Establishing a Digital Marketing Strategy for a Company

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The main purpose of this study is to examine and characterize key digital marketing elements. The second goal is to establish a digital marketing strategy for a company. Digital marketing plays a significant role in the business development and growth of a company by bringing opportunities of exposure, increase in sales and traffic generation. It is highly important to analyze, define and apply digital marketing elements, platforms, and tactics to achieve business goals.

The theoretical part of this thesis describes digital marketing elements and their power while establishing a digital marketing strategy. Qualitative and desk research studies were conducted by gathering theory and data from the sources published online. All information was critically analyzed and used as a source for the establishment of a digital marketing strategy for a company.

This research concentrates on the essential components of digital marketing, analysing their importance and applicability in relation to a company's digital marketing strategy. On the other hand, the development phase seeks to formulate a comprehensive digital marketing strategy that can be adopted by any company.
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Abbreviations and special terms

SEO  Search Engine Optimization
SEM  Search Engine Marketing
KPI  Key Performance Indicators
CTA  Call to Action
SERPs  Search Engine Results Pages
PPC  Pay-per-Click
CPC  Cost-per-Click
CPM  Cost-per-thousand impressions
CM  Content Marketing
KPIs  Key Performance Indicators
ROI  Return on Investment
1 Preliminary section

1.1 Overview of the digital marketing field

The utilization of technology in marketing has been transformed by digital marketing, altering the strategies employed by brands and businesses. The integration of digital platforms into marketing practices and daily routines has led to a rise in the prominence and effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 197.)

Digital marketing is a method of promoting products and services online. It involves using different tools and strategies to advertise through the internet. Apart from traditional marketing, digital marketing consists of a wide range of elements, such as search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, email marketing, social media marketing, analytics and data, and more. These elements enhance business development to a much higher level than traditional marketing. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 196.)

Nowadays, digital marketing strategies are extremely effective in reaching a cross-national and global audience. Global reach, cost-effectiveness, targeted advertising, and other factors help companies increase brand awareness, customer interest, satisfaction in product or service. Digital marketing channels can easily work independently; however, there are many cases when it is better to use several tactics and strategies to achieve better results among other businesses, engage more potential leads and turn them into long-term clients. (Kotler et al. 2020, 6.)

The aim of digital marketing is to engage with potential customers online, where they typically spend a significant amount of time shopping, socializing, seeking information, and engaging with online content. (Kotler et al. 2020, 7.)

1.2 Aim of the thesis
According to Kotler et al. (2020), digital marketing has become an unseparable part of the Marketing field. Therefore, this thesis is aimed at conducting a deeper investigation into digital marketing.

An analysis and definition of digital marketing tools is the primary purpose of this thesis, as is finding guidelines for creating a digital marketing plan. Additionally, a secondary follow-up goal is to analyze which online marketing platforms are most effective and are generic for any company to utilize.

Research questions:
1. What are the essential components of digital marketing?
2. How can a company establish a digital marketing strategy?

1.3 Framework of the thesis

This study primarily adopts a theoretical perspective and structured as follows. First, this thesis begins with an introduction chapter, including the background part that presents the digital marketing overview, the aim of the thesis and the outline. The second chapter describes key components of digital marketing, including the background information about the digital marketing field, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, influencer, content, and email marketing.

The following sections of this thesis explore the fundamental principles of search engine optimization (SEO) and provide insights into effective optimization techniques. Similarly, a comprehensive analysis is conducted on optimizing Google Ads. Additionally, this section explores the possibilities for improving conversion rates and approaches for their implementation. The methodology section describes the main sources that were utilised while conducting this research.

The pivotal and highly significant section of this thesis is the fifth chapter titled "Establishing a digital marketing strategy for a company." This chapter presents a comprehensive and systematic plan for implementing a digital marketing strategy. Importantly, this strategy framework has the potential to be applicable across various companies, providing a step-by-step guide for implementation.
2 Key elements of digital marketing

This chapter gives an overview on the digital marketing domain in general. This chapter highlights the key elements and is complemented by figures that illustrate the significance, popularity, and relevance of SEO, social media marketing, email marketing, analytics and data, affiliate marketing, conversion rate optimization and Google Ads. Key elements of digital marketing are illustrated in Figure 1.

The first subchapter gives an overview of the digital marketing field. Then, the following four subchapters describes key concepts and principle of work of TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, influencer, content, email marketing and how they work together in a digital marketing strategy.

After that, next chapter is supplemented by the concepts and the principles of Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Google Ads and its popularity, conversion rate optimization and Google analytics and data. These components facilitate a company in augmenting lead generation, enhancing website traffic, bolstering brand recognition, and evaluating both limitations and achievements to attain superior business outcomes.

Figure 1. overviews key elements of digital marketing that are described in this research. The Figure 1. Illustrates the most important elements to focus on while establishing a digital marketing strategy.
Figure 1. Key elements of digital marketing of this research.

Figure 1. gives a visual overview of the second chapter of this research, describing the key elements of digital marketing. Figure 1 includes digital marketing SEO and Google Analytics, social media marketing (SMM), implementation and control, and digital marketing.

2.1 Channels, tactics, and elements of digital marketing

Digital marketing stands for promotion of product or service online. As technology advances, various digital marketing techniques are becoming more popular, such as search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, email marketing, and social media marketing. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 196.)

E-commerce has grown tremendously as a result of digitalization and globalization. Businesses may better understand their consumers, enhance their goods, increase their distribution channels, and employ digital marketing (e-marketing or Internet marketing) by utilizing channels such as search engine marketing, online advertising, and other kinds of digital marketing. Without a doubt, e-commerce is directly tied to digital marketing since it allows for selling
and trading online. All online transactions, such as online catalog searches and answers to online catalog searches, are included. (Chaffey 2020, 13.)

Online marketing components are illustrated in Figure 2. Specifically, this research covers SEO, email marketing, analytics and data, social media marketing, and blogs.

![Figure 2. Online marketing. (Chaffey 2020,13).](image)

The responsibility of digital marketers is to enhance brand awareness and generate leads through both paid and unpaid digital mediums accessible to organizations. These mediums include social media, the company’s website, search engines, email, advertising, and the corporate blog. Key performance indicators (KPIs) can be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of each channel. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 197.)

### 2.1.1 TikTok

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the TikTok social media platform, elucidating its escalating prominence, potential business prospects for
companies, and empirical insights regarding the global user base of TikTok. TikTok is a unique social media platform that permits users to share concise, authentic, and relevant videos accompanied by subtitles and visually engaging overlays that align with current trends and music. (Alaniz, 2022.)

Presently, TikTok boasts a user base of one billion active individuals, distributed across a vast expanse of 154 countries. Furthermore, by the third quarter of 2022, TikTok had over 1.5 billion monthly active users. Roughly 29% of TikTok downloaders utilize the app on a regular basis, making TikTok the world’s second-most-engaged user base. (Tower 2022.)

Figure 3. shows the number of TikTok users (in million) in different countries. According to Figure 3, TikTok is the most engaging and popular among United States, Indonesia, Brazil and Russia.

Figure 3. Countries’ largest TikTok user base in the year 2022 (Statista 2022).
Many companies acquaint TikTok for achieving success and business growth. TikTok provides a special opportunity to reach and connect with diverse audiences that other platforms may not offer. With its creative features, innovations, and wide exposure, TikTok allows businesses to engage with clients on a whole new level and achieve better results. (Alaniz 2022.)

Companies are able to pick content distribution methods on TikTok in order to reach a larger audience and enhance their brand identification. TikTok provides a hashtag approach for increasing brand exposure. This enables content creators to capitalize on hot trends and increase the reach of their posts. This implies that by tailoring their content to popular trends, businesses or brands may greatly improve the number of views for their material. (Alaniz 2022.)

Positioning a company's brand as easily connectable to customers is crucial for building brand awareness and authenticity among the target audience. TikTok, a social media platform, can help companies reach its target audience quickly, irrespective of demographics and geographic location, thereby benefiting the brand. (Alaniz 2022.)

Moreover, TikTok allows businesses to increase organic traffic without incurring high costs. TikTok is a very cost-effective platform to grow a business and build brand awareness. (Alaniz 2022.)

2.1.2 Social media marketing on Facebook

Facebook is considered one of the world’s largest online social network. Since 2021, Facebook has been rebranded from Facebook to Meta.

For businesses, Facebook is an appealing platform with free and paid advertising. There are other advantages, such as the ability to communicate with people. Facebook is available for free, and it is easy to do marketing through this social media platform. (Piranda et al. 2022.)
Furthermore, Facebook Marketplace is a popular digital marketing solution to purchase and sell things from the app. Advertising with aesthetically appealing packaging, promotions, retail sales magazines, and product promotion are all ways to do this. (Piranda, et al. 2022.)

Originally, facebook advertising is designed to help business reach the right audience with the right messages. The Facebook ad is created considering the location, demographics, interests and behaviours of the target audience. Therefore, the ad is visible in the News Feed of Facebook’s users. (Facebook.com)

Facebook has a lot of advantages. First of all, it provides a low-cost marketing strategy, so any company can afford and integrate Facebook marketing. Furthermore, Facebook is quite popular and has a high engagement rate. While conducting a Facebook marketing campaign, it is easy to do the segmentation part, and it provides information functions. (Piranda, et al. 2022.)

To achieve success in Facebook marketing and advertising, it is crucial to effectively use social networks. Therefore, it will help to encourage users to engage more actively. (Puthussery 2020, 46-60.)

2.1.3 Instagram marketing

Nowadays, Instagram offers different types of paid ads. The assortment comprises an array of advertising formats, including photo, video, carousel, stories ads, and ads showcased within the Explore section. Companies can pick a photo or video and integrate them into the ad. There is also an opportunity to choose a post that was already shared previously. Subsequently, a company proceeds to configure the promotion by specifying the desired destination, target audience, budget allocation, and duration settings. Alternatively, a company may choose to utilize Instagram's automated options while creating the ad. (Davis 2021.)
Instagram provides three ways of ad purchasing and running. Advertisers are able to buy it through the Instagram app, which is the easiest way, or Ads Manager, which uses the same advertising tools as Facebook. Instagram Partners is another possibility. Through this, it is possible to find the proven experts who will help with the ad setup. (Davis 2021.)

The ads on Instagram should be posted regularly, and the engagement of content optimized by including a strong call to action (CTA). Additionally, the hashtags need to be tested regarding their efficiency. (Davis 2021.)

Figure 4. illustrates an advertising audience overview. The Instagram marketing tool gives an opportunity to create a targeted ad, reach a potential audience, gain followers, and turn them into customers.

![Figure 4. Instagram advertising audience overview. (Hootsuite 2022.)](image)

According to Figure 4, the overall potential audience reach of advertisements on Instagram is approximately 1.48 billion people, which, in turn, allows to make assumptions and forecasts on the Instagram advertising outreach for a company. (Hootsuite 2022.)

These indicators demonstrate the ongoing growth and advancement of Instagram. The platform proves to be a valuable advertising medium for businesses, offering a substantial reach and impressive rates of content
engagement, irrespective of gender, location, or demographic considerations. (Hootsuite 2022.)

2.1.4 Affiliate marketing

A social media influencer pertains to an individual who maintains an active presence across multiple social media platforms and commands a significant following, often numbering in the millions. These individuals serve as brand advocates and niche promoters. Credibility and specialization are two pivotal elements that distinguish an influencer. Initially, influencers garner high levels of engagement from their followers by delivering top-notch content. (Moriuchi 2019, 97.)

The benefit of using an influencer marketing technique is that the influencer expose a company’s brand to its audience through posts. However, the influence needs to be a “perfect fit” for a company’s brand image, vision and mission, so influencer matches the brand. (Moriuchi 2019, 98.)

When embarking on an influencer marketing campaign, it is essential to take into account four key factors. The first factor is expertise, which involves assessing the relevance and appropriateness of both the influencer and the content they offer. The second factor is the potential audience reach, which determines the appropriate channels. Thirdly, demographics is about the correspondence of the brand’s buyer persona with the target audience. Lastly, notoriety refers to the admiration and condemnation of the influencer, no matter if the audience is 50% haters, and 50% lovers. (Moriuchi 2019, 99.)

Figure 5 describes the leading goals of business-to-consumer (B2C) influencer marketing in Europe as of April 2021. The survey findings indicate that 85% of the participants identified increasing brand awareness as the primary objective of their influencer marketing initiatives. Driving sales was a goal for 66% of marketers, while reaching a new target audience was a priority for only 51% of the surveyed brands. (Statista 2022.)
Figure 5. Leading goals of B2C influencer marketing in Europe in April 2021. (Statista 2022.)

Overall, influencer marketing allows companies to reach the desired goals, such as brand awareness, the increase of sales, or new customers acquisition. From a company’s perspective, attracting influencers leads to driving more traffic to the website. Therefore, influencer marketing helps to build a trust bridge between the customer and a brand. It can be related to the psychological aspect, when the customers sees that a brand is endorsed by a powerful influencer they respect. In turn, this make customers believe that the brand they are interested in is reliable and trustworthy. (Moriuchi 2019, 100.)

2.1.5 Content marketing

Content marketing has revolutionized the manner in which companies engage in sales and communication with their intended audiences. It centers around delivering valuable information and ideas to consumers through a range of
content formats, such as publications, images, videos, and more. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 197-198.)

In essence, the main target of content marketing is to create and promote content to increase brand awareness, generate traffic growth, and lead generation. In this regard, eBooks and blog posts are the most popular channels for content marketing. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 197-198.)

Figure 6. illustrates the four main content marketing stages, including strategic plan, positioning, value proposition, and business case.

First of all, a company should have a strategic plan describing the desired target audience, how to deliver content and how to achieve and measure the results. Next, the positioning part should be identified. The value proposition needs to be done in a detailed way. The value proposition is an important part, which is related to the value of the content a company provides to a target audience. In the end, it is crucial to identify how content marketing influences business goals (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Content marketing Funnel. (Semrush 2021.)

Content marketing efforts can be effectively analyzed by assessing relevant metrics that vary depending on the format and media channels used. To monitor content performance throughout the customer journey, social listening and analytics tools can be employed. The five categories of metrics that
measure the effectiveness of content are visibility, relatability, searchability, actionability, and shareability. Visibility metrics assess whether the content is reaching the target audience. Relatability metrics gauge its appeal to the audience. Searchability metrics evaluate whether the content is easily discoverable through search engines. Actionability metrics measure the audience's response to the content, and shareability metrics assess the extent to which the content is being shared by the audience. (Kartajaya et al., 2016, 121.)

There is a content marketing framework, also known as the content marketing funnel. As content marketing has grown in popularity among marketers, it has become apparent that a structured approach is needed to guide the efforts. To guide customers through the purchasing process and establish long-lasting relationships by providing them with useful and relevant content, the content marketing funnel serves as a framework that begins with awareness and concludes with a purchase. (Kartajaya et al. 2016, 121.)

### 2.2 Utilization of email marketing in digital marketing

Email marketing has been evolving during this decade. Email is a place where customers receive companies updates, special offers, and other benefits. Companies tend to benefit from email marketing campaigns. It allows to grow a company’s brand and business by using it as a communication channel with a company’s target audience. (Gunelius 2018, 14.)

Software as a service (SaaS) products make email marketing affordable and easy to use. The main advantages are that email marketing has 24/7 access, low monthly fees, and easy-to-use tools. Each company is able to build its own client-based email list from a website, create professional-looking email campaigns, and send these messages to the target audience at specific times. (Gunelius 2018, 15.)

Email marketing is considered an affordable element of digital marketing. This means that a company can launch an email marketing campaign at low cost
considering the number of emails sent a month and the quantity of subscribers on the list. (Gunelius 2018, 16.)

Despite the fact that email marketing is considered an effective and measurable type of promotion of a company’s business online, it allows to customize and personalize a company’s email messages, which in turn, increases click through rates. Personalization allows to add a recipient’s name, or the greeting within the body of the message, such as “Dear (name)” to the email marketing message. However, personalization is workable and applicable only in the cases where a company’s list contains accurate recipient names. (Gunelius 2018, 17.)

Moreover, email marketing is a time-saving tool. There is an opportunity to create email automation sequence and integrate email marketing with a company’s website or Google Analytics. Therefore, thank-you messages, confirmations, offers, and other matters can be set up beforehand and run by themselves at specific times. (Gunelius 2018, 18.)

2.3 Search engine optimization overview

Search Engine Optimization with abbreviation of (SEO) utilizes two techniques to enhance a company's website visibility. On-page SEO plays a crucial role in Elevating posts to the forefront of search engine results, while off-page optimization pertains to actions taken outside the website to improve search ranking. (Dodson 2016, 7-21.)

The first step of the SEO process is to set goals (SEO advantages, set objectives), optimize on-page, optimize off-page, and evaluate (analysis tools, performance, and evaluation). The most typical objectives while using the SEO for business growth are market leadership, competitive advantage, visibility, conversions, reputation, and prestige. (Dodson 2016, 7-21.)

Obviously, it is possible to achieve success without purposefully implementing this process on every single post; however, if a company makes it a necessity to implement these on-page search engine optimization strategies on every single post, it will experience much greater consistency. An important part of the
on-page improvement process is to include those elements that are directly related to the site's keywords, including heading names and subheadings. (Guddu & Raj 2020.)

Off-page search engine optimization focuses on the influence of website's search engine rankings, specifically those that are external to the website itself. Off-page optimization can be broadly categorized into two key areas: the site's history and its outbound links. (Guddu & Raj 2020.)

An important term or phrase that pertains to the material on a website is referred to as a keyword. A search keyword is a phrase that people frequently use to locate a company on search engines. Companies must pick the keywords based on a thorough understanding of what their consumers are looking for in their searches. (Dodson 2016, 8.)

Search engine optimization depends on Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). Paid advertisements often take up 30% of a result page's space at the top, leaving the remaining 70% for organic search results. (Dodson 2016, 8.)

Pay-per-click advertising is one way to promote a business' website using search engine marketing (SEM). In terms of advertising mode, one can either choose pay-per-click (PPC), cost-per-click (CPC), or cost-per-thousand impressions (CPM). The search engine marketing industry offers several platforms, for instance Google Ad Words and Bing Ads. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 222-228.)

SEO enables companies to optimize a company's website to achieve higher organic results in search engine ranking. Google frequently updates its algorithm to present only relevant results. Some experts claim that SEO is no longer effective due to this perspective. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 222-228.)

The Google search engine prevents algorithm manipulation by filtering out websites that do not deserve to appear at the top of the search results. To generate a website's organic traffic, it is crucial to address technical issues related to non-text content interpretation, spidering and indexing, and matching content and queries. (Bala & Verma 2018, 330.)
The Search Engine Results Page is important for search engine optimization because it determines if the website appears on the results page. Users seem to be unlikely to locate a website that does not rank high in a search. Paid advertisements are displayed at the top of a results page. These adverts typically account for 30% of the page, with the remainder being organic search results. (Bala & Verma 2018, 329.)

A meta description is a hidden HTML tag that explains the page's content. Meta descriptions allow to influence the description of a website in search engines. It is not necessary to include meta description in the search engine results, and the meta keywords should be included. Although Google's website ranking algorithm is constantly changing, meta descriptions are still highly recommended. (Dodson 2016, 79.)

2.3.1 Google Ads

This subchapter is aimed to investigate Google Ads, its principle of work, Google AdWords and keywords. As being an online advertising platform, Google Ads allows companies to run advertising campaign with the high potential for achieving the desired business results. Google Ads helps to promote and advertise a company's business when searchers enter relevant keywords in search engine.

One of the first steps of launching a Google Ad is to set the main advertising goals. Figure 7. Gives an overview of these advertising goals. (Google.com, 2023.).
A Google AdWords tool organizes, suggests, and estimates various words and phrases' costs. Numerous factors influence prices, encompassing real-life occurrences and competitive companies that escalate the cost of keywords for their rivals. (Graham 2017, 2.)

The cost of keywords is established by Google AdWords, a program that takes click through rate into account. AdWords is used to create the adverts that appear in search results. A search engine user could use a keyword or phrase to discover pertinent webpages. (Dodson 2016, 21.)

Figure 8 shows how to add keywords while creating an ad via Google Ads.
Add keyword themes to match your ad to searches

Selected keyword themes:

+ New keyword theme

Suggested keyword themes:

+ Tesla + electric cars + Tesla Parts + All-Electric Cars
+ Fully Electric Cars + Ev Cars + Tesla Pricing
+ Electric Vehicles + Tesla Model S + Latest Electric Cars
+ Tesla Model X + solar & clean energy + tesla coupe
+ tesla minivan + tesla model s

Figure 8. Google Ads keywords (Google.com, 2023.)

Along with Figure 8, Figure 9 continues the main steps of creating the Google Ad. Next step consists of location settings where it is possible to choose the local areas or specific regions.

Up next, show your ad in the right places

- Advertise near an address
  - Advertise in specific postcodes, cities or regions
    - Finland

Add a postcode, city, county or country

Figure 9. Location settings of the Google Ad (Google.com, 2023.)
In AdWords, businesses can purchase sponsored results on Google's search result page that can be seen at the top or side of the page. During each search, Google holds an auction that compares the bid amount of a company with an automated quality score. Additionally, the keywords selected by advertisers can be swapped with those selected by Google if they are deemed similar enough. For an advertisement to be considered of high-quality, it should reflect a user's value or accurately anticipate the current context. (Graham 2017, 4.)

Google uses various factors such as the user's language, geographical location, and search history to offer different results. The importance of each criterion changes every time a query is made, making it impossible for users to determine which factors influenced their results. Consequently, each search creates a unique set of results that are influenced by several factors and cater to a specific audience. (Graham 2017, 4.)

2.4 Optimization of conversion rates through the use of Google Analytics and data analysis.

Conversion rate optimization refers to the process of enhancing a company's website conversion rate. A high conversion rate reflects the appeal of the company's product or business, prompting a response or purchase. Several factors affect conversion rates, such as the relevance and appeal of the offer to the target audience, ease of access to the offer, appropriate pricing, design, and comparison to competing offers. (Davis 2017, 199.)

The conversion rate of a company's website is determined by dividing the number of visitors who performed a specific action, such as making a purchase, by the total number of visitors to the site. (Dermatas 2017, 4.)
Conversion optimization studies consumer behavior to determine what motivates various market groups to respond to specific marketing aspects, and then advises businesses with potential marketing related changes. Conversion optimization is concerned with boosting the conversion of visitors into buyers. (Saleh & Shukairy 2011, 1-5.)

Conversion optimization requires a detailed market research and how the target market interacts with a company’s website. The process of conversion rate optimization starts when a visitor interacts with and react to a company’s website content. Conversion optimization allows a company to increase revenue. (Saleh & Shukairy 2011, 1-5.)

Google analytics and data is closely linked to conversion rate optimization. To start with, Google Analytics is a platform that eases the data analysis process for a company’s business. Google Analytics is used by companies to track the number of visitors without going beneath the data to understand the reasons why the numbers have changed. (Chaffey & Patron 2012, 42-54.)

A successful digital marketing strategy relies on reducing the inefficiencies that already exist in a company. Web analytics help to gain valuable insights on website traffic, customer activities and the efficiency of a company’s marketing campaigns. (Chaffey & Patron 2012, 42-54.)

An analysis of web analytics helps to optimize website functionality and conversions, analyze past performance, and optimize marketing campaign performance and conversions. Furthermore, it allows the identification of metrics that can be used in future marketing campaigns as well as budgeting and planning for upcoming company objectives. (Chaffey & Patron 2012, 42-54.)

Google Analytics dashboard is displayed in Figure 10. These metrics help to identify and analyse how well a company converts visitors: how much time do visitors spend on the website, or how many visitors does a company have per month. (Databox 2022.)
Google is a great source of reliable market analysis tools such as the Google Display Planner. Keyword Planner is a feature inside AdWords that predicts consumer search traffic for wider phrases. (Chaffey 2020, 8.)

3 Methodology

Research methodology and data collection are described in this chapter, which also outlines the structure of the research outline. The most appropriate and suitable research method I have chosen for this thesis paper is a desk research.

This research is focused on investigation of the key elements of digital marketing and, further, on what to be focused on while developing a digital marketing strategy for a company. The theoretical information was collected through the examination of statistics, scholarly articles, and digital books. The product of this research is to define and describe the necessary steps of establishing a digital marketing strategy for a company. After this, the conclusions and highlights of this research are summarized.
4 Establishing a digital marketing strategy for a company

This chapter is aimed at establishing a digital marketing strategy which fits any company. The first step is to set business goals that lead a company to a certain level of desired success. Secondly, it is highly important to create a customer profile, namely who the target audience is, where and how to reach them, etc. The next subchapter describes the importance and significance of the customer journey and how to create it in a right way.

After that, a company needs to create and apply a content strategy, which in turn, allows to achieve the target audience, gain followers or leads, and increase a company’s brand awareness. Correspondingly, it is highly important to define, analyze and choose the right marketing channels and tactics to achieve the desired results.

Finally, after all necessary actions are undertaken, the implementation and control take an important position in the digital marketing strategy development process. A company needs to follow the important metrics and control the process of digital marketing strategy.

Figure 11 illustrates the main steps while establishing a digital marketing strategy described in further subchapters.

Figure 11. Steps of a digital marketing strategy.

This illustration in Figure 11 helps to understand what steps are described in this research. One by one, the process starts with setting business goals, which ends with implementation and control of the whole workflow.
4.1 Set business goals

Overall, successful business performance depends on the selection of a target group. Once a company has selected its customer segments or focus customer group, it enables gathering qualitative data through group interaction. Potential clients’ opinions, perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes can steer a company in the right direction.

Goals are general statements of what a company is planning to achieve. It is crucial to integrate goals with a company’s vision and mission. For example, this involves mostly companies prone to setting goals such as profitability improvement, increased efficiency, a bigger market share, better customer service, and other potential company improvements. (Hafstrand 2009, 27.)

A company is able to assess the probability of goal achievement via goal criteria. First of all, the goal should be suitable and fit with the mission and vision of a company. Second, an acceptable goal always fits a company’s and employees’ values. Third, it is highly important when the goal is understandable and flexible, so the goal is formulated clearly and it is easy to adjust and adapt at any time. (Hafstrand 2009, 28.)

Business management is one of the most crucial activities for business people. Originally, there are three main types of goals. The first type is strategic goals. Initially, higher-level managers, for instance the board of directors, are in charge of strategic goals. Hence, this group is able to set goals for a company’s executives and then other lower-level managers to accomplish. (Gordon 2022.)

Tactical goals are developed by middle managers of a company. The functional employees are in charge of delivering the value proposition to customers and clients based on these goals and objectives. (Gordon 2022.)

The first stage of setting the business goal is the process where a certain strategy must be created and applied. For instance, the strategy can vary according to the mission, vision, core values, SWOT analysis, describing the
strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a company. After that it comes to set specific standards in a general company’s performance.

4.2 Create a customer profile

A company needs to be mindful of its perfect client and the issues they need to illuminate. After that the content based on demand coming from the clients’ needs and wants will lead to high engagement.

To begin with, a company has to characterize to whom they are showcasing, where the target gathering of people is and what channels are to apply in order to reach them. After that, it is exceedingly imperative to make a client avatar. This is a crucial and valuable part of identifying client aims, sources and channels of information, objectives, purchasing power and habits. Correspondingly, this gathered information about the ideal client will direct a company about the type of content to publish online with the purpose of reaching these clients. (McGruer 2020, 4.)

The Figure 12. shows the customer avatar creation template, where all crucial points should be taken into consideration. Objectives, principles, obstacles, problem areas, resources, concerns, position should be analyzed along with the demographics, habits etc. (McGruer 2020, 7.)
A customer profile consists of information on demographics, shopping habits, location, job function/description, product interests, and product aspect needs. For example, customer surveys, testimonials, and reviews provide a great way to gather data about why customers chose a particular company, their needs, their specific issues, or their motivations for purchasing. Search terms on social channels and Google searches can collect all kinds of information. A report on consumer behavior in a specific industry applied to customer avatar analysis. (McGruer 2020, 5.)

4.3 Create a customer journey

Once, a company identified its ideal customer, the customer journey and steps related to it need to be defined. Clients and companies benefit greatly from an ideal customer journey. Below, Figure 9. indicates four main stages in customer journey: attract, convert, close and delight. (McGruer 2020, 10.)
There are several important questions to be answered in order to create an ideal customer journey map. These are:

1. How does the audience find out about a company?
2. What make you customers choose a company in search result and visit the website?
3. Do you appear in Google search results proposing advice, solution or problem the ideal customer has?
4. How do customers perceive your competitors throughout their journey?
5. Are you visible for your audience?
6. What are the easiest ways customers can research and evaluate company’s products and services?

Customer journey maps must have a clear goal. After setting the goal, use the customer avatar to define customers' goals. Further, make a list of the touchpoints customers will have, from attraction stage to loyalty customer. (McGruer 2020, 11.)

The AIDA framework, consisting of attention, interest, desire, and action, is used and applied to describe the customer path in advertising and sales. It serves as a reminder for advertising and sales executives to design effective ads and pitches. The four A's framework is a customer funnel process where customers become aware of a brand, develop an attitude towards it, make a purchase decision, and then decide if they want to repeat the purchase. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 248-249.)

The number of customers and brands considered in each stage of the funnel declines. Companies can influence customer decision-making through
touchpoints, such as advertising, sales, and customer service. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 248-249.)

4.4 Establish a content strategy

This subchapter gives an overview on creating a content strategy for a company. When a company has set goals and they meet all necessary criteria, it is easier to establish a focused content strategy.

Originally, content is utilized as a tool to build industry authority and attract media publicity. The purpose of content marketing (CM) is to coordinate the creation, distribution, sharing, and publication of content through various channels. (Baker 2022.)

First of all, a company needs a thoughtful and high-level strategy which will lead to success. In case, the overall business strategy is clear and complex, this enables to focus on other related departments of a company. Identification of a brand’s uniqueness and speciality is a starting point and a key to a business success. A company needs to conduct a market research, to set comprehensive strategy and, to plan carefully in long-term and short-term perspective. (Jutkowitz 2017, 103.)

Since the strategy, goals and brand uniqueness are identified, it goes to creating a content strategy to promote business online through different channels and tactics. It is important to focus the content messages as much as possible to build stronger connection with an audience. (Jutkowitz 2017, 109.)

The user experience is highly influenced by the aesthetics and functionality of modern design opportunities. The content must convey visual value to the customer through the compelling quality pictures, videos and other visual content materials. (Jutkowitz 2017, 119.)
The content should always say something that uniquely entertains, inspires, and educates. Every single piece of content fits into a bigger image that a company’s brand is building. (Jutkowitz 2017, 126.)

The Figure 14. illustrates content ecosystem containing social, email, website, blog and other types of content.

![Content ecosystem](image)

Figure 14. Content ecosystem. (Crowl 2021.)

Different content ecosystems often contain familiar building blocks. However, a company has to define the right ecosystem for its brand by thinking about the experience a company wants to create for its customers. Content and its ecosystem are originally built around specific company’s goals. (Crowl 2021.)

In conclusion, companies should not only use ecosystem to drive strategic content creation but also to target content to specific stages of the customer journey, including conversion and retention.
SEO has a significant impact on the number of people who sees a company’s content. Creating content with the keywords in mind will ensure that the content gets exposure and interest. The keywords selected for a company’s website are essentially the terms and phrases that the audience uses when searching for solutions on the Internet. It is crucial to create content around these key terms. It enables to demonstrate the level of expertise in the industry and topics that are interesting for a company’s audience.

4.5 Choose channels and tactics

This subchapter determines popular digital marketing channels and tactics to use while developing a digital marketing strategy for a company. Once, a company created a desired customer avatar, set business goals and created a certain content strategy, it is crucial to choose right and appropriate channels and tactics.

First of all, a company should understand where it’s customer is, according to the customer journey path (Figure 12.). It is important to identify, whether the client is a stranger, or loyal customer, etc. Creating a customer avatar helps in identification of client’s needs and wants and, for instance, what social media channel they use more frequently.

To start with, any company needs a website developed specifically according to the business field, goals, mission and vision of this company. Therefore, SEO is a powerful tactic that helps to optimize a company’s website ranking higher in search engine results pages and, additionally, increase the organic traffic to a company’s website. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 219-228.)

Next, social media marketing eases the promotion of a company’s brand and content via social media channels. This could be done through promotions via Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc. and helps to increase a company’s brand awareness, traffic and number of leads. (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 220-228.)
When it comes to sharing capturing content via the social media channels mentioned above, it is crucial to utilize blog posts, whitepapers, press releases, reviews, paid social media collaborations (Bhattacharya et al. 2019, 221-228.)

Thereby, a company’s digital marketing manager analyzes and chooses the right channels and tactics. For instance, if a company’s goal is to attract more leads and convert them into long-term clients, then depending on the customer avatar, marketing managers can choose the most appropriate digital marketing channel and tactic for it.

Adopting Instagram allows a company to build brand awareness and increase click-through-rate by choosing the right combination of hashtags that give the posts the most exposure. One Instagram tactic is to create reels and post them regularly, for instance, one or two reels per day, considering the time zone of the target audience availability online.

These Instagram reels and posts can consist of interesting articles about a company. Additionally, while posting on Instagram it is crucial to share a company's values and cultural views by telling and showing them to customers and followers via content strategy.

Consequently, a successful business must have a professional LinkedIn page, where it is possible to position a company’s brand or products via sponsored ads and, therefore, build a company’s credibility. Additionally, LinkedIn helps to find and recruit new employees which, in turn enables the growth of a company’s business, visibility, traffic, etc.

Paid advertising campaigns are suitable for TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Youtube and LinkedIn, as well as Google Ads. Once the domestic digital marketing works well, the company should reach a broader audience. This can be achieved for example via launching ads on Youtube with the help of the Google Ads platform.

Additionally, email marketing campaigns allow to reach more customers and analyze the engagement with the content of the email and the interest in a company’s business. Therefore, the following email marketing ideas can be
considered as brainstorming topics before developing an email marketing campaign.

1. Create FAQs section to overcome misunderstanding.
2. Mention necessary company’s information.
3. List free resources and channels to help customers make decisions.
4. How does a company interact with customers, what are the channels and tactics?

The best tactic for digital marketing can potentially be a mix of several digital marketing channels, depending on the goal, strategy and overall the company’s expectations. The omnichannels strategy tend to increase the overall expectations and chances to achieve the desired marketing results.

### 4.6 Implementation and control

One important part of a digital marketing strategy is to implement the strategy and, further, control over the whole strategy. Once the steps in digital marketing strategy are undertaken, a company have to measure factors and means of control of chosen channels and tactics, customer satisfaction, brand awareness, and organic traffic.

Implementation involves shared goals and values among all employees. It is crucial to divide the labor according to employee’s abilities and skills. Another important factor is employee motivation to implement the strategy or task related. Job satisfaction and commitment toward a company and its goals have an impact on overall job implementation through motivation and increased work efficiency. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 237.)

Figure 15 illustrates the elements of marketing implementation and control that affect a company overall performance. First of all, a company has to define goals and share them between the employees of a company. By integrating shared goals and values, employees tend to become more motivated to achieve
the overall company’s goals and objectives. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 242.)

Figure 15. The elements of marketing implementation (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 242).

Marketing structure helps to divide and integrate marketing responsibilities among the employees more rationally. The right marketing structure is dependant on a company itself, the nature of its internal and external environments, and its marketing strategy. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 243.)

Furthermore, a company must be diligent in how all activities are managed. For example, organizational systems and processes allow gathering information and communication outputs that show the consistency of a company’s daily operations. A company can apply concepts that encompass handling data and operations digital frameworks, financial resource allocation, goal setting in alignment with vision, obtaining goods and services, streamlined delivery, production, and quality assurance to control and analyze a company’s performance, outcomes, drawbacks and strengths. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 244.)

Another important factor is the quality, diversity and skills of a company’s human resources. Therefore, the human resources factor ensures that employees have a correct match to the required marketing activities of a
company. Correspondingly, resources of a company play a significant role in implementation and control phases. Managers and analysts of a company must critically and honestly evaluate available resources during the planning phase in order to see whether the company’s marketing strategy and implementation are possible to create and achieve. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 244.)

Likewise, adopting key performance indicators (KPIs) allows companies to make real-time measurements and also evaluate a company’s performance. Predominantly, a company should use big data and measurement methods, such as analytics by Google, or other customer relationship management software to collect data and make assumptions, forecast and summarize. (Ferrel, Hartline & Hochstein 2021, 255.)

Marketing performance of a company can be easily analyzed via various marketing dashboards by Google Analytics. Figure 16 shows the parameters that assist in determining the efficacy of the material. The dashboard makes it simple to track which themes are most popular in a company's audience, which CTAs are most successful, and which pages require work. (Databox 2022.)

Figure 16. Content Marketing dashboard (Databox 2022).

Implementation and control can be supplemented by the Key Performance Indicators. It includes goal setting and process monitoring and tracking. KPIs
improve the leading indicators which are key to future success. However, there are delay indicators that show the path of success of a company in the past. Implementation and control enables a company to track the execution of the strategy, evaluate, predict results and ensure that the goals are realistic and achievable.

5 Conclusions

To summarize, digital marketing, with all of its benefits and faults, has a huge potential in determining the future success of a product or service in today’s technology-driven industry. Digital marketing will help companies to understand and attract target customers easier and quicker.

The first goal of this thesis was to investigate key digital marketing elements. The ones I have described in this work are SEO, content marketing, advertising on Instagram, TikTok, Google Ads and Google Analytics. Undoubtedly, digital marketing significantly impacts on a company’s business by building brand awareness, generating traffic and leads, and many more.

Social media platforms are highly efficient at increasing brand awareness by giving a chance to promote businesses to a larger audience, regardless of the time zone, geographical and demographics aspects. On the contrary, social media platforms require creating and sharing informative, entertaining, engaging, sometimes provocative but not aggressive content at the right time through the right social media platforms.

Correspondingly, it is highly important to follow these digital marketing metrics while establishing a digital marketing strategy. This first of all involves SEO, keyword support in driving more traffic to a company’s website and content interaction. Second, traffic from channels allows for the analysis of where customers were before engaging in a company’s business. It also includes how they arrived to a website considering direct traffic, organic search results, and other social media platforms used. Thirdly, conversions show if the marketing activities were successful enough by demonstrating the number of website visitors and how many of them turned into clients or suscribers. Additionally, as soon as digital marketing allows to build strong brand awareness, this metric
can be considered and tracked by likes, comments on social media platforms, number of followers, mentions, and even word of mouth. Moreover, analyzing CPC, CTR and other metrics enables the generation of more leads, increases the ROI (return on investment) and converts leads into long-term customers. In conclusion, while covering all the KPIs, metrics, tactics and other, it is crucial to consider the most important one – revenue. Especially, revenue growth is a KPI which is meant to pay attention the most, is used to measure the overall increase or decrease of sales.

The main conclusions of the second research question are described as follows. First of all, it is important to determine the specific demographics and psychographics of ideal customers. After that, a company should establish realistic, measurable goals that align with company’s overall business objectives.

A company needs to identify the digital channels (e.g. social media, email, search engines, content marketing) that are most relevant to the audience and goals. The next step is related to content, meaning that a company should create high-quality content that engages target audience and supports marketing objectives.

SEO can help in the improvement of visibility and the engagement rates of a company’s website and content to attract organic traffic. In the end, a company should always monitor marketing activities, and use analytics tools to track and analyze performance. This enables companies to adjust the marketing strategy and achieve even better results.

All in all, companies should apply digital marketing to reach the right target audience and promote products and the business online on social media platforms. There is a huge number of opportunities that digital marketing can bring to a company, from bright ideas, setting goals and establishing channels to a perfectly working strategy leading to increased profit.
References


