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DEVELOPING SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN ALMA MANU OY
FOR ITS POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS

Degree Programme in International Business
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The purpose of the thesis was to develop the social media marketing to find the potential customers for the Alma Manu which is situated in Pori region. Though the case company is much experienced in the field of its delivery business, but it lacking behind in the field of marketing through social media. The objectives of the thesis were to know the behavior, perception and expectation of the customers of Alma Manu and give the effective suggestion based on it.

The first part of the thesis covers the research process for the thesis followed by the method of research used in it. The research method used in the thesis is qualitative research method for primary as well as secondary data collection which were done by interviewing the manager and supervisor of Alma Manu, supervisor of ISS service company, owners of Mevlana Pizzeria and Yak and Yeti restaurant, front desk officer of Lahitapoila and salesman of DNA.

The second part of the thesis contains the theoretical and the empirical information. The theoretical information was collected from the webpages, reliable books and literatures reviews. The author used many resources for collecting that theoretical information. The theoretical information consists the information related to marketing, marketing strategies, marketing communication, Social media marketing etc. The empirical data were collected by interviewing the representatives of Alma Manu as well as its customers. The topics that was discussed in the interview was about the internal and external environment of the case company. the interview done with customers of the case company was mainly focused on the behavior, perception and satisfaction of those customers with the case company. The interviewees also included their expectations and areas of improvements for the case company.

The suggestions and recommendations for the Alma Manu was given based upon the interviews done with its customers and the manager. The suggestions are developed based on the way of doing social media marketing and marketing communication. The author has used his knowledge and research to give the best possible suggestions to the case company However, it is not compulsory for the Alma Manu to follow all the suggestions introduced by the author.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The idea of writing this thesis on this topic became the need for the company as well as the interest from the writer towards the topic. As the company for which the thesis is written has well developed system of direct marketing but the social media still in its primitive stage. Marketing is one of the most important part for the company as it helps the company to meet with its customers and identify their needs and wants and fulfill per it. It is only the way through which the company know about its customers and demands for their products or services in the market. It can be said that the term marketing is not only selling of products or services but also for knowing and analyzing the needs of the customers.

In today's world where the digitalization has touched every corner of the organizations, every companies should develop this to survive in the market. Marketing in the current world does not only includes the selling of products or services but also includes the regular interacting between the buyer and seller. This helps both the parties to be updated every time each other. The social media marketing can be defined as the type of marketing done online by using different network sites to expose their products or service and make the customers aware of it. Nowadays most of the people are attracted towards different social networking sites and have been using it on daily basis. So, to increase awareness of the brand of any company and its products, the companies should be active on those networking sites. Many people nowadays want all the information of either any product or any other related to it in their hands quickly and the social media tools are ideal for delivering information and interacting between people. To survive in the market, social media is important because most of the companies are in the social media and to compete with them also one need to choose these tools. It is not only for exploring the brand in the internet but social media also helps to understand the current demand for the products or services and customer's expectation. (Dodson 2016, 153-155.)

2 PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this thesis is to understand better current market condition of the company and find the potential customers for the company with the help of social media marketing. Before developing the marketing strategy for the company through social media, it is important to know the present condition and current situation of the company in the market.

The beneficiary of the thesis will be the case company as the thesis will give the new ideas and suggestion for developing social media marketing to find the potential customers and the writer will be gaining new experience of writing thesis on Finnish company on this specific topic.

2.1 Objectives

As the thesis, will be based on the marketing of the company in Pori region, it will provide the complete information related to the marketing done by the company so far and the experience and expectation of the customers regarding the company and their way of marketing which is mainly focused in direct marketing. The company's active in direct marketing but due to some communication barriers marketing information do not always reach its customers.

The thesis will also give the ideas related to the social media marketing where the company need to focus on and the way that can be used in marketing field to find their target customers.

- The positioning strategy of the company.
- Customers expectation, perception and experience towards the company.
- New ideas to perform the marketing communication through the social media.

- Find the expectation of their potential customers.

2.2 Research process



Figure 1: Research process of thesis

The process starts with the current business of the company in which the overview of business and current marketing is made along with the present marketing communication of the company. After going through its current business, then the present situation of the company in social media marketing will be analyzed. The company will also want to know their problem areas because of which they are unable to connect with its target customers and find the possible effective solution for it in order find its potential customers through social media. The company's existing customers are the daily sub-

scribers of Satakunnan kansa and Helsingin Sanomat. Based on all the gathered information, the marketing solution will be provided to the company to make effective social media marketing.

2.3 Research method

The aim of the thesis is to know the present situation of the company in the market and develop the effective marketing solution through social media for the company. Firstly, the theoretical information which will be collected through different books, websites and through company's webpage and it will be analyzed. The analyzing and planning of these information will be done to go with correct methodology. The theoretical part will include all the necessary information related to the marketing, marketing communication as well as social media.

The research method will be the qualitative research method in the thesis. Qualitative method of data analysis means the process irrespective of the numbers of data collected. It is mainly concerned with the meaning that is carried out through word and its quality. This can include from open minded questionnaire to in depth interview. The open-minded questionnaire includes the general information about the interviewee as well as the question related with the subject. These sorts of questions also expect the answers from interviewee point of view. The in-depth interview is the qualitative method of research which includes the confidential conversation between the interviewee and interviewer. This allow to develop the meaningful theory from the data which relates to theoretical information. The qualitative data gives the idea of both collection and the analysis of information. This sorts of analysis are done using conceptual framework of the thesis. The analyzing of the qualitative data gets started at the same time when the data are collected and then are continued further. (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill 2009, 480-481.)

In this thesis, both primary as well as secondary data collection were applied to get the qualitative result. As for primary data collection, the writer observed the customer's

perception and behavior for the company and will also interview with its existing as well as potential customers. And for secondary data collection, the data were gathered from the different websites and from the website of the case company. The interviews can be time consuming but they can give the true and in-depth information about the consumer groups so that it becomes easier for the author to give the effective suggestion to the Alma Manu. The secondary data was collected by some other people and it was helpful to gather information from it. This data gives the overall idea about the status of the company in the market current and better for the improvement. This data gives the overall concept from regional to the country level. For the empirical information, the author has interviewed two customer companies and two representatives of Alma Manu and two companies that are existing customer and one which is potential customer and one individual customers who is existing customer for Alma Manu. (Adams, Khan, Raeside 2014, 92-105.)

2.4 Reliability and validity of the research

The reliability and validity of the research determine the quality of research done to get effective result. The research should be clear and the evidence should be reliable to convince its readers. The research should have reliability and validity that can be utilized and made possible practically without any obstruction during its implementation. Because if the research is not reliable, then there is no use of such and it is completely useless. The reliability and validity of the research is strengthened by observing and experiencing the event and staying on it to understand its different phenomena. (Gray 2004,255-257.)

In this thesis, the validity and reliability of the theory is done by using the updated version of resources. For the empirical part, the validity and reliability is increased or developed by selecting the appropriate interviewees, avoiding the language barrier and formulating questions. The theory part of the thesis is written from the reliable books and some the webpages to get the accurate knowledge of it. The information related to

the case company is gathered from the official website of the company as well as from the employee of the company.

2.5 Introduction of the case company

The name of the case company is Alma Manu Oy which is a newspaper printing as well as delivery company located in Pori with its main branch situated in Tampere. The branch of Pori delivers the newspaper in Satakunta and Pirkanmaa. The company was established in July 2010 in Pori and initially the name of the company was Aamujakelu Oy which later changed into Alma Manu Oy. Currently, the company has total 210 deliverers and four office employees. The company has appointed Eija Kostin Harjamaki as a new manager.

The products that the company delivers are Satakunnan Kansa, Helsingin Sanomat and Uusi Aika. It has also started delivering the letters recently and are planning to deliver products and goods at the end of this year. All the newspaper that are delivered in Satakunta region are printed in Mikkola Pori except Helsingin Sanomat which is directly brought from Helsinki every day. These daily newspapers are delivered to the door of every customer early in the morning. Though it is only daily newspaper delivery company in Pori but there are also advertisements delivering company named Jakelukeskus. Since the company has started delivering letters so it should compete with Posti.

The company's business customers are the Satakunnan kansa, Helsingin sanomat and their target customers are the daily subscribers of these newspaper. Along with this, the potential customers for the company are all those organization and companies that sends their letters to their customers which may be either due payment bill, salary slip, insurance notices etc.

2.6 Current business structure of Alma Manu

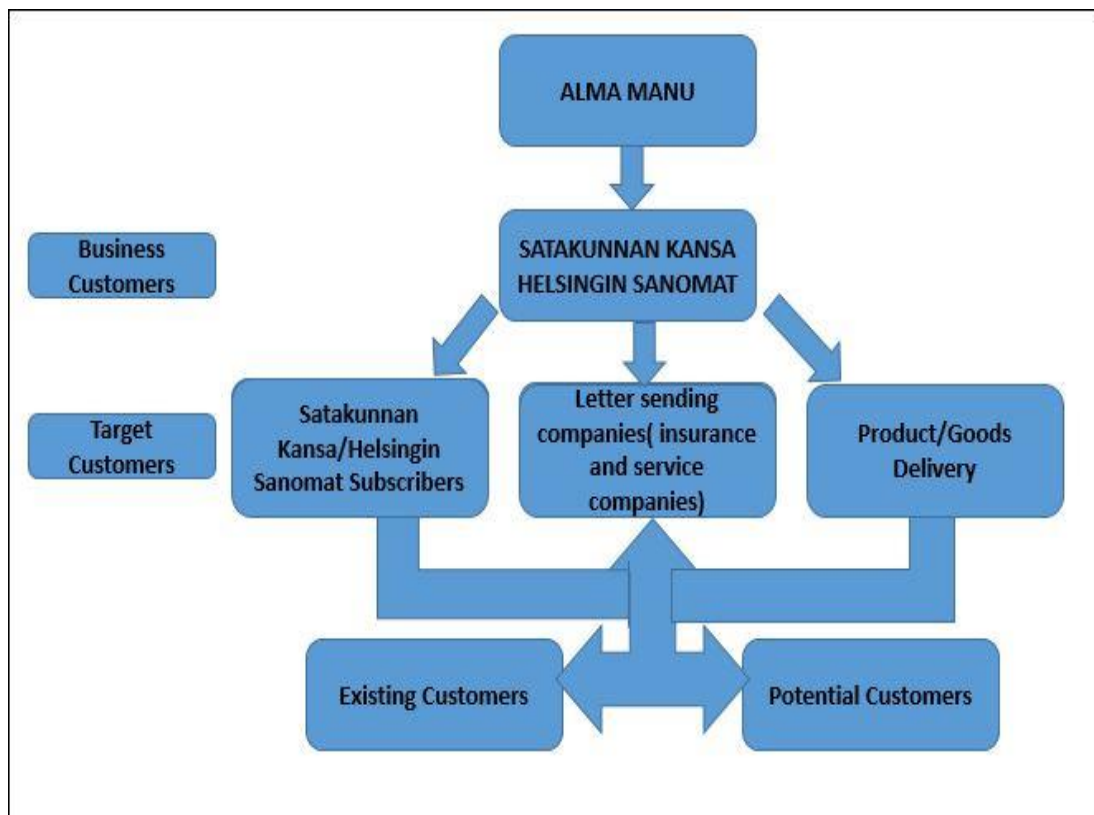


Figure 2: Business structure of Alma Manu Oy

The current business structure of the case company starts with its business customers with whom they have the right to print and deliver their product in Satakunta region. These business customers are the Satakunnan kansa and Helsingin sanomat. And then the company have their own target customers in which the daily subscribers of Satakunnan kansa and Helsingin Sanomat are included. The target customers are also the letter sending companies that send letters to their own customers through Alma Manu Oy such as telecommunication companies like Elisa, DNA etc. and insurance companies as well. The company has also planned to deliver the parcels and goods (food delivery) soon. These target customers are also categorized as two types of customers and they are existing customers and potential customers. The existing customers are the customers who are using the service of the company and potential customers are those customers who are likely to be the existing customers but it is assumed that due to some existing communication barrier they are not yet customers of Alma Manu. The

communication barrier in this case is like, the customers expects some offer from the company but the offer card distributed by the company do not reach to those customer's as they have banned the advertisement in their house and therefore those customers are not able to be the existing customers for the company.

3 MARKETING

Marketing is the process of interacting with the customers and building up the relationship with them. It has mainly two focused goal in which one is finding new customers and other to control and keep the existing customers. It is just not about the selling and making the people familiar with the product or services but it is more about knowing the similar product in the market and people perception about that product building up the relation with the consumer by satisfying their need. Nowadays, in every business either small or large business are doing marketing to interact with their consumer group and to survive in the market. Marketing helps the company aware of their products or services in the market so that they can convince their customer about their product which is better than their competitors. It helps to understand the current demand and need of the customer so that the company can perform well to fulfil it and create strong relationship with its customers. (Kotler, Armstrong 2016, 29-31.)

3.1 Marketing strategy

Marketing strategy is the process of identifying the target market and providing the direction for the effective development of the marketing. In other word, it helps its responsible personnel to achieve the objectives for the organization. It forms the plan for the better use of the company's resources to fulfil its objectives. It prevents the confusion and clarifies the importance of communication for the organization to

achieve its goal. Before designing the marketing strategy, it is necessary to understand the market where the company has targeted. This strategy may include the pricing, segmenting and communication decision for own product before placing it in the market. Giving the proper design to the proper and allocating proper price for it will ensure the success of the business in the market. Communication is also equally important in this case to know about own product and its acceptance in the market. (Lovelock, Wright 2002, 138-139.)

3.1.1 Market segmentation

Marketing segmentation is defined as the process of dividing the larger consumer market in to small groups of consumers that share their needs based on the marketing. In every business, segmentation is required to specify the user group so the company can target it. Segmentation can be done based different criteria such as geography, demographic, psychographic etc. Segmentation can be done based on the geography of the market such as continents, climate, country, regions etc. For instance, coffee is highly acceptable in Finland due to the climatic condition of the country whereas in African countries like Nigeria, Ghana it is not that acceptable. Another segmentation is the demographic which separates the market based on the sex, age, size of the family, their culture, salary etc. For example, a shoes company design the pink colour shoes specifically for their female customers and TATA in India launched a car worth Rupees one lakh (approx. 730 Euros) for the low-income families. Another segmentation is the psychographic which divides the market based on the personality and living standard. For example, a person who has the problem with their health so they don't choose to buy such products which directly or indirectly affect their health negatively. (De Pelsmacker, Genuens, Van Den Bergh 2001, 95-105.)

3.1.2 Branding

In general term, Branding is defined as the process of creating the image of the product in the market for the company which enable the customers to give priority to that product than its competitors. It is not just only about the company's customers to select their product than its competitors but it is also about the product of the company which becomes the solution for the customer's problems. It is very important for any company to spend time on market research, understand the customers' needs and wants and then fulfilling their demand by creating brand and winning in the market. Branding which was done a decade ago is completely different now because of the use of social media. Social media itself allows the company to create their platform in it and advertise their product and make the customers clear about their product better than their competitors. (Website of Harvard Business Review.)

Alma Manu is in developing stage in Pori region and yet to develop as a brand among its competitors. As the Posti is one of the most renowned delivery company for either letters or any other goods, it will be difficult for the case company to stand strong in front of its competitors and create its own brand for its customers. Since the company has recently involved in letter delivery sector but it is strongly going through right path to create brand for its target group. In the field of newspaper delivery, it is the leading delivery company in Satakunta region with very limited competitors.

3.1.3 Target marketing

When the company finds its proper segments in the market, it starts creating the plan for targeting the certain group of people. It is not always the similar as the company targeting the rich people but it is about targeting the specific group of people who are prone to utilize the service or products of the company. Most of the company target its consumer based on the need of the consumers and specific age group. The company have five type of target market selecting:

- One segment concentration
- Focused specialization
- Product specialization

- Market specialization
- Complete market coverage

(Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman, Hansen 2009, 356-357.)

Alma Manu has targeted the certain age group of people as their potential customers and those are from the age group of 40 and above. As the company believes that the age group of people spend time reading newspaper at their home early in the morning rather than the young people. And for the delivery of letters, the company has targeted the companies situated in Pori that sends letter either to their employees or to their stakeholders.

3.1.4 Positioning

In general term, positioning is the process of placing the company's products or services with its benefits to earn the image from the consumers of its target market. Every business success or defeat in the market starts with the position of its products or services in the market as if it is done in a wrong way then the consumers get confused and business gets collapsed. And if the positioning is done in a right way, then the business gets successful. Positioning is not only about the position of the tangible products in the market, but it is more about the positioning of the products in the thought and mind of the consumers. Once the product is positioned in the market it becomes difficult for its competitor to replace it as for this first they should change the mind of the consumers about the brand. Any brand positioned in the market should have some specific benefit which keep it different from its competitors. Some of the company just simply fall behind in positioning of the brand in a correct way and defeat in the market. There are several wrong ways of positioning of the brands:

- Under positioning
- larger positioning
- Confused positioning
- Doubtful positioning

When the company can avoid these errors before positioning its brand in the market, it can succeed in its target market and compete with its competitors. (Kotler 2003, 308-311.)

3.2 Marketing communication

Marketing communication is the process used by the companies to convey their messages regarding their products or services to the customers for its sales. The main aim of the marketing communication is to inform their customers about the offering the company have given on its products to its stakeholders. This helps the customers to accept the offerings of the company and fulfil their demands. (Fill 1999, 13-15.)

There are different types of marketing in which marketing communication is used such as direct marketing, digital marketing, social media marketing etc. Direct marketing is the process of interacting with the customers directly to receive the immediate feedback from them without others such as dealers or any third party. It used to be the best way of marketing in old days but due to technologies developed in the world, it is losing its popularity day by day. (De Pelsmacker, Genuens, Van Den Bergh 2001, 324-325.)

The term digital marketing is the marketing process in which different technologies are used specifically through internet to reach to its consumer group. This way of marketing is widely acceptable in present time. Social media marketing is the form of marketing done with the help of social networking sites as their tools for the marketing. This helps to make the brand by grabbing the attention of the customers and interacting with them to understand their actual needs and demands. (Dodson 2016, 2-4, 153-154.)

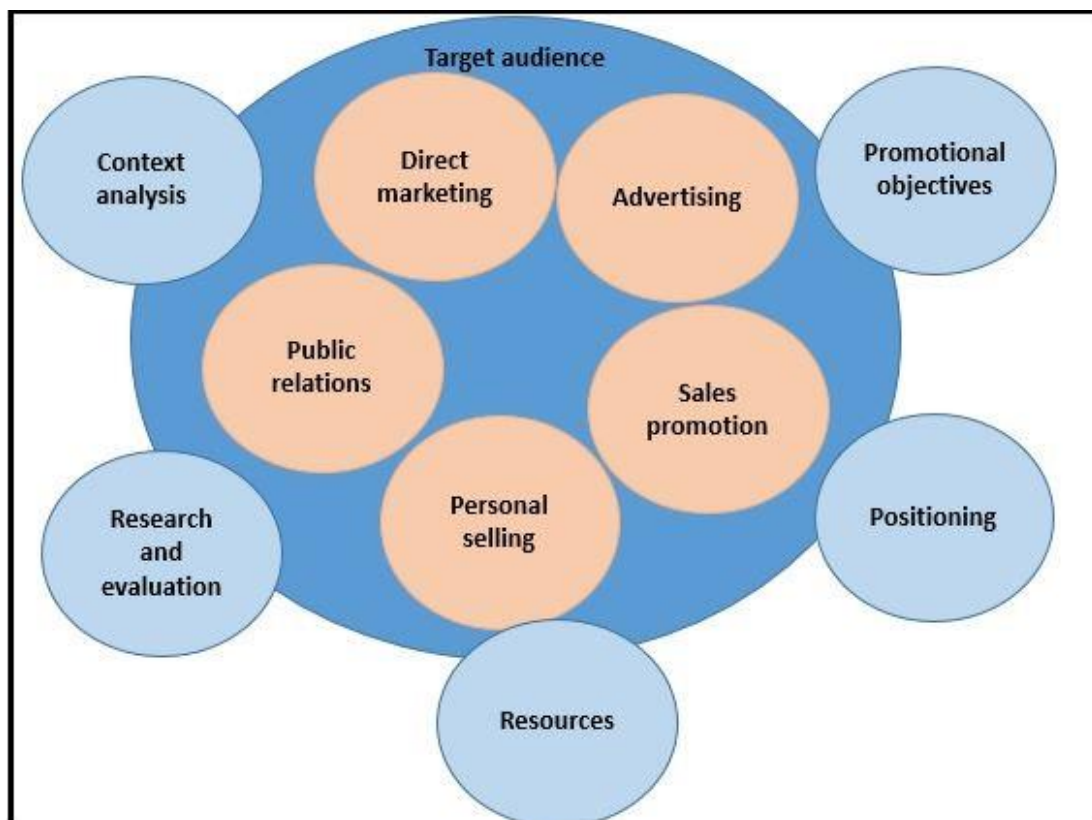


Figure 3. The system of marketing communication. (Fill 1999, 15.)

The above cycle describes the system of marketing communication of an organization to form a series of communication. In this, every factor is interrelated with each other in which one factor drives the other and so on. All these factors are associated to know the accuracy of the decision components.

It becomes tough for the company to predict the attitude of the consumers for their products. There are different factors that enhance the attitude of the consumers about the products, which is explained in the model called the Hierarchy of effects model. This model describes the attitude of the consumers and their process of recognizing and responding to the marketing communication. There are three stages and the customers are predicted to go through these stages. The first stage is cognitive stage in which the consumers think about the product and starts to gain the knowledge regarding the brand. The second stage is affective stage in which the attitudes and feeling towards the brand is changed and positive belief is formed on it. The final stage is the behavioral stage which refers to acting in response to the advertisement of the brand which mean to purchase it. (De Pelsmacker, Genuens, Van Den Bergh 2001, 60-61.)

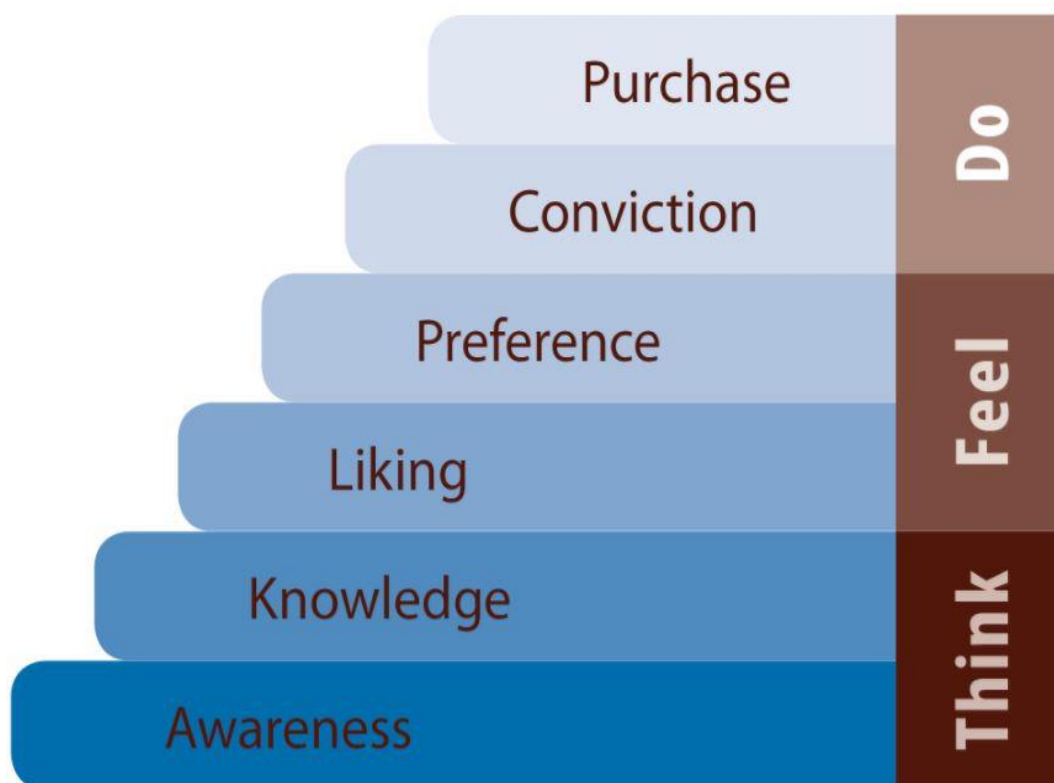


Figure 4. Hierarchy of communication effect. (Blythe 2006, 6.)

The above shown figure illustrates the series of communication that creates impact as it goes up through the ladder. At the bottom of the ladder, there are the customers who are completely unknown about the product of the company. As the ladder goes up, the customers start getting aware of the products and gradually they start liking the products. When they completely know the product, and prefer it more than others than it can be confirmed that they make the purchase of that products.

3.3 Social media marketing

Social media is a set of tools that are used to inform or advert others regarding task, events or any activities. It includes different social media channels to interact with its consumers and deal with its products. Nowadays, the social media has influenced in

every sector of the business because of its high acceptance and utility among the people. In social media, the audiences can participate in any conversation or related activities by commenting on it but this is not possible in the traditional media. The audiences are the part of the conversation in the social media that enhances the publisher to create the true and effective information as they receive the feedback at the same time unlikely the traditional media. Social media helps the advertiser to get the quick feedback from their audiences so that they know whether their advertisement is going in the right direction or not which is not possible in the traditional media. The traditional medias are not very interactive in nature. The digital media does not only help the customers to know about the products but also the companies to know about the customers and their demands and expectation related to the products. (Evans 2012, 32-33.)

Social media marketing is the process of marketing of products done by the company by using the social media tools to gain attention among the people and advertise own products through it. Social media marketing not only helps to interact with the customers but also it leads to expose the company's brands in the market and make it popular. It helps to gain the people's attention towards the product or service that the company is offering. Social media marketing is the most important tool which should be used by every company to succeed in the market. (Dodson 2016, 153.)

3.3.1 Social media marketing process



Figure 5. Four stages of SMM process. (Dodson 2016, 154.)

The above image explains the process of social media marketing done by the company to get effective result. The process starts with the goal in which the company finalizes its own goals and acts per it in the process. The goal of the company should be clear and should have an effective social media marketing strategy to grasp attention among consumers. Another part in the process is the channels, which means that the company should know the channels they are going to use for the marketing through social media.

As there are many social media tools, so the company should plan for the channels they are going to use for their business. The most popular social media channels are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google, YouTube, etc. The third part is the implement, which means how a company implements their plan and what they include and exclude on it to succeed in the market. So, in this part, the company understands their status in the market by receiving different feedback from their customers, which is gathered by listening to them through these social media. The final part is to analyze, which means to understand and evaluate the feedback received from the customers regarding the product or service of the company. This helps to know the company about their goals

and its direction and suggests which way needs to change or improve or stop to gain success in the market.

3.3.2 Social media tools in Finland

Social Media User penetration by Site, Dec 2014

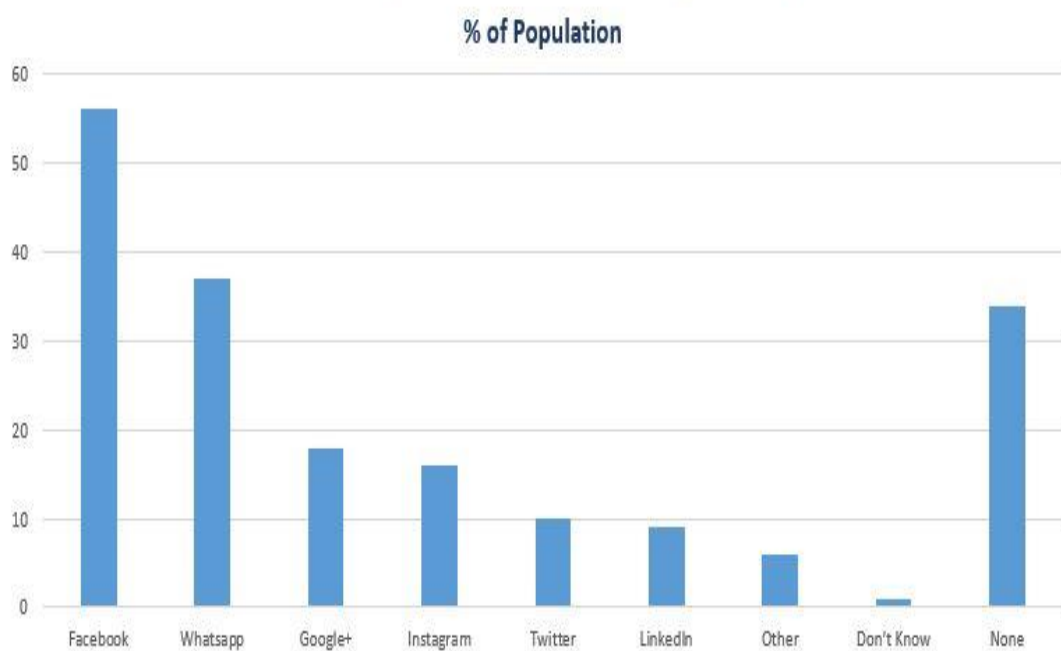


Figure 6. Social media tools in Finland. (Website of Adweek.)

The given graph illustrates the percentage of population those who uses the social media. Most of the people of Finland are familiar with Facebook, WhatsApp, Google, Instagram etc. Some of these popular social media are described below:

Facebook

Facebook has been the great social as well as marketing tools for many of the people from past ten years. There are 1.4 billion of active users of it with 1.25 billion uses it with their mobile phone which gives the great platform for the social media marketers.

Facebook is not only for making own personal profile and either send or accept the friend request but it is also for making own Facebook pages for the companies, creating some events and inviting people through it, invite friends or other user for own brand etc. this helps the company to the know about their product and their status in the market. it is one of the finest way to create brand awareness among the people. In this the customers, simply can show their give their feedback for the product either by liking it or commenting on it. (Dodson 2016, 158-161.)

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is also one of the most popular social media in the World. it is the messenger app used for the smartphone which is much like text messaging through phone. It uses internet connection to send the picture, messages or videos. It is much cheaper that text messaging so it is widely accepted around the world. Though this app does not show any other advertisement but it helps to communicate with business organization and the business organization with its consumers. (Website of webwise.)

Google+

Google+ is one of the most familiar and older social networking service. It has around 1 billion of registered user with 540 active monthly users. It has many products which includes YouTube, Gmail, Maps, Blogger, Android etc. we can open either personal account or public account on it with the option of either hiding or showing of the detail information of the user along with the pictures and posts. One can create a page for their business on it and then create their own circles or community so that other member of the circle can see what the company has done or has been doing. This helps to create new advertisement for their products and make it popular because of its followers who sees it when the company share it on their profile. (Dodson 2016, 176-178.)

YouTube

YouTube is one of the most powerful social media in today's world. It engages the people with its video which can be shared with all other users of YouTube. This is

major platform for the companies to advertise their brand and make its widely recognized. There are more than a billion users in a month and around 400 hours of contents are uploaded on it within a minute. The company can simply set up their own channel on it and specify their brand with a cover picture. Once the account is opened, the other user can simply subscribe or like it and this will give the company the best platform to make their product popular. Along with this, the different account can be shared among the friend through another social media such as Gmail, Facebook etc. (Dodson 2016, 178-180.)

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is recognized as the best platform to connect the professionals and make their more intelligent and achievable in their field. Creating account in LinkedIn is like the other social networks and this will help the company to advertise their vacancy and other opportunities of their organization. This will also allow the company to create the account of their staff members and include it under one profile of the company which makes the company famous and helps their customers know more about the company as well as its workforce. It is considered as the more powerful platform than Facebook or twitter in the field of professional and company focused media. Different links, pictures, videos, presentation are uploaded in every single profile which helps other user to know about either individual or company. (Dodson 2016, 171-172.)

Instagram

It is one of the popular social network platform that allows its user to share their pictures on other social media like Facebook, Flickr etc. in a simple language, it can be said as the platform for visual storytelling by the company or a person to its followers. It has more than 600 million of active users around the world. for creating account, it requires username with profile picture and the user can also log in through their Facebook account. This company was owned by Facebook since 2012. The user of Instagram can follow their friends or any company to know and interact with them. The user can find others photos and posts by following hashtags written on it. (Website of Instagram.)

Twitter

Twitter is also one of the renowned social media that grabs the attention of its user and make them engaged with its features writing on it called as micro-blogging. It is also easier to open a twitter account as other social medias which helps to interact with other people whom you know r whom you want to know. There are around 280 million users of Twitter and among them around 80 percent of user use it through their smartphones. For creating an account in twitter, user can write their name if it is personal account or company's name if it for their company without adding any space or any other sign with the limit of 16 characters. Once the account is ready, user can update their profile or company's picture so that other can know about it clearly. When it is done, one can easily tweet about them or their company product or service in a very short and sweet message. The company can also post their advertisement on it as it appears as the newsfeed in the account of its followers. It has also the facility of sharing, following, mentioning another user with it. It is widely accepted around the world as well as in Finland. (Dodson 2016, 164-170.)

Social media user in Finland

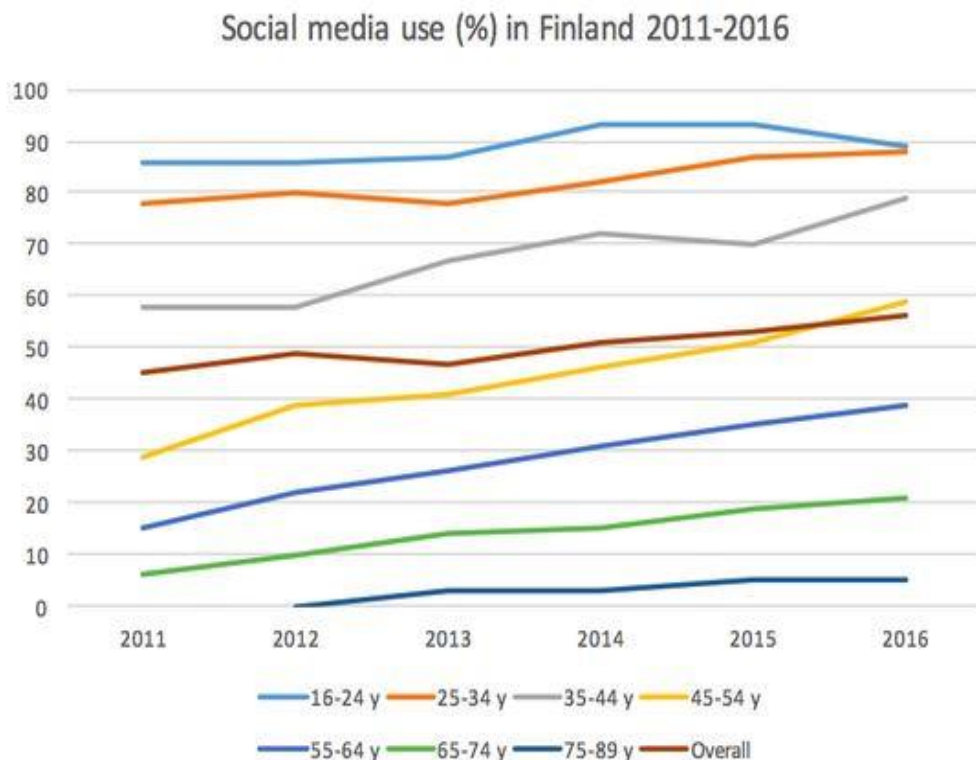


Figure 7. Age group of social media users in Finland. (Website of suvi uski.)

The above dataset explains the age group of social media user of Finland from the year 2011 to 2016. It shows that the young generation use the social media comparatively much more than the people of age group 35 and more. Though the social media is much more popular among the young generation but still it is widely used by the other age group of people as well.

3.4 Benefits and challenges of marketing

Marketing is one of the most important part of the business in today's world. every companies should have effective marketing strategy and plan to sustain and develop in the market. It helps the company to expose its brand and create better relationship and interaction with its customers. When the company interact with their customers in a regular basis, it creates trust and loyalty between them which makes the company well recognized among their audiences. This helps the company to lead the market with their products and position their business as a specialized industry. It helps the customers to make the purchase decision quickly by creating understand between the company and customers. Marketing not only helps to create trust between customers and company but also act as catalyst which leads to benefit both the company and customers. (Website of Masterful Marketing.)

Marketing has also various ups and downs in it which means that effective marketing leads the company to its highest peak whereas ineffective marketing leads to worse position to the company. Different companies create video with great content but it does not guarantee them that their video is watched by their target audience or not. This means the company simply spend a lot on its marketing but remains unknown with the fact that whether it reached to their target audience or not. Budget is also one of the major challenge of the marketing of the company as it is the main factor that decides the marketing plan of the company. Every company makes their marketing

plan based on the budget they have specified for it which creates the difference between the companies and their products. Another challenge that the company face for its marketing is the volume, quality and speed of their products. Because of this, many company struggle to deliver the quality service in each specified time, which becomes the trouble and company fails to achieve recognition in the market. (Website of Marketing Insider group.)

3.5 Marketing planning

Every business needs to design the effective marketing plan to succeed in the market. The company need to know about their target market, target group and their marketing channels, strategy etc. If the company fails in implementing proper marketing plan, the company won't be able to stand in front of their competitors. Marketing Planning not only gives the effective way of marketing but also creates solution to lower the risk in the business. There are many benefits of effective planning which includes less time consumption for market research, enhancing the ability for the adaptability, customer experience, finding the right direction for their products, keep up to date with the market and the competitors etc. Sometimes proper planning also does not go in the right direction because mostly harder part of it is covered and managed and but still misses the general or basic part. Though marketing Plan is mainly focused on its target audience but it also provides the ideas to adopt the changes and act per the change. (Website of The Balance.)

4 MARKETING OF ALMA MANU

Alma Manu has currently the marketing plan which is mainly focused on the traditional marketing communication and the use of social media has been limited. Because of this, their existing customers also do not know about the company. The customers

simply inform the newspaper publishing company such as Satakunnan Kansa and Helsingin Sanomat for their order.

4.1 Marketing strategy of Alma Manu

Alma Manu is very active in direct marketing but when it comes to social media marketing, it is still in the developing stage. The company delivers the advertisement related to their upcoming offers for the daily subscriber of newspaper, but due to different barriers it does not reach to every door of its potential customer. Some of the customers does not allow advertisement in their home and some the customers house are not always known to the deliverer and they fail to deliver those offer cards to those potential customers.

The company publish advertisement in the newspaper also to find its customers. The company delivers free newspaper called Porilaine on every Thursday and publish their offers on it as well. The company usually sends the offer card during the festival times such as Christmas, Midsummer etc. Some offer of the company has very low charges during the first week of the newspaper subscription, and after one week it turns to be a standard price. While other offers include the package, which means the company provides offers for certain subscription of the newspaper only as a package which is comparatively cheaper than the normal subscription. For example, the price of newspaper subscribed for a month is comparatively higher than the price of subscription during the offer. Since the marketing strategy of the company is of traditional type, but it is not as effective as the company expects from it.

4.2 Marketing communication of Alma Manu

The marketing communication in Alma Manu is targeted at its two stakeholders. The first one is the daily subscribers of Satakunnan Kansa and Helsingin Sanomat and the

other one is the letters sending companies such as DNA, Elisa etc. The communication between the company and its stakeholders is not that effective because the company only communicate with their customers when they have any problem either with the delivery of the newspaper or letters or due of the payment. The company do not communicate for receiving any feedback from its customers. Some of its customers even do not know about the company, they directly contact the publication company and order the newspaper and the publication company inform about the customer to Alma Manu. Though the newspapers as well as the letters delivered through Alma Manu has the logo of the company in it but still some of its customers are not aware of it.

4.3 Social media marketing of Alma Manu

The social media marketing of the company is in underdeveloped stage. The company has not done much in this category of marketing and they are still its initial stage. The main branch of the company has introduced the YouTube video for its customer regarding their services but the branch of Pori has not done much in this field. The company has neither opened any Facebook page nor used any other means of social media. The company has its own official webpage in which there are information related to their services or any changes in their services. In its webpage, the advertisement related to their services and offers for their customers are not published.

5 RESULT FROM THE INTERVIEWS

5.1 Collecting primary data through in-depth interview

The first interview was carried out with the manager of the Alma Manu company Eija Kostin Harjamaki. She started working in Alma Manu last year in May. The interview was done to know the internal as well as external environment of the company, relation with its business as well as target customers, competitors and so on. The interview was conducted in the office of Alma Manu in Pori on June 28 and it lasted for an hour. The interview was recorded as well as notes were written down. There were various topics in which the interview was carried out.

- Current business(services) of the company

Alma Manu Oy is the part of the company called Alma Media. The company has been doing the early morning newspaper delivery since its establishment. It has started delivering the letter. The manager stated that the letters that are to be delivered are not directly received by the company. Another company named as the Jakeluyhtio Suomi(JYS) handover the letters to Alma Manu that are to be delivered. The company has been delivering Satakunnan Kansa, Helsingin Sanomat, Uusi Aika, Porilaine, K-City market advertisement and Puuvila Advertisement etc. The company has recently started delivering the City Market Packets (goods delivery). The packets are collected from the stores and delivered to the customer's house.

Helsingin Sanomat and Satakunnan Kansa is delivered every morning and Uusi Aika is delivered on every Thursday. Porilaine is the free newspaper delivered to every door only on Thursday. The advertisement of K-City market and Puuvila is delivered usually on Thursday but in some exception, it is delivered a day before or after. The letters are delivered on week days. The offer letters are delivered once in a week usually during the festival time only to the houses without ban on advertisement.

- Importance of Social media in company and current activities in social media

Currently, the company is following the direct marketing but not the social media marketing. However, company has discussed about digital marketing but it is just discussed but not planned. Social media is important for the Alma Manu like other companies to sustain in the market and compete with its competitors. The company receives the feedback from its customers only as a complain because they are unable to

interact with its customers every time due to lack of social media. When asked about the feedback that the company receives from its customers, she said that the company do not receive any suggestion or idea of improvement from its customer which makes the task even more tough.

The company has not much done in this field of marketing as there are very limited activity done so far. The company official webpage is recently updated which is better than the previous one. There is a Facebook close group but it is only for the deliverers. The company has its twitter account but without any updates. There is a WhatsApp group among the employees only.

- Direct marketing or digital marketing

The company has always tried to act per the market and current market is influenced with Social media. Direct marketing is not that effective as expected from it and is comparatively expensive than the digital marketing. According to Eija, the company is paying not only for printing offer cards but also paying extra for the deliverers for delivering those offer cards. But still those offer cards do not reach to the door of every potential customer of the company.

The discussion about the digital marketing is still in its initial stage. No any major step has been taken for its further formulation. There were several meetings arranged on this topic but still no any plan has been made. The company is unable to step forward for the development of digital marketing in the company. Eija also stated that the company needs the digital marketing because it is widely accepted by every other organization to find their customers and establish in the market.

- Competitors for the company

There are very limited competitors for the company in the field of newspaper delivery and the letter delivery. The company is much strong in newspaper delivery field as it has only competitor called Jakelukeskus. It is an advertisement delivering company which do not deliver any newspapers and just the advertisements. The company is small scaled with limited deliverers so it is not the major competitor for Alma Manu.

In letter delivery sector, there is a competitor called Posti which is renowned all over Finland. This organization is big and it has occupied its market strongly. The company not only delivers the letters but also the parcels. Currently, it is number one reliable delivering company in Finland. Eija pointed that Alma Manu has a strong competitive advantage in the field of delivering letters. Posti delivers the letter in three to four working days but Alma Manu delivers the letters in one working day which means that it is much faster than its competitor.

- Communication with its business as well as target customers

There are two Business customers of newspapers namely Satakunnan Kansa and Helsingin Sanomat and the letter sending companies. Communication is mainly done with phone, email and through meetings which are arranged weekly as well as monthly with the business customers. When asked about the communication error, she replied that there are very limited communication errors that happens with the customers. But the company is unable to communicate every day with them to solve the problem that arise on daily basis.

Communication with the target customers is mainly done with the phone and emails. The customers do not always communicate with the case company for complaining about the services as they directly contact the host company of newspapers such as Satakunnan Kansa and Helsingin Sanomat. When asked about the complaint handling, she said that it is mainly done in the same day such as missing newspapers, missing letters etc. But, due to very limited channels of communication, the company is unable to interact with its customers and do not receive any suggestion for improvement of their services.

- SWOT analysis of the company

The SWOT analysis was made during the interview with the manager of Alma Manu. There are various strength, weakness, opportunities and threat for the case company. As the company was established in 2010 in Pori, it has reached to every corner of the Satakunta region. There are around 210 deliverers with around 50 summer workers.

The deliverers are expert in their field as they receive proper training verbally and practically by the experts of the company. Though the company has recently started the letter and parcel delivery but, it much faster than its competitor in delivery of it.

According to Eija, weakness of the company is that the company is still following the traditional marketing when its competitors are engaged in the social media. The company has done very limited use of social media and just internally among the employees in the company.

Eija said that the company has started many new businesses such as letter delivery and City Market packet delivery, but it still wants to increase its business area and in a better way. The company expects new customers in this field and want to occupy more space in the market. She also stated that Alma Manu do not directly receives the letters to be delivered from its customers. Since the company has recently involved in this field, it can develop and get direct link with the business customers for the letter delivery too.

Though there are very limited competitors for the case company in the market such as Posti and Jakelukeskus, but still they are competitor for Alma Manu. Jakelu keskus is not regarded as the strong competitor for Alma Manu in the field of delivery of newspaper and advertisement as it is only limited in delivering advertisements. Posti is very strong competitor for Alma Manu as it is the delivery company that delivers the letters, packets, parcels all over Finland and it is much experienced and reliable company.

5.2 Collecting primary as well as secondary data through structured interview

The structured interview was done with six companies and an individual who is an existing customer of the company. The members involved in the interview were supervisor of the case company, salesman of DNA (Telecommunication company), front desk officer of Lahitapiola (insurance company), Owner of Mevlana Pizzeria (existing customer of daily newspaper), Owner of Yak and Yeti Restaurant (potential customer

for newspaper), Supervisor of ISS Service company (Existing customer for newspaper and potential customer for Letters) and an individual who is an existing customer of the company since 2013. The interview was carried out for short time about 15-20 minutes with every individual. There were similar topics in which interview was taken as with the manager of the case company and few other questions. The interviews were done with the English-speaking people so there were no issues regarding the communication between the author and the interviewees.

- Supervisor of Alma Manu

The second interview was done with the supervisor of Alma Manu. Her name is Sari Murto and she has been working in the company since 2013. The interview was done on June 30 in the office of Alma Manu. The interview was not recorded but written notes were made and was carried out for around 20 minutes. The answers received from the supervisor was much like the manager's interview. When asked about the importance of social media in the company, she replied that it is current demand in the market and the customers expect us to be in the social media. The communication with the business as well as target customers are mainly done with phones and emails. Sari also stated that sometimes company receives some complaint about not receiving the phone call or replying to email quickly. According to Sari, since the company has started letters as well as parcels delivery the work for the supervisor as well as the deliverers is increased.

- Salesman of DNA

This interview with the salesman of DNA was done on Fourth July in the office of DNA situated in Itapuisto 3. The salesman has been working in the company since 2015. When the author asked about the Alma Manu and its services, he said that it is a newspaper delivery company and do not know any other services. he even did not know that the letters of DNA are delivered by Alma Manu. The office of Itapuisto has the daily subscription of Satakunnan kansa so he knew about the company. He has not seen Alma Manu in any social media but some advertisement in the newspaper. When asked about searching of any company's information in the social media, he said that they use social media often to search about other company's information and their

services. The company is in Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp etc. He also said that nowadays it is much easier to communicate with the customers through social media and they receive comparatively less phone calls.

- Front desk officer of Lahitapiola

This interview was done on July 20 in the office of Lahitapiola located in Gallenkallenkatu. The interviewee has been working in the company since 2013. She knows about Alma Manu as a newspaper delivery company but not a letter or parcel delivery company. She said that their account department takes care of the letter that are sent to their customers and those letters are sent through Jakeluyhtio Suomi company. She has not seen Alma Manu in any social media and they are in the social media like Facebook, Instagram etc. They use social media to find the information of any companies and their services. she personally uses the service of Posti for the delivery of letters as she does not know much about Alma Manu. Nowadays, every companies are in social media so she thinks that Alma Manu also should step towards the use of social media. It has been almost a year that Alma Manu has started its letter delivery but still she does not know about its services.

- Owner of Mevlana pizzeria

The interview was done on July in Mevlana Pizzeria which is in Antinkatu, Pori. The owner of the pizzeria is the existing customer of Alma Manu since 2013. He has subscribed Satakunnan Kansa newspaper. He knows about the company only as an early morning newspaper delivery company. He has not seen Alma Manu in any social media. His Pizzeria has its own official Facebook page, official Website. Before he used to contact directly with the Satakunnan Kansa representatives but from past two years he contacts to Alma Manu through phone office for any complaints such as late delivery or no delivery of newspapers. He is satisfied with the current service of the company.

He has hired Four employees for his company and the salary slip are sent to their net banking but not paper based any more. Sometimes, if the newspaper is late he receives the message from company just few hours before the delivery. He thinks that Alma

Manu should also should be active in social media so that it becomes easier for him and other customers as well to interact with the company.

- Owner of Yak and Yeti restaurant

The interview was done in Yak and Yeti restaurant located in yrjönkatu Pori. the owner has been doing this business since 2013 and was the subscriber of Satakunnan Kansa till 2015 but he unsubscribed the service. The reason he gave about the cancellation of service late delivery at least twice or thrice in a week. He has hired five employees in his restaurant and the salary slip are sent to their net banking as well as paper based and the paper based salary slips are sent through Posti. The restaurant has its own Facebook page, official website and the owner is active in social media and uses social media to interact with its customers as well as search for other company. The owner has not seen Alma Manu in any social media knows about the company as newspaper as well as letter delivery company as he receives the advertisement cards of Alma in his house. The company has no any plan to subscribe the newspaper again. The owner thinks that Alma Manu should be in the social media so that the customers will know about the company and its services.

- Supervisor of ISS service company

This was the last interview which was done in ISS service company located in Pori with the supervisor of the company and it last for around 20 minutes. She has been working in the company since 2010. The company has subscribed the Satakunnan Kansa and Helsingin Sanomat. The supervisor knows about Alma Manu as a newspaper deliver company but not about its letter as well as parcel delivery services. The ISS company has its own official website and Facebook page. She has not seen Alma Manu in any social media. The company has both paper based as well as electronic salary slip which are sent to its employees. Currently, the salary slips as well as other documents are sent through Posti. She told that the letters are generally reached within 3-4 working days to its employees. When the author told her that Alma Manu delivers the letter in one working days, she replied that she does not know about it and has not seen

it in any social media. She is an active user of social media. She thinks that the company should be able to make their customers known about their services so Alma Manu should focus more on marketing to make their customer aware of its services.

- Individual customer

This interview was done on July 15 in interviewee house located in Pori for about 15 minutes. He is 48 years old and has subscribed the Satakunnan Kansa since 2013. He only knows about the company as the newspaper delivery company. At first, he did not contact the Alma Manu for the newspaper but the Satakunnan Kansa and Satakunnan Kansa newspaper are delivered by Alma Manu in Pori. He has his Facebook and Instagram account and has been using it since 2011 and he is active in it. He uses social media channels to search for the services of the different companies. He did not find Alma Manu in Facebook or Instagram. He is satisfied with the service of the company but he expects that those few issues related to the delivery should be improved. Those issues are late delivery, late information related to delivery, almost every Thursday newspaper are delayed etc. He contacts with Alma Manu for any complaint either through phone or email.

By interviewing these six customers (existing and potential) of Alma Manu, it was known that most of the customer's do not know about all the services of the company. They just know the company as newspaper delivery company. The manager of the company told that their official website is updated recently but their customer does not know about it. The company still needs lot of work to do make their services known to everyone. It is usual to search for the services of the company in social media as most of the companies are in social media. It is much easier and faster way of finding the information about the company in social media. It does not only give the general information about the company but also the customers experience about the services through their comments and feedbacks. As everyone is in social media, nobody wants to waste their time by phone call or visit to the company to know about its services.

The service of the company is satisfactory as the newspapers are delivered in different timing few times in a week. On Thursday, newspapers are delivered late than the usual

time. The number of missing newspaper is comparatively less than the previous year. The number of complaints about missing letters is also very low and in most of the cases those missing letters and newspapers are delivered on the same day during the day time. Though the service of the company is fast but still it needs its improvement in the timing of delivery which means delivery of the newspaper at the same time every day. It will be easier for the customers to interact with the case company if it is available in the social media. The potential customers who are planning to join the services of the case company will know the company in a better way by knowing the feedback and comments of the audiences in its official page. The customers will be updated with every information of the company which are needed to inform to its customers such as any exception in the delivery or new services of the company etc.

Communication with the case company is usually done by phone and email. The problems that arise with phone call is the call is not received sometimes. This similar problem arise with the email as the queries are not answered instantly. The customers receive information about any exception in delivery such as late delivery or no delivery on any special day at night of the delivery so if the customers receive the information a day before it will be helpful for them. The advertisement related to the offer of newspaper do not reach to every door of its potential customers. The company should step forward in the field of social media to interact with its customers. This will not only help the company but also the customers to know about the company and their services. The customers will evaluate the company services with their competitors and select the best one. The customers can also inform to their friends, relatives about the services of the company and help them to find the better services from the company.

6 SUGGESTION AND RECOMMENDATION

The suggestion and recommendation to the case company is given by doing proper research of the company as well as its target group. The suggestions given by the author is based upon the objectives of the thesis.

- Use of social media channels for marketing

The case company has used very limited social media channels but only among its employees. Thus, they should mainly concentrate on using most popular channels in Finland for their marketing such as Facebook, Instagram, twitter, Blogs, YouTube etc. since all the customers are not in a single media channel so the company should provide the wide range of the channels so that it becomes easier for its customers to find it on the social media.

The company should create its own official Facebook page where they can post their offer or any news related to the customers. The company can also create some events and post it on Facebook so that the customers know about the event. The company can know about the people who are interested to attend their event from Facebook as it shows the number of people interested in the events. The company can post their latest offer in their services on it to inform to its potential customers. The company can know about the popularity of its Facebook page by simply checking the number of likes of its page. The company can also interact with its potential as well as the existing customers with the help of Facebook.

The company can also create its official page on Instagram where they can do the similar task as done in the Facebook. Any post updated in the Instagram can also be shared in the Facebook so that the target customers who have not followed the Instagram but the Facebook gets updated with it. The company can know the number of followers in it.

Another channel through which the company can do marketing is by creating its official Twitter account. It is also like Facebook and Instagram as through this, any news information related to the company or its customers can be posted. Another most popular social media channels in Finland is Blogs and YouTube. The company also should focus on making short video clips of their way of doing works and promoting their services through it. This will help the company to find its potential customers as well as the existing customers to know more about the company and their updated services.

- Services/product marketing

The case company should not limit its services in its channels just for making their customers aware of it but also with the help these channels the customers simply subscribe to their services. For example, if any posts related to the offers of the company is liked by the customers in Facebook, they can simply subscribe that offer. The customers do not always want to visit the company or call them to subscribe any services. Different problems may arise in this process such as the number gets busy, the company opening hours, no representative every time etc. This will help the case company to find their potential customers and helps the customers to subscribe the services more easily.

This will not only help the company to attract the customers but also help them to improve their services finding comments on their post regarding the improvement. The customers will get opportunity to know about the company more closely and think themselves as the part of the company. The company should be more responsive in this case, as any comments or suggestion given by the customers should be handled separately and in quick time.

- Finding evidence to check the success of marketing

To know the success rate of the marketing effort done by the company, finding physical evidence is important. It is necessary for the company to know how well their social media tools are accepted by the customers. The case company can simply check it through the channels by knowing the number of followers in the Instagram, twitter and number of likes and share in their Facebook page etc. This will help the company to their present situation of their marketing efforts and can compare it with their competitors. The number of views on any official video of the company on YouTube or Facebook also help to know the result of their effort.

- Budgeting

Budgeting refers to the amount of money required to perform any task in any company. In this case of Budgeting for the marketing of the company, the case company can

either give all the responsibility to the marketing or the Branch manager. The case company has hired sales manager last year in October but not the marketing manager. The sales manager deals with the direct marketing of the company but do not involve in any sorts of social media marketing.

The first way is to hire a marketing manager for the company who takes the responsibility for social media marketing. However, hiring a new manager for the company won't be cheap. The average salary of a marketing manager in Finland is 4375 Euros (52498 Euros/ year Nokia digital marketing manager). Giving this much amount of salary by middle scaled company to marketing manager might be difficult.

Another option for the company is to hand over the responsibility of social media marketing to the branch manager of the company. This will be much more affordable than the earlier option. Since, the responsibility is big that it will be tough for the manager to handle, they can also hire an assistant who work under the supervision of the manager. Hiring an assistant won't be that expensive as the average salary is around 1900-2000 Euros per month (approx. 22800-24000/ year). If the company can increase its customers to some extent with the help of social media, it won't be tough for the company to hire an assistant and even the marketing manager.

Position	First year budget	Second year budget	Third year budget	Total
Marketing manager	52498	52498	52498	157494
Assistant	22800-24000	22800-24000	22800-24000	68400-72000

The above table illustrates the estimated budget for first year plan for hiring either marketing manager or an assistant. Alma Manu has the option to choose any one of them and start for the further development of social media marketing.

7 CONCLUSION

This thesis is written with the aim to provide the effective ideas of developing social media marketing in the case company to find their potential customers by the author. The objectives of the thesis were to know the satisfaction and expectation of the customers (potential as well as existing) from the case company which was achieved gathering the theoretical as well as empirical data. The boundaries for this thesis was created and followed so that the author does not move away from the related topic and change the direction of thesis. The purpose and objectives of the thesis are clear and understandable for the readers. The thesis plan is designed to provide the right direction for the thesis and fulfil its objectives through it.

The first part of the thesis includes the purpose and objective for the selection of topic and its importance for the case company. The current business of the case company is described in it so that the reader knows about the case company in detail with its business areas. Since the topic for the thesis was mainly based on creating the marketing plan for the case company, different extensive research has been done and included in the thesis to provide the best effective result. The information related to the marketing and marketing communication is well described in the theoretical part.

The theoretical information was collected from the official webpage of the company, books from the reliable writers and from the reliable websites. The theoretical data includes different part and ways of marketing done globally so that the author has enough evidence to evaluate the effective marketing plan. The branding, positioning, target marketing, segmentation is well described to collect extensive data and analyze it. The description of the social media and their channels are done extensively to provide the idea of finding effective suggestions for its development in the case company. Different charts and graphs are included in the theoretical part as well to make the reader aware of the use of social media through different channels in Finland. The most accepted and popular social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, WhatsApp etc. are described in the thesis.

The empirical information is collected by performing two types of interviews as in-depth and structured interview. Since the research method used in the thesis the qualitative research method, the author has selected eight interviewees for the interview. The in-depth interview was done with the branch manager of the company to know both the internal and external environment of the case company. The questions discussed in the interview were on several topics such as marketing of the company, its communication, customers, competitors, strength, weakness, opportunities, threat etc. the addition of the services by the case company for its customers were discussed.

The structured interview was done with the representatives of seven company and an individual who were either business customers or target customers of the case company. The interview also includes the similar topics which were discussed with the manager of the case company along with the satisfaction, improvement and expectation of the customers from the case company were discussed. The thesis also includes the present status of the company in the field of marketing and marketing communication. It includes the description of the company that it has been doing for direct marketing, digital marketing and its communication with the customers.

The suggestions and recommendations for the case company is based upon the interview done with the representatives of the case company as well as other company. The suggestion for developing social media marketing in the case company is given by knowing the behavior, perception of the existing as well as the potential customers towards the company. The suggestion and recommendation is given to develop the marketing plan done through social media to stand strong among the competitors in the market. it includes the areas of development and its procedure along with the estimated budgeting required for this development. Overall, the author has used the extensive research to provide the effective suggestions to the case company for its development in the field of social media marketing.

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APPENDIX 1

Primary data collection through in depth interview done with the Manager of Alma Manu

What activities company is doing currently in social media? Any change from last year.

Who are the Target customers for the company? Something about the branding of the company.

Which is better either Social media or Traditional media and why?

Which social media channels are used by the company?

Does company receive any feedback from its customer regarding the marketing? If any

How important is the social media marketing for the company?

Any plan for the further development of social media marketing in the future?

How social media is carried out in the company among the employees in the daily work?

Who are the competitors for the company? Do you think that Alma Manu is better than its competitors and how?

According to you, what are the strength, weakness, opportunities and threat of Alma Manu?

How often company communicate with their business as well as Target customers and through what?

What are the problems that arises when communicating with the customers?

Does every employee of the company know about the social media marketing?

Does company has appointed any expert for social media marketing?

APPENDIX 2

Structured interviews of business as well as target customers

What do you know about Alma Manu?

What are its services?

Have you seen the company in any social media?

How often you communicate with the company and through which channels?

How long you have been the customer for the company? Do you want to be the customer of Alma Manu?

Why Alma Manu but not other companies?

Are you satisfied with the services of Alma Manu?

Do you expect anything more from Alma Manu?

Are you active user of social media? How often you use it?

Do you use social media when searching for any company's information about its services?

How would you like to communicate with Alma Manu, if needed? Through phone. Email or any social media

What will be the advantage for you if Alma Manu becomes active in Social media?

What kind of information you would like to get from Alma Manu?

Do you want to give any suggestion to Alma Manu for its development?