOT analysis of Relationship Games.](image-url)
4.2 Customer and market analyses

The target customer groups of Relationship Games are active social networks in different age and lifestyle groups of 18+ to 40 year old couples, active on the internet with a Western ideology (Relationship Games: Business Plan 2010). Given the nature of the service and the distribution channel, the target customer group needs to value their romantic relationship enough to invest time and effort into it, and be familiar and fond of social games and social media.

The main social media platform used by Relationship Games is Facebook. As of September 30th 2012, Facebook has 1,01 billion monthly active users (Tech Crunch: Facebook Announces Monthly Active Users 2012) of which 72% is an age group 18-44 year olds (Wikipedia: Facebook Users By Age 2012). The primary target audience of Relationship Games is couples of the age group 20-40 year olds. The overall average age of Facebook user is 40,5 year old. (Pingdom: Social Network Demographics in 2012 2012.)

Currently, there are close to 2,267 million Facebook users in Finland. The largest Finnish demographic present on Facebook is the age group 25-34 year olds with total of 563 880 users. 53% of Finnish Facebook users are female (Social Bakers: Facebook Statistics 2012). FIGURE 3 shows Relationship Games aims at combining three main features: the real world interactions, gaming and social media markets. (Relationship Games: Business Plan 2010.)

![FIGURE 3. The main three features Relationship Games aims at combining. Relationship Games. (Relationship Games Business Plan 2010)](image-url)
The five most popular Facebook games have crossed the number of 20 million monthly users. The FarmVille 2 has reached 43,5 million monthly users (Statista: Monthly active users of the most popular Facebook games 2013). The number of Facebook games users was 235 million on October 23rd 2012 (Tech Crunch: Zuckerberg: “Gaming On Facebook Isn’t Doing As Well As I’d Like” 2012). These numbers show the popularity of Facebook online games. In June 2011, the global video game market was valued at 48,8 billion Euro. (Wikipedia: Video game industry economics 2013.)

4.3 Main competitors and their social media presence

One group of main competitors of Relationship Games is providers of online social media games and games for mobile phones. The competition between Relationship Games and other online games is aimed at the user’s time spent online.

The other group of main competitors of Relationship Games is providers of similar online games and apps, whether those are related to already existing dating site or a brand new separate game.

Online search engine showed that a product or a service with non-interchangeable name (Kahnoodle, Tokii) attracts more attention and it is easier recognized and remembered. Choosing a unique name can “strategically distinguish the product from its competitors by conveying its unique positioning.” (Wikipedia: Product Naming - Principles 2013.)

There are several competitors to Relationship Games currently emerging on the market of online games for couples:

**Kahnoodle** is present on Facebook, Twitter, has a blog, a web page and one promotional video on Youtube. As of May 2013, Kahnoodle has 599 fans on Facebook, 1 285 followers on Twitter. They make posts on Facebook daily, send Tweets daily and post blog posts once a month. Facebook and blog posts are mainly related to relationships and advices. They don’t seem to have launched any major promotional viral campaign; however they seem to be paying attention to and maintaining to its virtual presence. (Kahnoodle 2013.)
**Duet** has a web page including promotional video via Vimeo and direction to App Store. The only other social media platform used by Duet is Twitter where Duet has 533 followers. Last Tweet is from August 17th, 2012. They don’t seem to be very active. (Duet 2013.)

**Tokii** has its main presence on web page, where all the services are provided. Tokii is also using Youtube, Pinterest and Facebook. They have 42 subscribers and almost 79 thousand total video views on Youtube. The most popular video has over 30 thousand views. They have 239 Followers on Pinterest. On Facebook, Tokii has 6 715 fans and posts are made daily. Tokii seems to be paying attention and maintaining to its virtual presence. (Tokii 2013.)

**Between* is a South Korean company providing an app for smart phones. It has a web page, Facebook profile, a Pinterest profile, and Twitter account in English and in Korean. On the web page, there is a link to App Store and promotional videos via Vimeo. The service is available for free. Between* has 194 Followers on Pinterest, 1 964 followers on English Twitter, 5 898 followers on Korean Twitter and over 52 thousand fans on Facebook. Facebook posts are irregular and mainly in Korean language. Also Tweets, both English and Korean, are irregular. Between* is mainly gaining publicity via Startup competitions and social media. (Between* 2013.)

**CoupleFire** has a web page with a promotional video via Youtube, and a sign-up form, Facebook and a blog. Their Facebook page has 150 fans and the last post was made in October 2012. Last blog post is from June 2012. CoupleFire doesn’t seem to be active. (CoupleFire 2013.)

**Love Pong** only seems to have a web page with register form and important information. However, they don’t seem to be present at any other platform. Also, due to the name of the service, the search is quite difficult. (Love Pong 2013.)
4.4 Relationship Games marketing mix

One of the cornerstones of marketing plan is defining the 4 P marketing mix – product, price, promotion and place. Identifying and specifying what is the product or service the company plans to provide for its customers, determining the price to communicate the position and value of the product in the market, deciding the means and channels of promotion, and clarifying where the customers can obtain the product or service.

4.4.1 Product

Relationship Games provides services in a form of an online social game for couples on Facebook. The aim of the service is to bring fun and excitement to a relationship by social gameplay, role-playing missions, quizzes, real-world surprises, real-world rewards, and turn-based missions.

4.4.2 Price

The basic game provided by Relationship Games is for free to create high market penetration. Revenue is generated by sales of virtual goods via micro transactions and affiliate sales based on 5-15% sales commission. Business-to-business transactions are focused on marketing and commercial messages and have market prices. (Relationship Games: Business Plan 2010.)

4.4.3 Promotion

The main promotional channels are social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, blog and a web page. The primary target audience is mainly present on these platforms. The main promotion happens on Facebook Relationship Games fan page and application page and it is also used for recruiting users to further promote the service.
4.4.4 Place

The Relationship Games service is accessible on Facebook via the Relationship Games application page. It is also available in a version for mobile phones however the main focus is on social media platforms. Overall, Relationship Games is present on Facebook app page, Facebook page, webpage, Twitter and a blog.
5 CAMPAIGN OUTLINE AND PROPOSALS

The following chapter presents various campaign proposals based on the information gathered about different forms of viral marketing and popular social media platforms, and the respective ways of using them. The most suitable campaigns were developed for the needs and purposes of Relationship Games with regard to budget and time-scale.

The main goal of the campaign is to attract and gain new fans on Relationship Games Facebook page. The campaign should raise awareness, form a positive attitude, and encourage the target audience to “like” Relationship Games Facebook page. The strategy how to achieve the goal is conducting a viral marketing campaign to reach the target audience and to get wide social media exposure. The tactics of achieving the objectives will be adjusted according to the medium chosen as best suitable for the means and purposes of Relationship Games. Evaluation of the selected and executed campaign would be done based on whether the goals were reached or not. The effective and ineffective parts of the campaign would be determined, and recommendations will be given for future purposes.

5.1 Video campaign proposal

It was showed earlier (chapter 3.1.2 and chapter 3.2.1) how popular Youtube videos are becoming and the exposure they can provide. Youtube is slowly becoming a medium channel of its own next to radio, television and cinema. Offering wide range of topics by numerous personalities, celebrities and companies, it is obvious Youtube is a platform with various possibilities. Given the nature of Relationship Games and its services, the spirit, goal and point of the game could be presented in a form of a romantic comedy -like animated video episodes.

The campaign and the message could be delivered by several videos on Youtube. The videos would be animated (using illustration or puppets) portraying and demonstrating various activities the players can do while playing Relationship Games missions. The
visual style would be similar to the graphical design of Relationship Games. The videos would be funny and entertaining underlining the enjoyable and funny part of the game. The costs of creating these videos could be lowered by involving art and media students.

5.2 E-book campaign proposal

In chapter 3.2.4, it was highlighted that the e-books are a tool of PR and marketing, promoting the author or a business by attracting the attention of other professionals of given field, and other bloggers. Given the founder and CEO of Relationship Games, Mari Parviainen, came up with the idea for Relationship Games based on her own life experience, she could utilize this experience and knowledge to write an e-book, approximately 1000 words long, about her story of creating and developing Relationship Games, starting with the personal events that led her to founding the company and her advices how to deal with similar personal situation, but also including various business issues and her approach to those issues.

Also, topic of women as entrepreneurs and in business world would be included as it remains a hot and interesting topic. The title should be related to Relationship Games and the chosen issues. The title should be interesting and the subheadings should explain the main point of the e-book. The e-book would be available for free download via link placed on the web page. The e-book would be mentioned in Facebook posts and Tweets, a blog post would be written about the book. Selected bloggers would be contacted directly and informed about the existence of the e-book.

5.3 A series of photos campaign proposal

A series of pictures or photographs would be created with a strong back story yet self-explanatory without actual text. A similar storyline and script as for the animated video episodes could be used for the series of pictures or photographs. These pictures or photographs could portray a couple in various stages of their relationship. Relationship Games would be introduced in the photos at the stage where the relationship obviously
needs an outside impulse. Following photos would show various activities while playing Relationship Games. The series of pictures or photos would be published on Facebook as a continuous story, while the exposure would be supported by tweets and a related blog post. The customers would be presented with the mission of Relationship Games in an entertaining and appealing form while new customers would be attracted.

5.4 A combination of various media campaign proposal

The exposure in online media would be increased by combining all previously mentioned forms of campaign through online media channels and platforms. A blog post could be composed around a short story (true or scripted), relevant and capable of attracting attention, including photos or pictures, and possibly a video. Photos can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, and video placed on Youtube, a blog post linked. Each medium can be directly linked and shared via other platforms. Creating a campaign consisting of several different media would require more effort, planning, and investment of time and resources than any of the separate campaigns.

5.5 An online event campaign proposal

A series of online events on Facebook would be arranged. Each event would have a different theme related to the date of the event, preferably it would be connected to a good cause to attract attention and increase participation, and would be relevant for couples and their relationships and the services provided by Relationship Games. The participants would be encouraged to ask questions and share their stories and opinions during the event chat. According to the theme, an expert guest speaker would participate in the group chat providing a professional opinion, ideas and help if requested. This guest speaker should be someone rather known in the given field. An example of such event could be: International Listening Awareness Month (March). During the online event, a discussion about the importance of listening and communicating in a relationship would take place. The participants would be encouraged to share their experiences, give tips and ideas. There would be an expert guest speaker – a therapist, a counselor, a relationship adviser etc. As part of the online event, a real life task would be suggested
for the participants to do, e.g. the couples or individuals could visit local retirement home and spend some time with the residents. This would create discussion about Relationship Games also outside of the platforms and would also be used as a positive PR creating the image of a company that cares about the well-being of all people.
The following chapter describes the process of planning the chosen campaign, why it was selected from the suggested themes, how it was executed, and analyzing the gathered data. At the end of this chapter, encountered problems and limitations are discussed as well as recommendations for future campaigns if Relationship Games decides to continue with online marketing campaigns of this kind.

Due to the low demand on time and budget, the online event proposal hosted on Facebook was chosen. Various themes and topics were discussed, e.g. 'Plant a Flower', 'Compliment a Stranger', 'Candlelight Dinner'. As the first online Facebook event was chosen the 'Candlelight Dinner on the Earth Hour 2013' and it was scheduled for Saturday, March 23rd 2013. Despite the original suggestions for the event to be interactive and based on an moderated discussion, to lower the time and budget requirements even more, the final form of the online event was passive and offline. The event was chosen to take place parallel with the Earth Hour global event, and therefore the participants took part in the event at home without electricity and so without internet. Consequently, there was no discussion during the time of the event, nor guest host.

6.1 Campaign planning

The topic or theme of the event needed to be chosen as interesting and intriguing, something customers would like to know more about and therefore participate in the discussion during the online event. A title of the event should be brief but provide a clear idea about the topic. At the beginning of the online event discussion, an exclusive content created in regard of the topic/theme specifically for the online event should be provided to 'kick-off' the discussion and set the tone of the discussion. The content could be a text or a short video (TSNN: Using Facebook Pages as an Online Event Platform 2011). The participants would be encouraged to take an active part in the event discussion by being offered an item or a service of value to a selected few most active participants.
During the time-frame chosen for the live online event, the selected representatives of the company and the guest speaker - a professional related to the topic of the event - hold and maintain the discussion, answering questions and providing relevant information to the participants. (Smart Insights: Using Facebook Events - An Example 2012.)

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the final form of the online event differed from the original interactive proposal to minimise the costs. After launching the event on Facebook including suitable cover picture and introduction text of the event, it would be tweeted about and a blog post would be published regarding the event.

6.2 Execution

The participants were encouraged to take part in the Earth Hour (Earth Hour 2013) by having a dinner with their spouse while turning off all the lights, computers, etc. By doing so, they would join a good cause to 'save our planet' and they would spend time with their spouse. Afterwards, to maintain the traffic and the interactive communication, the participants were encouraged to share their experience and several polls about the event were opened on the event page.

The event was opened on March 20th 2013 and on the same day three members of Relationship Games team invited all their Facebook friends to the event. The final number of invitations sent was 759.

Consequently, the event was promoted on other social media platforms: within the next three days, Relationship Games tweeted three times about the event; on Friday, March 22nd 2013, a blog post (Relationship Games Blog: Candlelight Dinner on the Earth Hour 2013) was published on the Relationship Games blog. This blog-post was shared via Twitter and Facebook. Furthermore, the event was shared in two Facebook groups. Relationship Games intended to purchase Facebook advertisement to promote the event, but an unexpected error on Facebook's part occurred and the advertisement was not published. Instead, a promotion of the blog post on Facebook was purchased.
6.3 Data

On March 20th 2013, when the event was opened, Relationship Games had 1000 page likes. As of May 5th 2013, Relationship Games Facebook page has 1 014 likes. Only 9 page likes were generated by the online event.

The Facebook tools for business profiles offer a simple way of tracking and measuring the results as the number of visitors can be easily seen with the View Insights tool. The Facebook advertisement promoting the blog post was viewed by 9 883 people. 76 views were organic, 38 views were viral and 9,769 views were paid. The active response included 45 page post likes, 17 link clicks, 9 page likes and two comments on page posts.

The first Facebook group, where the event was shared, had 118 members of which 82 members saw the post. The second group had 913 members, the number of views was not published, but there were 64 comments on the post.

On March 23rd 2013, there were 39 Facebook users 'going' to the event, 22 users 'maybe going', 56 users declined the invitation and 698 users did not respond either way. The number of invitations sent was 759.

There were two polls opened on the event page. The first poll was opened on March 22nd 2013 and there were altogether 5 votes. The second poll was opened on March 25th 2013 and there were no votes.

From those 39 participating Facebook users, only one posted a comment on the event wall. From those 56 Facebook users who declined the invitation, only two commented on the event wall explaining why they declined the invitation.

6.4 Campaign analysis and recommendations

In general, the success of an online event or the lack of it can be easily measured by a few key performance indicators of the event - the number of invitations sent and the percentage of attendees. The industry average is said to be 40% (Hubspot: How to
Measure and Get Even More Value from Your First Webinar 2011). Also, the number of new 'likes' on the company Facebook page is a relevant factor.

The percentage of attending people in regard to the number of invitations sent is 5,14%. The percentage of all invited people in regard to how many times the link to the event was seen is 7,68%. This is obviously a low outcome and can't be called a success. Despite the exposure and visibility, only 9 page likes were generated by the event.

There was minimum interaction on the event page prior the time the event took place and essentially no interaction after the event ended. Despite the encouragement in the event description for the attendees to share their experience afterwards, there was no participation. The event didn't manage to create the necessary buzz to become truly viral, therefore it failed to achieve the goal of attracting attention and new customers in the scale corresponding with the exposure.

The main limitation was eventually the internal communication and different approaches to the concept of chosen campaign. While the proposals were aiming at rather interactive online discussions supported by a guest host on the event chat, the final form of the online event could be described as 'offline'. The chosen form of the event was more closely corresponding with the general idea and execution of the services provided by Relationship Games. Also, due to the low frequency of the internal communication, only one campaign was successfully executed within the given time-frame of the thesis.

The problem with purchasing and publishing an advertisement on Facebook occurred unexpectedly and was dealt with in the best possible way considering given situation and set time-frame.

There were several decisions made about the final form and execution of the event that were most probably responsible for the lack of success of the event. For an online event held on Facebook to be successful, various features need to be considered and acknowledged. The most important of these features is included in the term 'online event' - it is supposed to be an interactive event held online based on the concept of discussion and group chat. This feature was obviously ignored as the Candlelight Dinner was essentially designed as offline event. This 'offline' factor was obviously corresponding with the
Earth Hour event and from this point of view the decision made sense. Still, the social media environment is based on interactivity, connectivity and communication; therefore taking these main cornerstones of social media out of the online event is contradicting by definition and can only lead to failure.

In the case Relationship Games decides to continue with the online event campaign, a long-term plan should be developed. The online events should be held regularly on monthly or bimonthly basis, with themes and topics relevant to the time of the year. The form of the events should be adjusted to the proposed concept (interactive online discussion with a guest speaker). Relationship Games could support these events by following blog posts summing up the topic and discussion of the event.

The event page should be opened 1-2 weeks prior the event date so people would have more time to join, share and invite others. Also, this time frame would provide enough time for successful advertisement and exposure of the event in case of any complications. Furthermore, additional blog posts, tweets and updates could be sent.

Naturally, Relationship Games could include other proposed campaigns in its future activities and combine them. An e-book about organizing online events, their pros and cons, do's and don'ts might be an interesting topic to read about for both business marketers as well as private persons.
7 CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this thesis was to develop and plan a viral marketing campaign to promote Relationship Games Ltd. and its services provided online. The campaign proposals were developed in regard of the services the company offers, the overall style and philosophy the company stands for and in consideration of the social media platforms used by Relationship Games to reach its customers.

The theoretical part of the thesis covered the classical marketing features of a company and its products and services with focus on social media, various social media platforms and their different uses and how to utilize the business presence in social media. Different examples of viral phenomena were discussed and used as background information for proposed viral marketing campaigns.

As mentioned in chapter 3.2 and chapter 6.2, social media environment is based on interactive, inter-connected communication. It can be also said that social media environment is highly unpredictable and unforgiving. A success with social media requires a lot of planning, however proper planning in no way automatically means a success.

Relationship Games needs to re-evaluate its approach to the concept of online events if the company plans to continue with the campaign. An even deeper research of the topic of online events and webinars might be necessary to improve the current concept of the online event held by Relationship Games. In a longer time-frame with larger budget, other proposed campaigns may turn out more suitable and effective than online events.
REFERENCES

http://marketing.about.com/od/marketingplanandstrategy/a/marketingmix.htm

http://marketing.about.com/od/marketingplanandstrategy/a/Marketing-Strategy-Vs-Marketing-Plan.htm

Read 14.11.2013
http://www.flexstudy.com/demo/demopdf/99037_1.pdf

Between*. 2013. Read 14.11.2013
http://appbetween.us/en/

2012. Read 20.1.2013

http://www.couplefire.com

20.1.2013

http://duet.me

http://en.ecommercewiki.info/marketing/viral_marketing

Earth Hour. Read 25.3.2013
http://www.earthhour.org/

Elite Daily: This Video Will Have You Completely Rethink How You Conduct Yourself Online And In Person (Video). Read 11.11.2013


Gigaom: Marketing With Virtual Facebook Events: Yay or Nay?. March 2010. Read 5.5.2013


http://www.kahnooodle.com


http://www.lovepong.com/


http://mashable.com/category/viral-video/


NY Times: The Woman With 1 Billion Clicks: Jenna Marbles. April 2013. Read 5.5.2013
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/14/fashion/jenna-marbles.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&

http://www.slideshare.net/osmawati/marketing-process-overview

Paper Li Community: Facebook For Business - 10 Do's and Don'ts. August 2012. Read 5.5.2013


http://blog.relationship-games.com/2013/03/22/candlelight-dinner-on-the-earth-hour-2013/

http://www.davidmeermanscott.com/free-stuff/free-ebooks/
http://www.seobook.com/pricing

Smart Insights: Using Facebook Events - An Example. February 2012. Read 5.5.2013
http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/facebook-marketing/using-facebook-events-an-example/

http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/page-2/


http://www.teamusa.org/~media/TeamUSA/Gymnastics/Maroney_McKayla_vaultfinal_300x375_2012.jpg

http://techcrunch.com/2012/10/23/facebook-announces-monthly-active-users-were-at-1-01-billion-as-of-september-30th/

Tech Crunch: Zuckerberg: "Gaming On Facebook Isn't Doing As Well As I'd Like". October 2012. Read 20.1.2013

Tokii. Read 14.11.2013
http://www.tokii.com

TSNN: Using Facebook Pages as an Online Event Platform. February 2011. Read 5.5.2013

http://www.tutor2u.net/business/marketing/distribution_channel_strategy.asp

Vimeo: Kony 2012. February 2012. Read on 5.5.2013
http://vimeo.com/37119711

http://www.viralplanet.co.uk/the-importance-of-viral-video-marketing-and-current-marketing-trends/

WeKnowMemes. Not Sure If I Don't Care About Anything Or... (2012), Accessed 20.1.2013
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring#Social_media_and_the_Arab_Spring


http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Product_naming#Principles

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rage_comic

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Elder_Scrolls_V:_Skyrim#Sales

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game_industry#Economics_2

Youtube: How to trick people into thinking you’re good looking. Added by Jenna Marbles in July 2010. Read 20.1.2013
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYpwAtnywTk&feature=youtu.be

Youtube: Jenna Marbles Youtube channel. February 2010. Read 5.5.2013
http://www.youtube.com/user/JennaMarbles

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc&feature=youtu.be

http://www.youtube.com/user/malufenix

Youtube: Somebody That I Used to Know - Walk off the Earth (Gotye - Cover). Added by Walk Off The Earth in January 2012. Read 20.1.2013
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9NF2edxy-M&feature=youtu.be

Youtube: Statistics. 2013. Read 5.5.2013

Youtube: The Dragonborn Comes – Skyrim Bard Song and Main Theme Female Cover. Added by Malukah in November 2011. Read 20.1.2013
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4z9TdDCWN7g&feature=youtu.be

http://www.youtube.com/user/walkofftheearth