



## **Social Media Marketing Channel Strategy For Hemlux.com Online Store**

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<p>The aim of this product-based thesis is to propose a social media marketing channel strategy for the commissioning company Hemlux.com, which is an online store that sells kitchen and home décor products. The company has recently started its operations and therefore the brand is not yet widely recognized. The goal is to create a social media marketing strategy, which the company can use as a framework in their marketing efforts, to increase brand awareness and sales for the online store. The commissioning company should be able to utilize the marketing strategy developed based on this thesis as a guideline to execute their social media marketing effectively. This thesis won't detail specific budgeting or scheduling but rather serve as a roadmap for integrating social media marketing into the company's existing marketing strategy.</p> <p>The main objective of this thesis is to construct a social media channel strategy for the client. Sub objectives include: Firstly, what is the clients' target audience and how can the company effectively reach them. Secondly, how can the company enhance brand awareness and encourage customers to recommend its products within their networks in terms of social media. Thirdly, which social media channels should the company utilize in their marketing.</p> <p>The theoretical background relies on the theory of digital and social media marketing. In the theoretical section, the use of social media as a marketing tool is introduced, and various social media channels are compared in terms of their advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, consumer behavior across these various platforms is investigated, and more importantly, how the commissioning company can leverage this knowledge in their marketing strategy.</p> <p>The resulting strategy was presented as a PowerPoint file. It included the company's mission, vision, and values, marketing objectives, and key content, analysis of the current state, as well as selected channels and tips on how to apply them.</p> <p>To summarize the key points of the content of the PowerPoint, the company should continue to use Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest to market on social media platforms, but the use of these channels should be further intensified. Visual content and regular posting of images are the most important methods. Customers can also be engaged through various contests, giveaways and surveys. Furthermore, it is advisable for the company to improve visibility in search engines through keyword selection and utilize email newsletters to communicate with customers.</p>
<b>Keywords</b> Social Media Marketing, Ecommerce, Marketing Strategy

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# 1 Introduction

Social media marketing has become increasingly crucial for businesses due to the pervasive influence of digital platforms in today's world. As millions of people engage with various social media channels daily, these platforms offer an unparalleled opportunity for businesses to connect with their target audience on a personal level. The dynamic nature of social media allows businesses to build brand awareness and drive traffic to their products or services. The use of social media increased by 21 percent globally during the pandemic. This growth wasn't limited to social media alone, as time spent on other digital channels also saw an increase. (Komu-lainen 2023)

The main objective of this thesis is to develop a social media marketing channel strategy for Hemlux.com, which is an online store that sells kitchen and home décor products. For a start-up business, achieving visibility and increasing brand awareness can be challenging, especially when the customer base has not yet been established. The company has engaged in some marketing on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, but a formal marketing strategy has not been implemented nor developed. Although the company possesses a strong visual brand, it is not widely recognized. The business seeks assistance in launching the brand and solidifying its customer base. The goal is to create a marketing channel strategy for the client that addresses the following research questions: How can the company reach the right target audiences and increase brand awareness, and what social media channels should it utilize to achieve this.

## 1.1 Client Introduction Hemlux.com

The client company, Hemlux.com, is an ecommerce business, that sells home and interior design products along with table and kitchenware. The online store has been operational since August 2023. The store mainly sells two Swedish brands; Byon and Sagaform. Both brands are known for their contemporary and stylish collections along with a modern and chic aesthetic. They are committed to quality and design innovation. The target audience consists of individuals who are interested in enhancing and personalizing their living spaces. This demographic may range from young adults to elderly individuals all whom are looking to decorate and furnish their house. The majority of these products tend to cater to the premium market. The premium market offers high-end products with exceptional quality and unique designs, targeting a niche audience who are willing to spend more on luxury items.

The author of this thesis, entered into collaboration with this company as one of the co-owners of Hemlux.com, confident that the research he undertakes will offer the company significant value. As a newly established company, it requires assistance in its launch phase and in building a

substantial customer base. Crucially, it requires clear guidance on how to direct its marketing efforts and allocate its resources effectively. The commissioning company will be referred to as Hemlux.com or the company, throughout the thesis.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Thesis**

The company has yet to establish a solid customer base. Although, some marketing has been commenced on Instagram and TikTok, the company has not implemented nor developed a formal marketing strategy. Despite having a strong visual brand, the company lacks widespread recognition. The business needs assistance in launching the brand and solidifying its customer base. The main objective of this thesis is to create a marketing channel strategy for Hemlux.com. The following sub objectives will be addressed in this thesis:

- Who is their target audience and how can the company effectively reach them?
- How can the company enhance brand awareness and encourage customers to recommend its products within their networks in terms of social media?
- Which social media channels should the company utilize in their marketing to do so?

## **1.3 Structure of the Thesis**

This product-based thesis consists of a Theoretical Part and an Empirical Part. In the theoretical part of the thesis, the focus is on reviewing existing literature, theories, and concepts relevant to the topic. The empirical part of the thesis involves the application of the theoretical knowledge to real-world cases. In this thesis, the Empirical Part is a social media marketing channel strategy, which is drawn from relevant literature and numerous sources in the field. With this knowledge a proposal is crafted on methods and channel choices that this specific business could utilize to reach its target audience and increase brand awareness. It also suggests how existing channels and methods can be employed more effectively.

To limit the scope of this thesis, the primary focus is on social media channels, but also includes influencer marketing since it is highly connected to certain channels examined in this thesis. Additionally, many channels have been excluded from the start based on various factors such as their relevance to the topic of the thesis, their popularity and usage among the target audience, and practical considerations such as time and resource constraints. This thesis will not include exact budgeting plans nor detailed schedule, instead it is meant to be used as road map to implement social media marketing to the company's ongoing marketing strategy. The strategy primarily

involves social media as it is often the most cost-effective tool for marketing and is particularly suitable for a small and emerging business. Furthermore, utilizing social media allows the company to engage directly with customers, gather feedback, and encourage customers to recommend products within their networks.

The resulting strategy will be presented as a PowerPoint file. The strategy will include the objectives and key content, along with the specific channels and methods the company can use in its marketing efforts. Additionally, methods for measuring results and success are included. The strategy is a proposal, allowing the company to either adopt it as is or utilize specific elements based on its own needs. The thesis solely consists of the strategy, and the implementation of the given marketing strategy is the responsibility of the client company.

## **2 Rise of Digital and Social Media Marketing**

Traditional marketing has long been surpassed by digital platforms since they have been proven ineffective and merely impossible to track success. The return on interest (ROI) of traditional marketing campaigns could be observed only on a balance sheet. Digital marketing has allowed us to observe and measure marketing efforts in almost real time and make changes accordingly. Also, digital platforms have enabled us to provide sophisticated targeting options. Advertisers can tailor their messages to specific demographics, interests, and behaviors, ensuring that their content reaches the most relevant audience. Ultimately, digital marketing has enabled businesses to reach and engage with their target audience on a global scale. (Kananen 2018, 13-14.) This chapter will dive into the importance of social media marketing and examine possible social media channels that will be included in the clients' channel strategy.

### **2.1 Introduction to Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing has become more and more important for businesses due to the impact digital influences have today. As seen from the chart below, billions of people engage with various social media channels daily. These platforms offer an unparalleled opportunity for businesses to connect with their target audience on a personal level. The nature of social media allows businesses to build brand awareness, better customer engagement, and drive traffic to their products or services. Additionally, the ability to gather valuable insights from user interactions enables businesses to improve their strategies and adjust their efforts to meet customer preferences. In an era where online presence is synonymous with business success, allocating resources in social media has become not just beneficial but essential for staying competitive and relevant in the market. (L.Coles 2018, 6-12.)

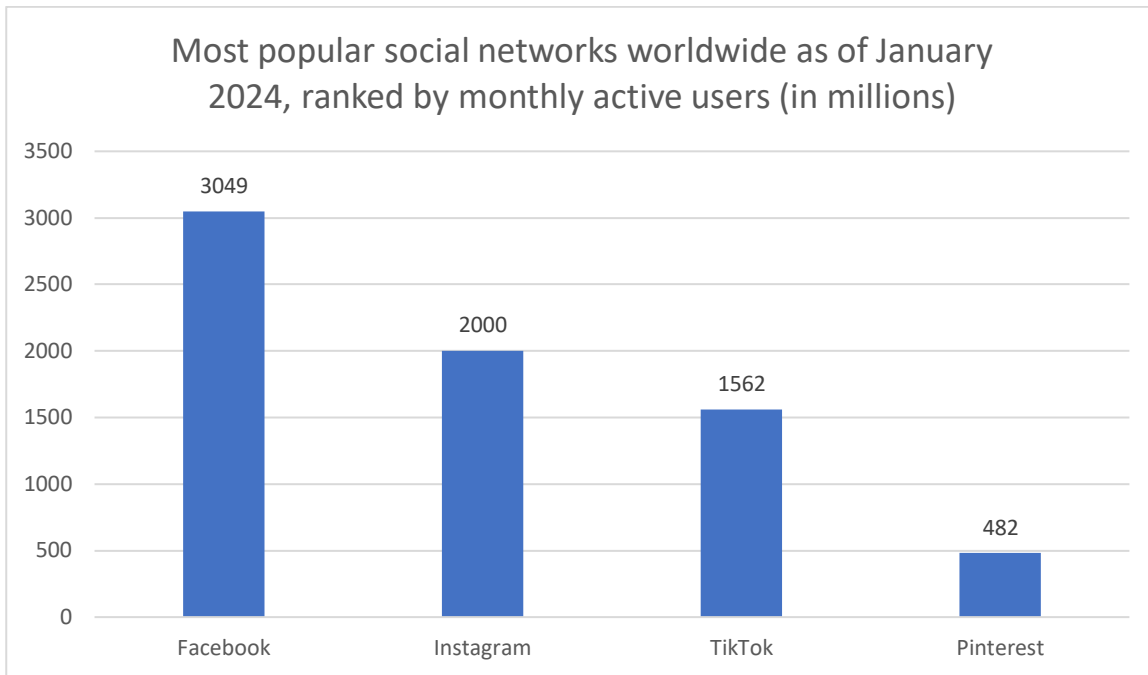


Chart 1. Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2024, ranked by number of monthly active users (in millions) (Statista 2024)

## 2.2 Benefits of Social Media Marketing

The ability to exponentially enhance brand visibility and engage with customers is one of the primary advantages of social media marketing. (Komulainen 2023, 27.) This lies in the fact that globally, social media has reached over 4.95 billion active users. (Statista 2023) This means that every third person uses social media. Through strategic utilization of various social media platforms, businesses can reach a vast audience, fostering recognition and enhancing familiarity with their brand, ultimately contributing to brand loyalty. (Kananen 2018, 24.)

Social media has risen to be one of the most important marketing tool, since it offers businesses a way to engage with their audience like no other platform. On these platforms, quick conversations, feedback, and addressing customer questions happen in real-time. This direct engagement helps build a strong connection and loyalty with customers, which is super important for long-lasting relationships. What makes it so unique is that no other type of marketing has made it as easy, fast, and cost-effective to engage with customers. (Williams 2017, 9.)

Compared to traditional advertising channels, social media marketing is cheaper and more cost-effective. In the past, only big companies could afford expensive marketing campaigns. Nowadays

new and small businesses can effectively and cheaply increase their brand visibility. With options for both organic and paid campaigns, businesses can choose strategies that align with their budget constraints while still achieving significant reach and impact. (Kananen 2018, 25.)

The key advantage of social media advertising lies in its ability to track and measure campaign success, a significant improvement over traditional advertising methods. Social media platforms provide businesses with analytics tools to monitor metrics like reach, engagement, clicks, and conversions in real-time. This valuable data allows businesses to identify effective campaign elements, make timely adjustments, and optimize their advertising budget for maximum return on investment (ROI), offering a crucial edge in assessing and improving marketing strategies. (L.Coles 2018, 26-27.)

In summary, social media marketing goes beyond just online visibility. It's important for building strong customer relationships, focusing ads on the right audiences, and making smart decisions based on data. Businesses need to really understand these advantages to do well and stay competitive in today's digital world.

### **2.3 Choosing the right Social Media Platforms**

There are numerous different social media channels, and their popularity is constantly changing. While some channels are forgotten, new platforms emerge. However, the basics of marketing theories, and fundamental models of consumer behavior remain consistent across these platforms. (Kananen 2018, 22.)

Selecting the right social media channels is a critical decision for businesses aiming to establish a strong online presence and in converting marketing efforts to customers. It is important to understand the unique features and demographics of each platform. This process requires a strategic approach to align the chosen channels with the business's goals, target audience, and content strategy. (LinkedIn Pulse 2023) The channels explored in this thesis have been selected based on their compatibility as possible marketing channels for Hemlux.com. In terms of the scope of the thesis, only appropriate social media channels have been selected for further examination based on the popularity and usage among the target audience. Other channels have been excluded from the outset due to practical considerations such as time and resource constraints. After analyzing their differences and unique features in-depth, we can choose the most suitable channels, which will be included in the channel marketing strategy. The table below shows key details for each selected social media channel. It aims to help compare them easily and give insight into their main features and user demographics.

	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok	Pinterest
Monthly Users	2.93B (Facebook Financial Report 2023)	1.3B (Instagram Financial Report 2023)	1B (TikTok Financial Report 2023)	450M (Pinterest Financial Report 2023)
Typical Marketing Content	Engaging posts, promotions, user-generated content, behind-the-scenes, events.	High-quality visual content, stories, influencer collaborations, product showcases, lifestyle content.	Short-form entertaining videos, trends, user-generated content, behind-the-scenes, influencer partnerships.	Visual content, pins linking to blogs/products, DIY tutorials, mood boards, shopping guides.
User Demographics	Broad age range, slightly older people, balanced gender distribution, global user base with diverse interests. (Statista 2024)	Predominantly younger users (18-34), fairly balanced gender distribution, global presence with a focus on urban areas, interests include fashion, beauty, travel and lifestyle. (Statista 2024)	Primarily younger users, balanced gender distribution, global popularity with a strong presence in Asia and North America, interests include entertainment, humor, music and challenges. (Statista 2024)	Slightly older user base, predominantly female, global presence with strong user bases in North America and Europe, interests include home decor, recipes, fashion and DIY projects. (Statista 2024)

Table 1. A review of the selected social media channels that will be investigated more closely.

### 2.3.1 Facebook

Facebook has an average of 2.93 billion monthly active users. Facebook's prominence as the most utilized social media platform makes it a persuasive choice, if a business is aiming to connect with a diverse audience. This large audience allows businesses to connect with a diverse demographic

and target specific customer segments. The platform allows businesses to create a business page for organic advertising. Adding an account to your page enables you to begin promoting your content with paid marketing. What makes Facebook ads so effective, is that they offer businesses the ability to create focused ads based on factors such as age, location, interests, and online behavior. Additionally, marketing content can be customized to align with marketing goals and cater to audience preferences by using different ad formats that Facebook offers. These formats include videos, photos, carousels, sponsored posts and stories and reels. This variety in ad formats provides businesses with flexibility in how they choose to communicate with their audience. (Hootsuite 2023. 1.1.2024)

Facebook's interactive features such as comments, likes and shares, helps businesses engage with their audience in real-time, this engagement creates a sense of community. Furthermore, powerful analytics tools enable businesses to monitor and optimize their ad performance, gaining insights into reach, engagement, and conversion rates. This valuable data can be used to recognize successful campaigns, make adjustments and optimize their marketing budget to maximize their ROI. The platform's integration with other Meta-owned platforms like Instagram provides businesses with a multi-channel approach to reaching a broader audience. Overall, Facebook's cost-effective advertising, and the ability to build communities and showcase products through dedicated business pages, confirms it as a powerful and versatile marketing tool for businesses of all sizes. (Hubspot 2023)

### **2.3.2 Instagram**

Instagram is a social media platform that focuses on photo and video sharing. It allows users to upload, edit, and share visual content with their followers. The platform also includes features such as stories, IGTV and direct messaging. Instagram was initially launched in October 2010. With 2 billion daily users, Instagram is among the most used social media platforms. Though, 30.8% of all users are between the ages of 18 and 24, making Instagram a platform more connected with millennials. (Statista 2023)

Instagram is also one of the most effective platforms when it comes to social media marketing. In 2022, 80% of global marketers used Instagram to advertise their business, making it the second most popular channel for advertising after Facebook. From a marketing standpoint, Instagram is far more influential than LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok. (Statista 2023)

Typical advertising formats on Instagram include, giveaways by influencers, affiliate links and promo codes, or a full take over of a company's account. These collaborations, especially with large-scale influencers can generate thousands of euros to the influencer, but the engagement and

visibility acquired by the company is far more valuable. However, many brands prefer working with smaller influencers who have dedicated audiences and high engagement rates.

Creating a business account unlocks many useful tools and features. These features enable you to add contact buttons allowing customers to easily connect with your business. Additionally, business accounts enable the shopping feature, which allows individuals to click on links in posts, to be directed straight to the company's online store. (Komulainen 2023, 158.) This feature is particularly beneficial for ecommerce businesses since customers can click on products advertised on posts, and be directed straight to the product page, or better check-out page. The most significant feature enabled by the business account is the data that it provides. Instagram provides analytics for audience demographics and followers, as well as insights on how your posts are performing. This data can be used to track your advertising success and improve future posts. Also, paid advertising features are only accessible through a business account. (L.Coles 2018, 121-124.)

### **2.3.3 TikTok**

TikTok is a video-sharing app that allows users to create and share short-form videos on any topic. It's mainly mobile-based. What separates TikTok from other social media platforms is its addictiveness and engagement, which can be seen in the chart below. According to the latest data on time spent on social media, US adults spend the most time on TikTok. On average, they spend 53.8 minutes a day on the platform in 2023. (Oberlo 2023) In Finland, time spent on the app is even more, averaging 92 minutes per day. (Komulainen 2023, 161.) Though TikTok has been previously perceived to cater to younger audiences (36.5% aged 18-24) (Hootsuite 2024), the platform is rapidly growing especially to the older demographic. Becoming more prevalent to older audiences and TikTok marketing becoming evermore so important for big companies.

TikTok is about creating content that resonates with its younger user base in creative and authentic ways. Typical marketing content on TikTok often involves short, engaging videos that showcase products or services in an entertaining way. This can include product demonstrations, user-generated content featuring the brand, challenges or trends related to the industry, influencer partnerships, behind-the-scenes looks at the company, educational content and interactive content that encourages viewer participation. (Forbes 2023)

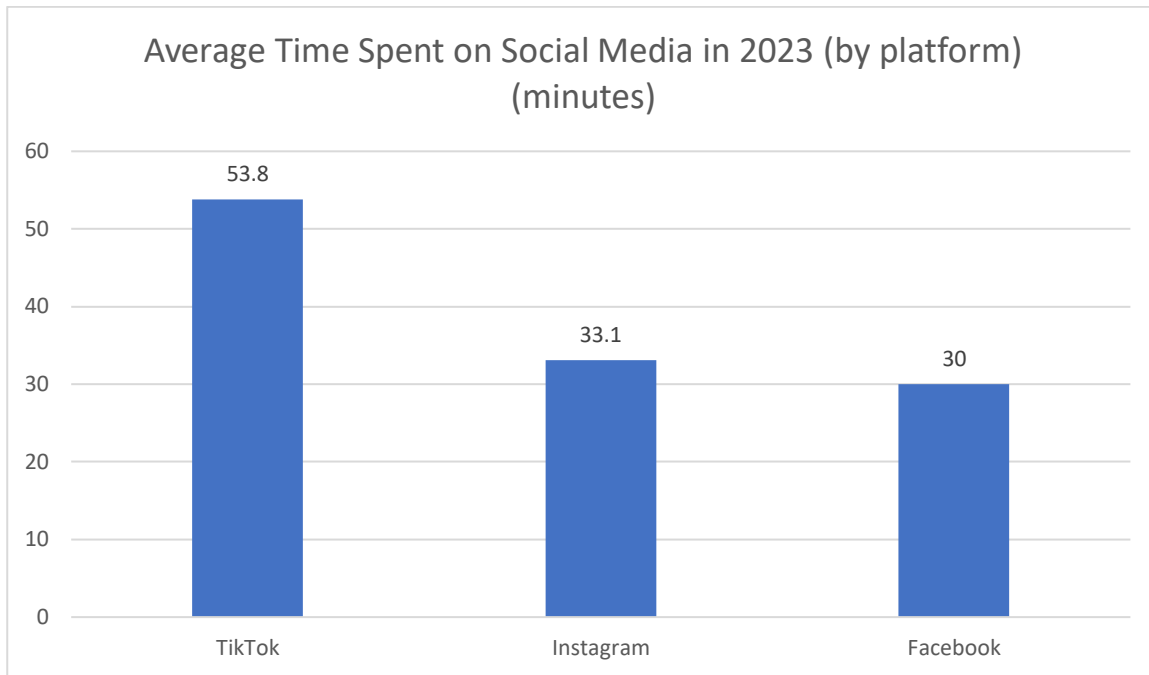


Chart 2. AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN 2023 (BY PLATFORM) (Oberlo 2023)

TikTok is currently the fastest-growing social media platform. Its addictiveness is based on its algorithm, which learns from the content users consume to understand their preferences and show similar content. When creating a TikTok account, users can choose their areas of interest. For instance, if one selects well-being and fitness as themes, relevant content within those themes will appear in their video feed. (Komulainen 2023, 161.)

On TikTok, videos have the potential to go global without paid advertising. Currently, TikTok is one of the few social media platforms that cater to business content even on new accounts. On other platforms, the algorithm is often limited for new accounts making it difficult to go viral organically. TikTok allows high-quality content to take off more easily compared to other channels. (Komulainen 2023, 161.)

According to a study conducted in 2022, TikTok will continue to grow with the highest percentage increase compared to other platforms. The study indicates that TikTok's growth is expected to be 47% higher. (Meltwater 2022)

#### 2.3.4 Pinterest

Pinterest is a social media platform in which users explore, share, and store visual content they find inspiring, helpful, or entertaining. Users can add or "Pin" content that they like to a common theme board. Other users can then add and discover new content related to their interests in these

boards. With over 482 million monthly users, Pinterest is among the social media platforms company's should consider using. Additionally, 83% of users have made a purchase from content they've seen on Pinterest. (Pinterest Business 2024)

Like other platforms, setting up a business account on Pinterest will allow you to gain access to Pinterest Analytics and other features including a visual search tool, a native video player, and the ability to run Pinterest ads if you choose. These features make the platform ideal for marketers. (Hubspot 2023)

Pinterest is a very visual platform, where posting visually appealing content is important. Businesses can add images of their products on to their own board. Pinterest users are active, meaning it is a good platform for increasing brand visibility. It also generates significant traffic to websites, especially e-commerce stores, since products can be tagged with links directing users to their website. Design and Home Décor are among the most popular categories on Pinterest, making it a crucial and valuable channel for the client company, Hemlux.com. Users are also known to like aesthetically pleasing content and products. (Hootsuite 2024)

Analyzing your customers interests on Pinterest, provides you with insight into what your target audience is interested in, and helps you keep up to date with changing trends. Many consumers use Pinterest to discover interesting products, and the platform often appears prominently in search engine results. Therefore, search engine optimization (see 2.5) and using the right key words is crucial when posting content on Pinterest.

## **2.4 Other Channels**

Influencer marketing and search engine visibility have been included into the scope of this thesis because they could be suitable marketing communication channels for the client company. Since these mentioned marketing tools are tightly connected with social media, it is important they are included in the scope of this thesis to produce a comprehensive social media channel strategy that fulfils all objectives of it. Search engine optimization and visibility leads to the company's social media channels and influencer marketing is tightly intertwined with Instagram marketing

### **2.4.1 Influencer Marketing**

Though this thesis is restricted to social media channels only, influencer marketing will be included since its importance in social media market is constantly growing. Influencer marketing is a strategy where brands collaborate with individuals who have a significant and engaged following on social media platforms. These individuals, known as influencers, use their influence to promote and endorse products or services to their audience. This form of marketing relies on the influencer's credibility and relationship with their followers to create brand awareness and lure customers from

the influencer's devoted fan base. The market has grown astonishingly quickly. Since 2019, it has more than doubled on the strength of platforms such as Instagram and YouTube. In 2023, the influencer marketing economy was valued at \$21.1 billion. (McKinsey & Company 2023)

Influencer marketing has grown to become a very broad concept, and the types of influencers vary greatly. Traditionally, influencers would be considered as well-known public figures such as athletes, models and musicians. However, nowadays through social media, a new type of public figure has emerged and is being used globally by marketers. Influencers can be categorized into traditional influencers such as celebrities and social media influencers. (Halonen 2019) These social media influencers can be further divided into macro, micro and nano influencers. Macro influencers being the largest such as a extremely famous athlete with a following over 10 million. The majority of funds allocated to influencer marketing go to macro influencers. Micro influencers are smaller influencers with less than 10,000 followers, but their audience is often highly focused on a specific niche. Additionally, micro influencers often underestimate their own value, and are willing to collaborate for a very low compensation, even to the extent of just receiving a few free items from the company's store. This loyalty to a specific niche and their cost-effectiveness is the reason why it is becoming increasingly more used by marketers. The use of micro influencers in influencer marketing is becoming increasingly popular compared to macro influencers. (Lahtinen, Pulkka, Karjalainen & Mero 2022, 238–240.)

#### **2.4.2 Search Engine Optimization**

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a process that enhances the content of your website, social media channels and ability to be found when being searched organically. SEO is an effective way to increase a company's visibility, often at no cost, when used correctly. (Google Search Central 2024) SEO is critical especially for online stores since customers often search for individual products, instead of your website. Having proper meta data and SEO on your products will help in showing your products higher up in the search results. While social media marketing is frequently used for the initial stages of the customer journey, such as increasing brand visibility and fostering brand loyalty, search engine optimization and Google advertising are well-suited for the phase where customers already have a need and are seeking answers. By utilizing search engine optimization and Google Ads, you can be the primary response to your customer's search. Without SEO, a company may end up at the bottom of search engine lists. Typically, only the first few links are clicked, and only 25 percent of users venture to the second page of search results. (Komulainen 2023, 136.)

SEO will improve your conversion greatly, meaning when a user performs a desired action in response to a call-to-action (CTA) placed in an ad, offer or push notification. It is a tool that must be used in collaboration with the companies' multichannel marketing efforts to succeed. Other

channels are used to generate initial need, and then SEO supports guiding the online purchase decision to completion. The better optimized your content is, the more it attracts customers to your site. (Komulainen 2023, 136.)

Additionally, in order to utilize Google Ads efficiently, which is Google's search engine marketing (SEM) tool, it is paramount that your search results are optimized, otherwise paid advertising will not reach your audience efficiently. (Komulainen 2023, 136.)

### 3 Marketing Channel Strategy for an Online Store

The resulting product of this thesis is a social media marketing channel strategy. A proposal is crafted on methods and channel choices that Hemlux.com could utilize to reach its target audience and increase brand awareness.

This chapter will analyze the current state of the company and its current marketing efforts. Including, its future objectives, target audience, and competitors. Following this, a marketing strategy will be developed utilizing industry guides, which will include communication objectives, key content, essential channels, and tips on how to use them. Finally, a tentative schedule and some methods for measuring results will be presented.

The product will be presented as a PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1). The strategy is presented in a PowerPoint presentation since it allows the creation of visually appealing slides that can effectively communicate the key content of the strategy to its viewers. It is also easy to share within the commissioning company's organization. The exact budgeting of the strategy and the execution and measurement of results remain the client's responsibility.

#### 3.1 Current Status of the Online Store

A thorough inspection of the companies' current website and social media presence was conducted, and these were the findings. Hemlux.com online store is aesthetically and mechanically well designed. It was designed to keep the user experience (UX) in mind. Meaning, it is easy to navigation, it has an intuitive design, and fast loading times. The store is also accessible and optimized for different devices and browsers. The home page has the company's logo *Hemlux*, in white text with an interactive dark background. Under the logo there is a text; *Home Décor*. The site is aesthetically pleasing with a visually appealing design and a clean layout, pleasing color scheme and consistent branding. The home page of the site has clear call-to-actions (CTA), to guide users into shopping either kitchenware or home décor items. There are also seasonal discounts and an item of the month advertised on the home page. When scrolling down the page, the user will be able to read about the brands for sale and the partners who vouch for Hemlux products. There is also links to the companies Facebook, Instagram and TikTok accounts, in addition to a contact button.

Since the website's launch, even without paid marketing, the company has received orders monthly. Meaning even organically the website gets a decent amount of traffic. Most orders originating from central Europe and United States.

The company's Facebook page currently has 4 followers and 7 likes. Posted posts include product pictures with informative and persuasive captions, calling viewers to shop for these products from

the Hemlux.com website, through the attached link. On Instagram the company has 92 followers and has posted 11 posts, of which all are the same as on Facebook. The posts are accompanied by many industry-specific hashtags. On TikTok, the company has 6 followers and 25 likes. Posts include only product pictures edited into short videos with trending music to go along with.

Overall, the company's communication is highly visual, which aligns well with the company's brand. The images are high quality and appropriate. The company also has a recognizable logo and theme colors that are noticeable across all platforms. The main social media channels are already in use. However, activity has been extremely irregular, and due to this posts have not received large amounts of comments, shares or any kind of activity. Additionally, the content across these channels is the same, which consists only of product pictures from the site. The content posted on different social media channels must be specifically created with the specific channel in mind, since different types of content performs better than others on certain channels. In Table 2, the current status of the company's social media presence is illustrated in the form of a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis is a tool which helps identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Table 1. SWOT-analyses of Hemlux.com current social media presence.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High-quality visual content</li> <li>- Recognizable slogan and logo</li> <li>- Presence on key social media platforms</li> <li>- Alignment with the visual nature of the brand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irregular posts, no schedule</li> <li>- Limited to no engagement on social media posts</li> <li>- Monotonous content, not specifically created for each channel</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential for increased engagement through consistent communication</li> <li>- Using industry specific influencers to promote their products</li> <li>- Utilizing trending topics and hashtags for increased visibility</li> <li>- Utilizing user-generated content for enhanced brand credibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competition for audience attention on social media</li> <li>- Changes in social media algorithms affecting reach</li> <li>- Credibility as a legitimate business is at risk with such low engagement</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Objectives for Marketing Efforts

The company's objectives are to create strong visual marketing content on various social media platforms. This can be achieved by publishing content catered to the specific channel, and post on a reoccurring schedule to increase activity across all platforms. In addition, the company aims to boost visibility by promoting content on Instagram and Facebook with paid advertisements. The objective of the marketing strategy is to find the right target audience and strengthen the company's brand to increase credibility. The goal is also to engage customers and encourage them to recommend the company's products to their networks. (Hootsuite 2022)

To be able to increase brand awareness and recognition of the brand, it is crucial to increase website visits and grow their social media followers. Increasing organic and paid website traffic will increase the number of visitors to the online store. Improving social media presence will boost customer engagement and with this customer loyalty.

### 3.3 Target audience

The target audience consists of individuals who are interested in enhancing and personalizing their living spaces. This demographic may range from young adults to elderly individuals, all who are looking to decorate and furnish their house. Most of the products sold on the Hemlux.com online store tend to cater to the premium market. The premium market offers high-end products with exceptional quality and unique designs, targeting a niche audience who are willing to spend more on luxury items. The target audience is not limited geographically, since the company has a global shipping policy, users can buy products all over the world. Though, the products sold on the site, boast Nordic hand-crafted qualities, which can be more appealing to those interested in Scandinavian design. Since most orders have been currently from central Europe and United States, these regions will be promoted the most by paid advertisement. (Hubspot 2023)

### 3.4 Competitors

The company's competitors include already established online and traditional physical stores that sell home décor and kitchenware products, catering to the higher end market. Therefore, companies such as Ikea are not direct competitors, since Hemlux.com emphasizes handmade quality items. Other direct competitors include sites such as RoyalDesign.fi and Nordicnest.fi. These companies offer the same Byon and Sagaform products as Hemlux.com, meaning that there is competition. Hemlux.com will have to set itself apart from the competition by creating a strong brand identity and offer exceptional customer service. Being a small company it is often easier to communicate effectively with customers and offer support throughout the buying process. Going above and beyond can turn customers into loyal advocates. Hemlux.com site definitely stands out visually and aesthetically when compared to the competitors' sites. It is important that the company continues to enhance this visual identity not only on their website, but across all their social media platforms. This strong brand identity, coupled with exceptional customer service and focus on niche region will set Hemlux apart from generalist competitors.

### 3.5 Selected Methods and Marketing Channels

Based on the Thoretical Part of this Thesis, and research conducted on Hemlux.com current situation, the following channels have been selected to be most suitable for the company to commence their full marketing efforts on. Channels include Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. Other important methods to utilize are email newsletters and search engine optimization. TikTok has been left out since its' nature as a marketing platform doesn't fully adhere with Hemlux.com's objectives and it is better to concentrate on three main platforms rather than too many.

On Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, the key is to publish visual content regularly. It is also important to continuously engage customers through various means such as contests and

giveaways. Content should be interesting enough to encourage users to comment, like, and share. Additionally, ensuring proper linking between channels is essential. Facebook offers the opportunity for targeted advertising to enhance brand awareness and get your content directed specifically to the target audience. (Hootsuite 2023)

Instagram is a great platform to engage directly with customers through giveaways and enhance the brand's identity with visually appealing content either with posts, stories or shorts. Most importantly for Hemlux, Instagram offers the opportunity for influencer marketing by collaborating with niche home decor and design influencers. These influencers can have a very loyal fan base ranging from 5 to 50 thousand followers. Entering collaborations like these tend to be very lucrative for and cost effective for both parties. (Heinz, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T., Cruz, A. 2017, 255.)

Pinterest enables the sharing of aesthetic content and offers an exceptional engagement rate with over 80% of users having bought items due to marketing on the platform. Pinterest is a good platform for creating traffic to your website, but it takes regular activity and interesting content. Additionally, Pinterest is good for analyzing your target audience and studying what their interests are and what trends are currently active. (Pinterest 2023)

Increasing visibility on search engines through SEO, will drive a lot of new customers to your website. Most importantly utilizing strategic keyword research will help you target and engage your specific target audience. Keyword research can be managed through platforms such as Google AdWords. (Heinz & al. 2017, 169.) It is crucial that links to other social media platforms are readily available on the main page of the website, to enhance your brand identity and gain new followers. Ideally, fostering a sense of community around your brand will create a powerful and loyal fan base. This takes continuing communication and engagement with your customers across all platforms. Additionally, adding automated newsletters that reach out to customers with personalized offers and messages is a great way to increase trust and loyalty with your customers.

### **3.6 Measuring and Analyzing Performance**

To make data-driven decisions to optimize your future marketing efforts, it is crucial to be able to measure and analyze the heaps of data we can collect of the customer's online journey. By understanding basic metrics and their correlations with business objectives, businesses can develop successful marketing campaigns catered to customers' needs and expectations. Results can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively, preferably on a monthly basis. It is also important to make changes and react based on the obtained results. Quantitatively, results can be measured by tracking the increase in likes, followers, shares and comments across different channels. It's possible to analyze when and why there's a lot of engagement and understand why, as well as recognize times when there's not much happening. (Komulainen 2023, 308.)

Results can be measured individually on each platform to see which channels have garnered the most success. Having a business account on these platforms allows the admin to access the insights dashboard. In this dashboard the admin can view and analyze important metrics. This data can be used to see what kind of content has been successful, allowing the company to make important decisions about future marketing content. (Williams, J. 2017)

## **4 Discussion**

In this chapter, the reflection begins with an analysis of the product's success. It examines whether the presented strategy meets the set objectives and discusses its potential benefits to the client. Following this, suggestions are provided on how the company could further develop its marketing strategy looking ahead. Finally, the chapter reflects on the learning during the thesis project.

### **4.1 Product Success**

The objective of the thesis, which was to develop a social media marketing channel strategy for the client company, was timely and necessary in my opinion, since the company had recently commenced its operations and therefore its brand is not yet well known. Additionally, its communication and marketing efforts across various platforms have not been consistent. It was important to define the objectives and content of communication so that now the company can follow this strategy to create coherent and compelling content aligning with their objectives. The client can adjust the strategy accordingly to their needs and findings or use it as is. The product was completed within the planned schedule. I find the presentation clear, visually appealing, and easily usable.

However, it feels like the product did not bring as much information to the company as it could have, since the company had already utilized most of the selected channels in its marketing efforts previously, though extremely vaguely. While some recommendations remained somewhat broad, it's worth noting that the focus was on strategy rather than intricate planning and content creation. Alternatively, a more pragmatic product may have offered greater benefits to the client company, but I believe that this thesis' objective to create a long-term strategy is more useful than presenting content ideas which are always changing in this trend driven world.

At the final stages of the thesis process, the future of Hemlux.com looked uncertain, since there were talks of us shutting down its operations, due to lack of time and resources. This uncertainty made it unclear if the marketing channel strategy would ever be put into use. Despite the unclear outlook for the company's future, my commitment to completing the product and thesis remained strong throughout the entire process.

## **4.2 Future Recommendations**

Further recommendations include developing a more comprehensive and detailed marketing plan with yearly and monthly calendars to provide a structured approach to communication activities. Surveys should be conducted to get an idea of customer satisfaction with products and services, alongside researching the target audience's perceptions of the company's brand to understand how its values are conveyed. Additionally, looking into specific marketing actions such as writing company blogs, as well as exploring opportunities for collaboration with brand ambassadors can be appropriate for enhancing brand visibility and fostering a sense of community. Targeted surveys should also be conducted to gain insights into the audience's social media usage and their engagement with home décor -related products and companies, including their reliance on social media for purchasing decisions and interactions with kitchen and home décor blogs.

## **4.3 Learning and performance throughout the Thesis Process**

During the thesis process, I learned to find and utilize various sources of literature and guides on the topic of marketing, social media and e-commerce. I learned to specifically apply and tailor this knowledge to the needs of the client company. I examined various social media platforms closely, understanding their usage and how this information is leveraged in effective and successful marketing campaigns. I gained a comprehensive understanding of the significance of social media in corporate communication and marketing. This newfound knowledge is extremely valuable for me, especially in a world where social media plays an important role and will definitely prove useful in my future endeavors.

Additionally, my skills in managing processes and planning schedules improved. I executed the thesis project within a relatively short timeframe of a couple of months, thus also learning to work efficiently. Starting the work was delayed, so taking a more proactive approach to initiating the project, such as by researching previous theses, could have been beneficial. Though, once I had started the writing process, I worked very efficiently. The most challenging aspect of the thesis process was narrowing down the topic, where I had to seek guidance from my thesis supervisor.

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## Appendices

### [Appendice 1. Social Media Channel Strategy for Hemlux.com](#)

Social Media Channel Strategy for Hemlux.pptx

