Tampere University of Applied Sciences

Digital Marketing Plan

Case: Bitumipojat Oy

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis was to create a digital marketing plan for the commissioner, Bitumipojat Oy, because they did not have a marketing strategy before. The company's online store has been operating for few years, and they needed a marketing plan to increase their sales and attract new customers. Bitumipojat wanted to know what marketing tools they needed to achieve these objectives.

The theoretical framework outlines the different tools used in digital marketing, such as social media marketing, customer reference marketing, search engine marketing and content marketing. The digital marketing plan's conceptual framework was created based on SOSTAC and Marketing Mix. The author conducted a quantitative research by designing a questionnaire to gather information about the target audience's social media and buying behaviour and their search habits, which gave the necessary information to create the digital marketing plan.

Secondary data research showed the importance of website optimization and social media marketing, and the company's content should include photos, videos, and articles. It was found out that Bitumipojat has the values, the target audience value, them being a good product quality, quality of service, seller's expertise, and reasonable price level, but they have not utilized it in their marketing before.

Based on the situational analysis, the company has an excellent opportunity to differentiate and grow their business since their competitors do not do active digital marketing. The literature review and collection of questionnaire data made it possible for the author to create a SOSTAC model-based digital marketing plan. The plan includes all the recommended tools and strategies the company should utilize to grow their business. After using the digital marketing plan and growing the company, it is suggested that they conduct new research about their customers to gain more customer data and create new target group segments.

Key words: digital marketing plan, online store, social media marketing, SOSTAC

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thesis topic

The online store's marketing plan was chosen as the thesis topic based on the author's interest and the commissioner's needs. The thesis focuses on constructing a practical digital marketing plan and the main elements it should include. The focus is on the organisation’s social media channels and online presence, as the organisation’s products are aimed at individual consumers (B2C), and the purchasing and selling happen online.

The topic is relevant for Bitumipojat since digitalisation has changed the way people consume. The popularity of online stores has grown rapidly during the past 15 years. Because of Google, consumers could find online stores with ease, and the variety of products, reasonable pricing and ease of purchasing drew consumers to online shopping. Ten years ago, the growing popularity of social media helped boost the growth, and six years ago, the introduction of mobile purchasing increased the popularity of online shopping by 43,21% during 2015-2016. The introduction of the smartphone and social media have enabled online store companies to do inexpensive and widespread marketing, thus making online shopping easier. (Rantamölö 2020.) Almost half of the small to medium businesses have estimated that digitalisation affects their business significantly, especially in companies that are focused on selling. The importance of digitalisation is the most remarkable when the companies are in the founding or growth phase. (Conferedation of Finnish Industries 2015.)

The thesis’s primary focus is on developing an online store. As the online store's sales have not been what was expected, the development of a marketing plan is in place to increase the sales. However, the commissioner has not had the resources and knowledge to create and execute a marketing plan prior. Therefore, the thesis focuses on digital marketing actions because the company is entirely online, and nowadays, companies must have online visibility to attract new customers and create long-lasting customer relationships (Kotler 2019, 23).

The author believes that the plan will help the organisation increase its online presence, thus generating more sales through its online store and gaining new customers and possibly attracting potential employees.

1.2 Thesis objective, purpose and research question

The purpose of the thesis is to provide Bitumipojat Oy with an adequate marketing plan, which would improve the company's digital presence and create more attraction to their online store, thus generate more sales and attract new customers and potential employees.

The marketing plan's objective is to create more traffic on the organisation's online store and improve Bitumipojat's social media visibility. To achieve the objective, it is crucial to see what tools and channels the company should utilize and how they should plan their marketing activities. Furthermore, it is essential to search the market's characteristics and what factors affect their target audience's social media and buying behaviour. Based on these objectives, research questions were set.

The initial research question is:

What are the digital marketing tools the company should use to increase its visibility and online sales?

The supporting sub-questions are:

How to create a digital marketing plan for Bitumipojat Oy?
How should they use these tools to reach digital marketing goals?

1.3 Research methods

The primary data of this thesis is gathered by quantitative research by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire data is collected from potential customers to determine which social media channels they use and how they would research the commissioner's online store.

This way, the commissioner gathers information on which channels are the most relevant for an online company that sells bitumen roofing material and what kind of content they should provide for their target audience.

In this thesis, the literary review consists of digital marketing, marketing planning, and B2C marketing on a general level. The literary review also includes two marketing planning models, marketing mix and SOSTAC, which are part of the thesis's theoretical framework together with the concepts. Finally, the literary review is combined with the collected primary data in the empirical part, in which the questionnaire and digital marketing plan is created.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis structure is visualised in figure 1. The first chapter introduces the thesis topic and its objectives, purpose, research questions, and methodology. Chapter two introduces the commissioner's company and the industry it operates in. The third chapter explains the concepts and theories that create the thesis framework. Together, chapters one, two and three form the thesis plan. Chapter 4 explains the research methods, introduces the conceptual framework, the planning of the questionnaire and the analysing methods. Chapter 5 includes the results of the questionnaire as well as the analysis of it. Based on the data gathered, chapter six will include the digital marketing plan. Finally, chapter seven includes the conclusions and recommendations made by the author.

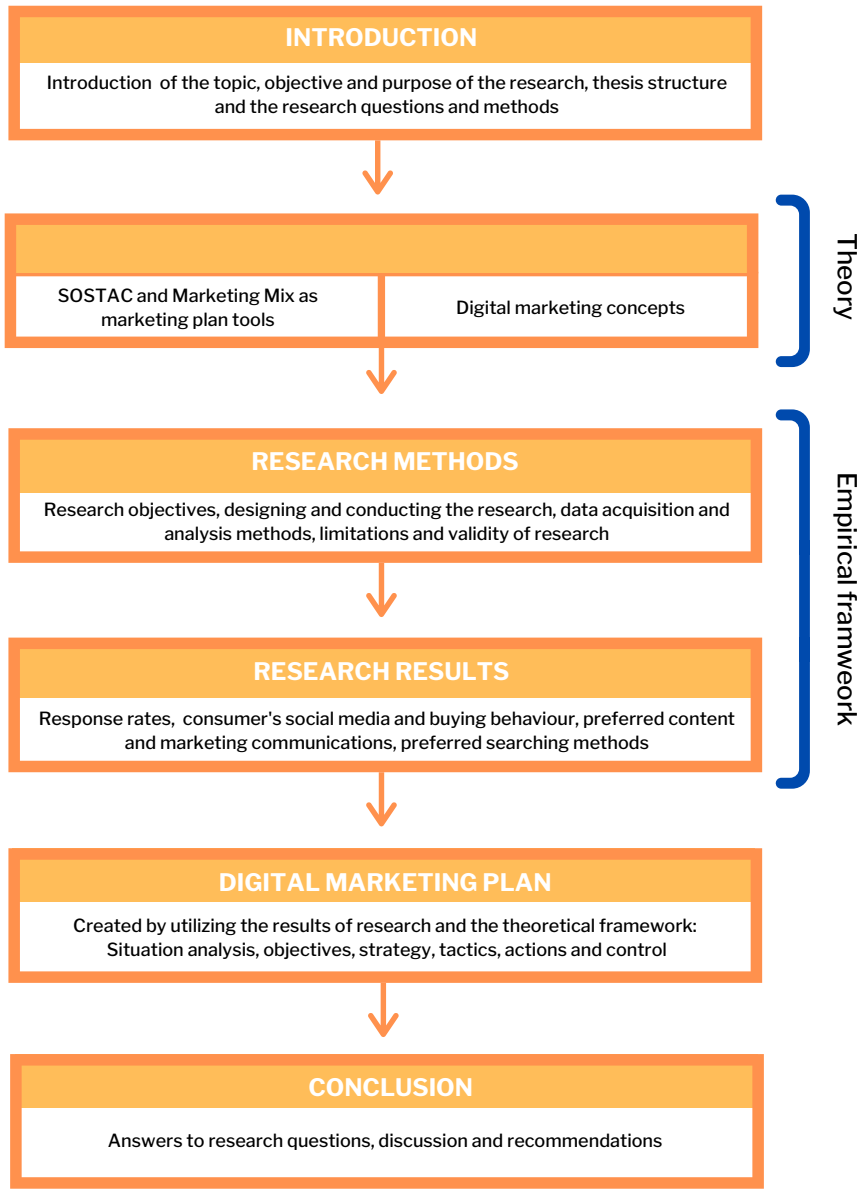

FIGURE 1. Thesis structure

2 CASE COMPANY AND INDUSTRY

2.1 Bitumipojat Oy

This thesis is commissioned by Bitumipojat Oy. The company's main business is roof installation, and now they have established their online store where they sell roofing materials. Bitumipojat was established in 2015. The company is located in Lempäälä, and their worksites are mainly located in the Pirkanmaa region. The company has four employees. They are very successful in their roof installing business, but they have not had success yet with their online store. (Viitanen & Virtanen 2020.) The turnover of Bitumipojat was 499 KEUR, and their profit was 4 KEUR (Finder n.d).

Their online store sells roof materials made from bitumen, which they use in their installing business as well. Bitumipojat have an excellent opportunity to create a successful online business because their prices are much lower than their competitors. Their target customers are so-called ‘’DIY-builders’’ who will do some minor renovations or buildings to their homes or other small projects. (Viitanen & Virtanen 2020.)

Bitumipojat Oy launched its online store in 2018. The online store sales have not been what was expected, and now the organisation wishes to develop a marketing plan to increase their sales and positioning in the market. They do not have an employee who focuses on marketing solely, and the marketing is done by the company's owner. Previously marketing has consisted of seldom Instagram and Facebook posts and one radio advertisement. (Viitanen & Virtanen 2020.)

2.2 The construction industry in Finland & online store trends

Finland’s construction industry employs around 250 thousand people, and it includes both employees and entrepreneurs. Around 100 thousand of these are employees, 35 thousand are white-collar workers, and the rest are entrepreneurs. Small companies dominate the construction industry. The industry is very seasonal, most of the construction is done during summer, and it is sensitive to trade

fluctuation, and it affects employment, but it has been stable for the last few years (Rakennusteollisuus RT ry N.d.) The pandemic did not affect the roofing industry a lot. The economic situation of the industry remained good because there was more housing construction than was expected. Therefore, the business cycle is expected to remain at a good level in 2021 as well. (Rakennusteollisuus RT ry 2021.)

The consumers are not as familiar with the roofing industry's brands as the professionals, and the consumers' perceptions of brands are more deficient than professionals. Only a few brands in the industry have good notoriety among the consumers. (Kerabit 2017.) Marketing in the industry has traditionally relied on sales, and marketing and communications have had a minor role. During the last few years, companies have been seeking new marketing channels to increase their sales. The development of websites has been on the rise, and companies have started to create content, and they are trying to test new ways to improve search engine visibility. (Olsio 2019.) Almost every company in the industry has a website, and they are present on the internet. Some of the websites are remainders of the '90s, and they have not been updated in years. Often the websites consist of reference images and contact information and nothing else. Most of the companies' marketing activities revolve around Google AdWords, and when inspecting the results of organic marketing, giant online stores are ahead of smaller companies. The competition of organic marketing is very minimal in the construction industry. (Jansen 2021.)

According to Relatable (2020), the popularity of online shopping will pass brick-and-mortar sooner than expected if the regular consumers follow the early adopters' footsteps. The role of physical stores changes, as they are seen more as an inspirational place, and the purchasing takes place online. Showrooming's popularity is on the rise, and it attempts to combine brick-and-mortar and e-commerce. For the online store to succeed, it needs to be convenient to the consumer. Nowadays, online purchases happen primarily through mobile, which means that the online stores need to be designed that in mind if they wish to succeed in the competition. Also, the demand for flexible and alternative payment methods are increasing significantly. Shopping through social media platforms is growing, and Instagram dominates it. In the future, the importance of reviews

grows, and it is seen to decrease online trust issues among consumers. The consumers' values are changing as sustainable production is seen as a more important value than the price. Consumers also prefer content is something easy to consume and access.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will introduce the concepts and theories that are used in this thesis. These concepts and theories compose the theoretical framework and literary review for this thesis. The concepts introduced and explained are written to give the reader a broad context of the thesis. The concepts start from the common marketing terms and end in the specific ones. The theories also contribute to the theoretical framework.

The SOSTAC model is the main framework of this thesis, and it will guide the digital marketing plan creation process as a model for Bitumipojat Oy. To help to determine the strategy, tactics and actions of SOSTAC in the digital plan, the Marketing Mix is used to help to form the questions when designing the research questionnaire. The formation of questions is explained more in-depth in chapter 4.2. The conceptual framework can be seen in Figure 2, which is presented below.

3.1 CONCEPTS

3.1.1 Digital Marketing

Marketing used to be seen as a part of the company functions alongside production, human resources, financial and information management. Nowadays, customer-oriented marketing thinking plays a vital role at the strategical level, guiding most business decisions and solutions. (Bergström 2018, 17.)

The whole organisation should notice that marketing is part of every function, and it does not only belong to the marketing department. The organisation's image is an essential competitive factor; it is how organisations create long-term customer relationships. The current and potential customer' needs and wishes are the premises of marketing thinking from which new products and services are developed. (Bergström 2018, 17.) According to Bergström and Leppänen (2018, 17), the more satisfied the customer is, the more likely the customer relationship will continue, and the longer the customer relationship, the better its success.

Companies' most usual tools to reach customers are websites, search engines, social media channels and e-mail. Nowadays, digital marketing can be seen as more vital than traditional marketing methods because consumers spend all-time high amounts on the internet. Digital marketing utilises this as an opportunity to promote their products and services and interact with their customers, thus building customer relationships, which is not possible through traditional marketing channels. (The American Marketing Association n.d.)

It is agreed that currently, there are three different types of media in digital marketing: paid, owned and earned media. When using paid media, the company invests its capital in getting more visitors, get greater reach or conversions through search engines, and display their advertisement on networks or affiliate marketing. Traditional media channels such as print and TV advertisements also fit into this category. Owned media consists of media platforms that the company owns and controls themselves, such as their social media channels, apps, websites and e-mail lists. These may also include brochures and retail stores.
On the other hand, earned media can be defined as various communication methods between customer and businesses online and offline. Communication can happen through word of mouth, which can be prompt through social media marketing and conversations across different social media channels and communities. Traditionally it has been seen as the publicity generated through PR, but nowadays, it is seen as sharing content through influencers, blogger and other partners. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 10.)

At its core, marketing can be defined as a process whose primary goal is to satisfy customer needs. In the marketing process, companies provide value to their customers in order to build strong customer relationships, thus gaining value from customers in return. (Kotler et al. 2017, 5.)

3.1.2 Marketing plan

The marketing plan’s purpose is to document how to achieve the organisation’s customer-centric strategic objectives by using specific marketing strategies, tactics and tools (Kotler et al. 2018, 621). The marketing plan’s objective is to reach

a specific audience with a clear and consistent message to turn prospects into customers (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 78). The plan aims to establish a framework for an organisation to access various marketing opportunities, set marketing goals and put competition into perspective. The marketing plan must be precise and flexible so that it helps the company prepare for unforeseen factors, such as new competition, changing technologies and other changes that can impact marketing efficiency. (Wood 2017, 4.)

The marketing plan consists of seven different stages:

1. Analysis of the current situation
2. Market and customer analysis
3. Determining segmentation, targeting and positioning
4. Setting marketing direction and objectives of the marketing plan
5. Planning of programmes, strategies and support
6. Planning of progress and performance measuring
7. Executing, controlling and reviewing the plan

(Wood 2017, 4.)

In this thesis, these stages will be covered using SOSTAC as the framework to create a digital marketing plan. SOSTAC is explained in more detail in chapter 3.2.2.

3.1.3 Business-to-Customer Marketing

In Business-to-Consumer markets, the seller is a business, and the final consumers are individuals who buy goods for their personal consumption. In most cases, consumers are not aware of what influences their buying behaviour. (Armstrong, Brennan, Harker & Kotler 2019, 167.) When making B2B sales, the buyers often make their decisions based on rational factors, but in B2C sales, the decision making is often based on emotional factors. Therefore, it is essential to understand the differences between consumers when trying to implement and plan a marketing strategy successfully. (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 74.)

In most cases, B2C marketing communication will be based on capturing the customers' attention immediately by offering coupons or subscription to the newsletter to get a discount on a purchase or other similar methods. Because of emotional decision-making, B2C consumers will not put as much effort into analysing other options or competitors, but they are sometimes interested in the characteristics and advantages of products and services. Therefore, the emotional factor plays a fundamental role in the sales process in order to provoke a purchase decision. (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 74, 78.)

When doing a B2C marketing plan, the choice of proper media channels is crucial for the company’s success, especially of the smaller companies, who have limited budgets, because when choosing one or two primary channels they reduce the risk of wasting time and resources on activities that would not lead to pursued goals and objectives (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 79). Although the company's primary purpose is to sell in the B2C market, the aim of marketing communications is not always to increase sales. In addition to sales, many other secondary objectives may be set, such as building loyalty, reinforcing brand name and investigating consumer responses. Customer orientation is the most significant factor in marketing (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 77)

When implementing the marketing plan, the result measurement is mandatory in order to learn from mistakes and avoid them in the future, thus providing directions to improve in marketing techniques (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė 2019, 84.)

3.1.4 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing can be defined as using digital marketing tools such as social media channels, websites, e-mail and apps to engage and reach customers through computer’s or mobile devices (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris, Hongwei, 2019, 23). It is also about monitoring the customers' activity to reinforce engagement with the company, which may happen through the company website, social media channels, or third-party sites. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 29) Social media marketing aims to create engagement with target customers and promote its business by making tailored content for particular social media channels. Social me-

dia is an excellent tool for companies to gain insight into their customers' interests. By having a social media platform, the company can communicate with their customers and target customers and recognise their brand and create stronger, long-lasting relationships by engaging with them. Social media marketing is also very cost-efficient compared to other advertising platforms; creating social media profile is free, and when doing paid campaigns and advertisements, the costs are relatively low. (Henderson 2020.)

3.1.5 Customer Reference Marketing

Customer reference marketing can be described as an action where a company utilizes existing customer relationships and previously delivered customer solutions in their marketing actions to appeal to new customers. By having customer references, the company brand, reputation, and credibility can strengthen. Having references indicates that the company has a strong market position. It also reduces the potential buyer's perceived risk since it demonstrates previous experiences. By utilizing customer references, the company gains credibility as it shows the company's expertise, experience, and ability to deliver customer value. Customer reference marketing is seen as critical marketing, promotional and selling an asset when attracting new potential customers and building the company's credibility. (Jalkala & Salminen 2010, 976-978 & 981-982.)

3.1.6 Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a pivotal part of search engine marketing (SEM). SEM is used to generate visitors from search engines like Google, Bing or even YouTube. SEM utilizes the consideration phase of the customers when they are looking for products or brands, which nowadays mostly happens through search engines. SEO purpose is to achieve the highest possible ranking in the organic searches of the consumers when using search engines by utilizing the chosen keywords or phrases. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 400-401.) SEO's advantages are in creating traffic to the website, and when having well-chosen keywords, the visitors are highly targeted, thus having quality visitors who already have a high intention to purchase. SEO also affordable because optimization does not require money. The disadvantage of SEO is the lack of predictability

and the ongoing nature. It is hard to predict SEO results compared to other media, and the competition is tough. For a company to have good SEO, they need to update it regularly and create new content and links. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 406.)

3.1.7 Content Marketing

Content marketing consists of either static content in web pages or dynamic content that encourages engagement. Good examples of engaging content are videos, user-generated content and podcasts. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 36.) In order to succeed in digital marketing communications, the produced content needs to be at the centre of all marketing actions because it incites all the channels that are being used to communicate with audiences. When doing e-mail and social media marketing or campaigns, content creation is a crucial method in order to generate demand and engage with the audience. The most important part is to create content that meets the target customer's interest and the company's set commercial goals. To create more awareness and get shares of the content, the companies can partner with sites or influencers. To get the best results, the company needs to monitor its performance, such as sharing effectiveness in social media. They should also engage with the audience by answering their questions and comments. It is also essential to see how well the content is performing in search marketing since by creating a regular stream of content, the search engines will favour the site when consumers are looking for information, thus generating more traffic to the website. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 36-38.)

3.1.8 Integrated Marketing Message

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) can be defined as a marketing approach where a message is shared through multiple strategies while working together and reinforcing one another's purpose. An example of this is when a company introduces their new logo and promote it in multiple channels such as television, print, social media. Their approach in each medium differs slightly, but the core message is the same, thus linking all forms of communication together. (Lake 2019.) When a company utilizes IMC, the brand awareness increases, consumers are more familiar with the product or service, and consumers are more

likely to favour the company when purchasing than companies that are not integrating their strategies (Allen 2020). In addition, by having a unified core message rather than a scattered myriad of messages, the company is able to have a more impactful effect (MMC Learning 2020).

IMC has multiple benefits, such as boosting sales by communicating through multiple platforms to create multiple opportunities to increase the awareness and interest of consumers. Well planned and executed reminders and special offers help the customer in their buying process by reducing the consideration time. IMC enables consistent messaging, making the company's marketing more credible, and nurturing the customer relationship. It reduces the customer's search process and helps to differentiate from the competitors when the consumer is considering their options. Utilizing IMC in the company's marketing can save money and reduce workload since it eliminates duplication of visual materials since all the materials can be utilised in different mediums like print and social media. (MMC Learning 2020.)

3.2 THEORY MODELS

3.2.1 The marketing mix (7p's)

After the company has defined its marketing strategy, it is time to use the marketing mix. The marketing mix consists of strategic tools that the company utilizes to reach its determined goals defined in the marketing strategy. As seen in figure 2, the marketing mix defines the company's tool kit for establishing a strong positioning in the target markets. (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris, Hongwei 2019, 51-52.) The marketing mix was introduced in the 1960s and was referred to as four P's; product, price, place, and promotion. However, as time has passed, four P's have evolved to seven P's, including the service mix known as people, process and physical evidence. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 19.)

The product defines the end product, which is catered to the target audience. The product decisions should be defined by conducting the customers' needs and feedback concerning their desires. The product can be divided into core products and extended product. The core product defines the main product the customer

purchases, but the extended product involves additional services and benefits built to support the core product. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 193.)

The price variable defines the amount of money the consumer pays to enjoy the product or service. When setting prices, the company must think about the customers' perceived product value and its compatibility with competitor prices. (The Marketing Mix n.d.) It defines the company's pricing policies that define the pricing models and the prices set to products and services. The place variable defines the ways the products are distributed to customers. Typically product placement aims to minimise the inventory, transport and storage costs and maximize products' distribution. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 202, 212.) When the company understands its target audience and product placement, the distribution can be done in channels that resonate with its target audience, thus attracting more potential customers. Placement relates closely to the promotion because well-made promotion maximises the reach and attracts more customers. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 212; The Marketing Mix n.d.) The promotion variable is the last one of the traditional marketing mix's four P's. It includes the marketing activities that are used to communicate with customers and inform them about products. It includes public relations, merchandising, word of mouth, packaging, advertising and selling. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 220.)

People variable recognizes the importance of the organisation's employees and their interaction with customers during sales as well as before and after sales. It helps the organisation manage its customer service and define each employee's involvement in the marketing and selling process. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 222.) The process refers to all the procedures and methods that organisations utilize to achieve their marketing strategy goals. The physical evidence refers to all the tangible products and how they are purchased and used. It covers the experience that the customer experiences when visiting the online store and purchasing a product. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 223, 225.) The physical evidence includes the environment where the organisation distributes its products, the packaging and branding of the products as well as the way the staff acts and dresses (Business Queensland, 2016).

FIGURE 2. Marketing Mix (McCarthy 1960, modified)

3.2.2 SOSTAC

The SOSTAC model, seen in figure 3, was created by PR Smith in the 1990s to help marketers in marketing planning. It was voted as the third most popular marketing model because it is easy to understand and remember, and it applies to multiple different planning activities. The name of the model, SOSTAC, stands for each step that the model contains: Situation analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions and Control. All the six steps support and overlap one another in each stage of planning. (Chaffey 2019.)

The model's acquisition starts with analysing the company's current situation, its capabilities and resources, and how its brand is perceived. After the situation analysis, the company will define their objectives, where does the company want to be in the future. When the company has analysed its situation and objectives, it is time to think about the strategy and tactics to achieve set objectives and goals. The last two steps are focused on implementing the plan and monitoring its performance, and does it work as planned. (Chaffrey & Smith 2013, 3-4.)

FIGURE 3. SOSTAC planning framework (Smith N.d.,modified)

4 RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Research objectives

To answer the research questions: ‘’*What are digital marketing tools the company should use to increase its visibility and online sales?’’*, ‘’*How to create a digital marketing plan for Bitumipojat Oy?’’ and ‘’How should they use these tools to reach the digital marketing goals?’’* quantitative data must be gathered. The best way to collect the data is through an online questionnaire, so it would be available for target customers across the country, which would give the author a diverse set of answers. The questionnaire is also used because the company has not collected any information about their customers or target audience, and by doing a questionnaire, the company gets a diverse look into their audience, thus helping them to create content tailored to their audience in the future.

Quantitative research was chosen as the research method because it enables learning about the demographics and it examines their attitudes and behaviours, and measures the frequencies and correlations (Goertzen 2017). The research approach is inductive since the purpose is to find patterns and obtain information about the respondents’ behaviour and form a digital marketing plan by utilizing that awareness (Thomas 2006, 238). The quantitative research method can be defined as utilizing and analysing numerical data to quantify and analyse how the variables differ in order to get results. The data aims to explain issues or phenomena by utilizing collected data in numerical form and analysing it with mathematical methods such as statistics. (Apuke 2017, 40, 46.)

Analysing the consumers' social media behaviour and marketing preferences and their purchasing behaviour and factors that influence it, the author gains a better understanding of their target audiences’ behaviour. The questionnaire aims to detect how age, gender, county and the purpose of purchase affect the customer’s behaviour. This insight of the target audience gives the author a better understanding, and it helps the author create a digital marketing plan for the company that the commissioner will then execute in their future practices.

4.2 Research design

The questionnaire can be divided into three parts: background information, social media behaviour and buying behaviour. The questionnaire combines both SOSTAC and Marketing Mix. It aims to collect information to parts of SOSTAC; (6.2) strategy, (6.3) tactics. Different factors of Marketing Mix are used in the questionnaire. In questions about social media behaviour (questions 4-8), marketing mix's promotion and placement are relevant. The questions aim to detect the most popular social media channels that the company should use and the content they should use in their promotion, which helps the company to decide their placement in the social media. See the conceptual framework in figure 4

The questions about the buying behaviour are pivotal concerning the marketing plan because the Marketing Mix's physical evidence factor sees it as an essential factor when planning a company's marketing. Furthermore, since the online store was established a short time ago, this information can be highly beneficial for the company's business because the usability of the website affects the customer's buying behaviour.

FIGURE 4. Conceptual framework (Smith N.d., McCarthy 1960, modified)

4.3 Data acquisition

The questionnaire was planned and designed in February-March 2021, and the data collection was done between 24.03.2021 and 07.04.2021. The questionnaire was created by using Google Forms, and it included 15 questions. In total, the questionnaire got 89 responses. The commissioner offered a prize to be drawn among the respondents to attract target audiences to answer the questionnaire. The prize was either a roof cleaner or a roof inspection service. By having a prize related to roofs, the author was able to attract respondents who are the company's target audience.

The research data was collected through the Facebook group *''Rakentaminen & Remontointi''* and *''Rakentaminen ja Talotekniikka''* where the assumed target audience is located in. The groups were chosen because, in both of them, the conversations revolve around DIY-building and renovation, which are topics that the target customers of Bitumipojat are interested in. The questionnaire was promoted only once in the Facebook groups because the moderators only allowed the author to post once about the questionnaire. Bitumipojat Oy also promoted the questionnaire on their website. The questionnaire was also shared in the author's social media channels, and the author's followers shared the questionnaire in their channels.

4.4 Analysis methods

The author analysed the data using Microsoft Excel and an Excel expansion called Tixel. The questions were constructed to a data matric in which the different variables were turned into numerical values, representing the answers the respondent gave. For example 1= Female, 2= Male, 3= Prefer not to answer. When analysing the data, the author wanted to see how different factors, such as age, gender and location, affect the respondent's answers. That is called a dependent variable. Its purpose is to explain if knowing the value of the first variable reduces the uncertainty of the second variable's value. (Manninen 2004, 74.) To gain that information, the author analysed the data by doing cross-tabulation with Tixel. After analysing the data, the author formed graphs using excel to make the data easy to comprehend.

4.5 Research limitations and validity

As explained in chapter 4.3, the research was conducted through Facebook groups, where the assumed target audiences are. A prize was drawn among the survey answerers and the prize being a product relating to the roofing materials, it can be assumed that it attracts respondents interested in roofing. However, this cannot be proven in any way, but the author must assume that the prize worked the way it was designed to. The survey was tested before publishing by test participants. The test participants gave feedback on the survey and if it was easy to understand and fill in and check if the questions were easily misunderstood. This minimizes the possibility of misunderstandings, thus creating reliable data. After their feedback, the author edited the survey to its final form and shared it.

The validity of the questionnaire is determined if the results were able to answer the initial research questions and if the results correlate with the variables they are expected to correlate (Jhangiani, Chiang & Price 2015). The research objective was to gain knowledge about consumers buying and social media behaviour, their preferred social media channels and content, as well as how they would search for roofing materials. The questionnaire also aimed to detect how age, gender, county and purpose of purchase affect the results. The author decided to not take the age group's 56-65 and over 65 years old answers into account when analyzing because the number of respondents in those groups was too low, making the answers unreliable. The purpose of purchase and location of the respondent were not used in the cross-tabulation analysis either because the sample sizes of groups were too small, excluding the detached house roof and cottage roof, which in total were chosen by 70% of the respondents when choosing the purpose of purchase. Moreover, when combining the votes for Western Finland and Southern Finland, they gathered 92% of the votes.

It is also suspicious that most of the respondents were young females. Because the construction industry is often seen as a masculine industry, it surprised the author. It is unknown why the response rate of under 25-year-old females was so high. However, it is essential to note that it is proven that nowadays, women have an even more prominent role in the decision-making process concerning home improvement. In fact, women represent 44% of DIY-builders (Huffman 2006).

Nowadays, women also make 91% of the home purchasing decisions, and young single women buy houses more than single men, and they are the second most significant segment of homebuyers after married couples. In which the women also tend to make the decisions. (Girl Power Marketing n.d.; De Jong 2018.)

The questionnaire was successful, and all the objectives were met, thus making the research valid. Furthermore, the questionnaire got 89 respondents, which is a high amount of responses when considering the lack of promotion and that the survey was distributed only through few specific Facebook groups, which increases the validity of the research. However, the answer percentage of the questionnaire cannot be answered because it was distributed through Facebook groups and not directly to the answerers. Thus, it is not known how many people have seen the post about the questionnaire.

5 RESULT ANALYSIS

The result analysis starts from the analysis of the demographics. The author was able to get 89 answers to the questionnaire. Of the respondents, 64 were female (71%), 22 were male (25%), and three preferred not to answer (3%). There was an option to choose ''non-binary'', but it was not selected by any respondent, so it will not be considered in the analysis. The high amount of young female survey respondents can be attributed to few factors. According to studies, young adult females answer online surveys more frequently than young adult males (Smith 2008; Yetter & Capaccioli 2010; Slauson-Blevins & Johnson 2016). Because the survey was mainly shared through Facebook, it is essential to note that there are more female Facebook users than males. Women are more active than men on social media, which can also explain the higher amount of female respondents. (Biernatowska, Balcerowska & Bereznowski 2017.)

The age groups were divided into six groups. The age group options were: Under 25 years old, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and over 65 years old. From figure 5, it can be seen that under 25 was the most popular group with 36 responses (41%), followed by 46-55 with 23 responses (26%), 26-35 with 16 responses (18%) and 36-45 with nine responses (10%). The lowest amount of answerers were in 56-65 with three responses (3%) and over 65 year olds with two responses (2%).

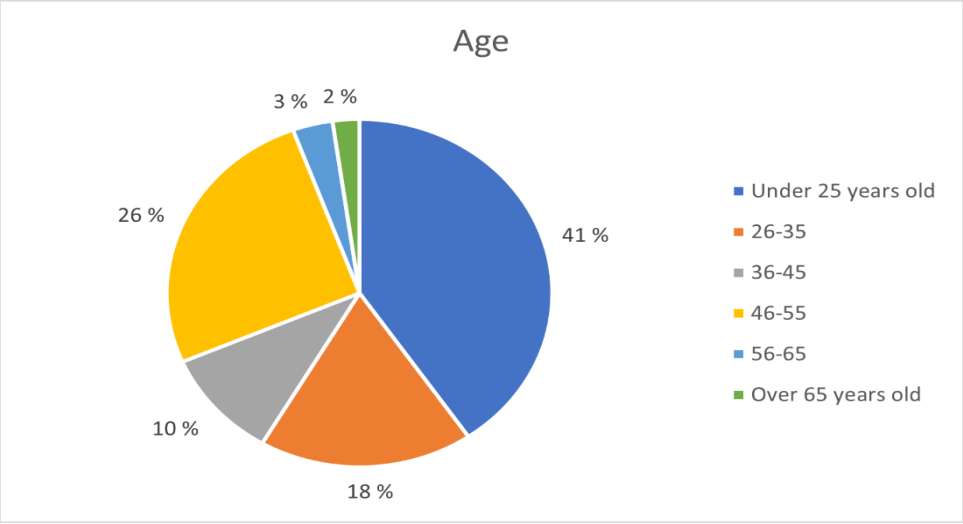

FIGURE 2. Age distribution of respondents

The location of respondents was divided into four options: Southern Finland, Western Finland, Northern Finland and Central Finland. Most of the answerers were from Western Finland with 52 answerers (58%), the second-largest group was from Southern Finland with 30 answerers (34%). Only four respondents were from Central Finland (5%), and only three respondents were from Northern Finland. None of the respondents selected Eastern Finland, so it will not be considered in the analysis.

When analysing the purpose of purchase, it can be seen from figure 6 that detached house roofs are the most popular, with 44 respondents (51%) from 86 respondents. Cottage roof was second with 17 respondents (20%). The rest were pretty equal with popularity: 7 respondents did not have a need for purchase (8%), seven respondents chose row house's roof (8%), five chose garage's roof (6%), three chose playhouse's roof (4%), and three chose other (3%) from which sauna building was answered once and housing association twice.

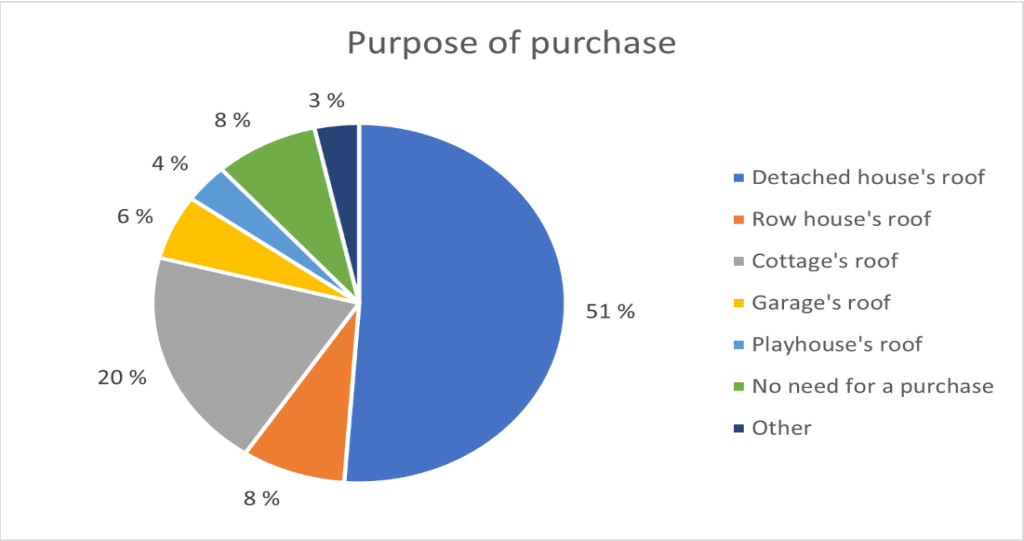

FIGURE 3. Distribution of purpose of purchase

5.1 Analysis of results

The first part of the questionnaire aimed to search what social media channels the respondents use daily. This question helps the author to decide what social media channels should be utilized in the marketing plan. The options were Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, TikTok, YouTube,

blogs. In addition, there was an option to answer to choose ''other'' and ''I do not use social media''. Generally, the most popular social media platforms were WhatsApp with 76 responses (85%), followed by Instagram with 72 respondents (81%) and Facebook with 68 respondents (76%).

When looking at the results based on gender, women use WhatsApp and Instagram the most; both are used by 88% of women daily. Also, 41% of women use Snapchat daily, but only 27% of men use it daily. On the other hand, WhatsApp is the most popular social media among men, with 77% of men using it daily. Tied in the second place are Instagram and YouTube, both being used by 59% of men daily.

From figure 7, it can be seen that among under 25-year-olds and 36-45-year-olds, Instagram was the most popular choice; 94% of under 25-year-olds and 100% of 36-45-year-olds using it daily. On the other hand, Snapchat and TikTok mainly were popular among under 25-year-olds and 26–35-year-olds; 78% of under-year-olds and 25% of 26-35-year-olds using it daily. The rest did not use it at all.

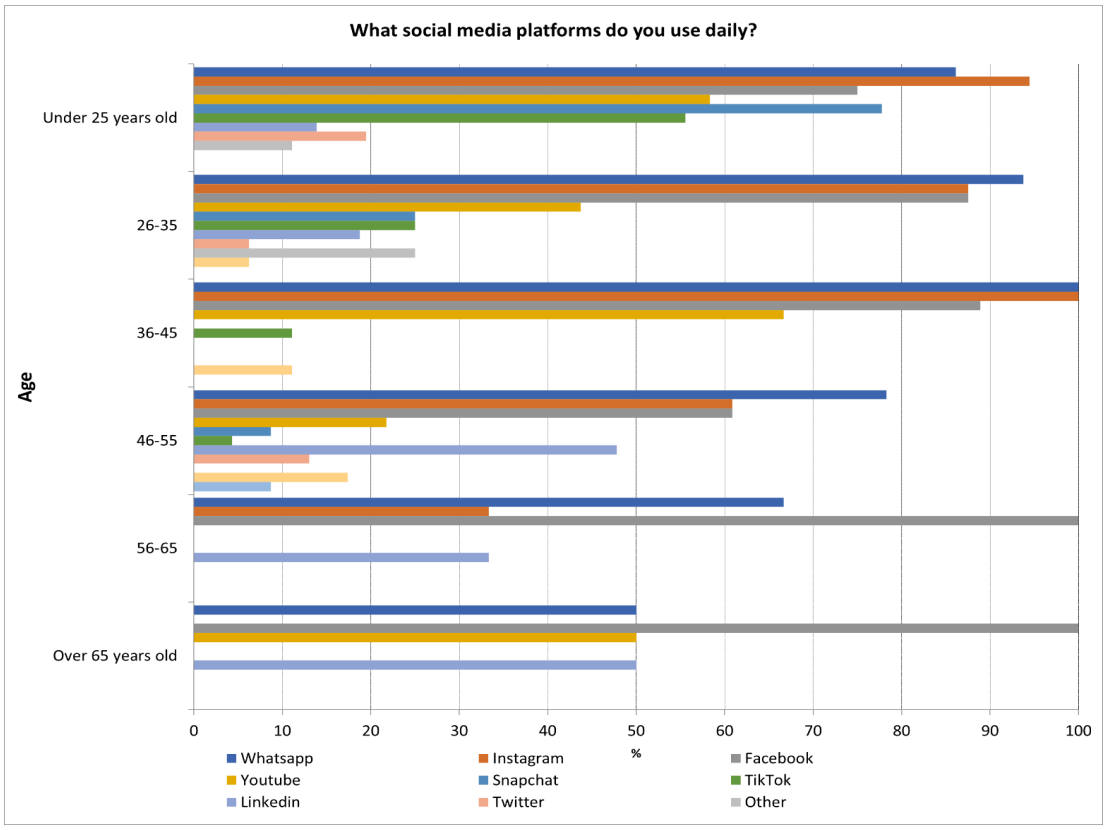

FIGURE 4. The daily social media platforms of each age group

When asked about the most used social media channel, the most popular were Facebook and WhatsApp, with 24% of the respondents using it the most and Instagram with 22% of respondents using it the most.
Instagram is used by 28% of women daily, and only 9% of men use it daily. Instagram was also the most used social media by women, with 28% of women using it, and WhatsApp was the most used by men, with 32% of men using it the most.

Figure 8 shows that the most used social media differs a lot between each age group. For example, Snapchat was most voted by 33% under 25-year-olds, Whatsapp was voted by 38% of 26-35-year-olds and 68% of 36-year-olds. On the other hand, Facebook was the most popular among 46-55 (43%), 56-65 (67%) and over 67-year-olds (100%).

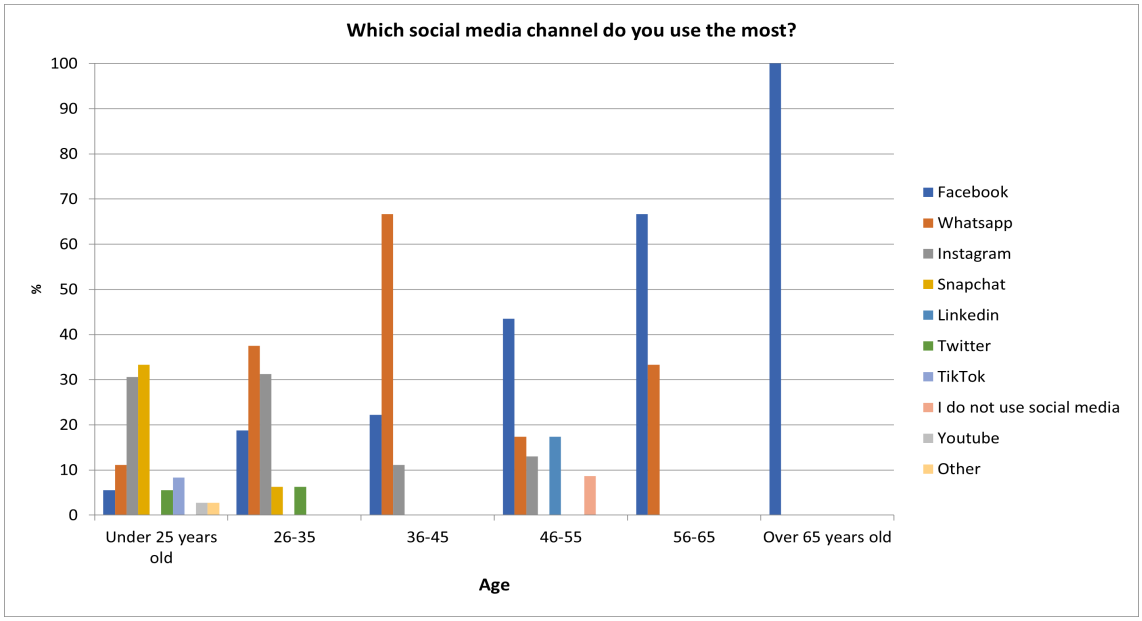

FIGURE 5. The most used social media channels of each age group

When asked about what kind of content the respondents enjoy, 66% answered videos. The following content forms are relatively similar in popularity, Pictures and infographics with 49%, articles with 48%, other's experiences 43%, podcasts 38% and Facebook groups with 39%.

In each gender, videos were the most popular, with 64% of women and 67% of men preferring it. However, women tend to enjoy pictures and infographics more than men, 56% of women and only 24% of men preferring it.

Figure 9 shows that videos were the most popular form of content in the younger age groups, 86% of under 25-year-olds and 88% 26-35-year-olds preferring it. However, articles were also popular, with 65% of 46-55-year-olds and 50% of 26-35-year-olds and 40% under 25-year-olds voting.

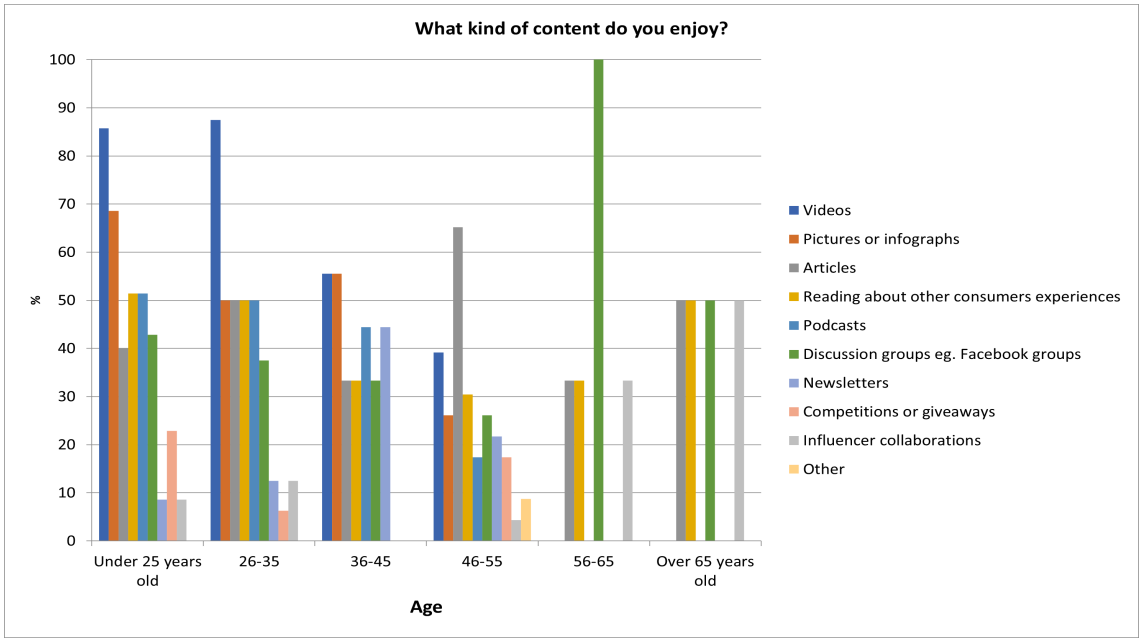

FIGURE 6. What kind of content each age group enjoys

The author wanted to find out which marketing communications reach consumers the best. Social media posts were the most voted with 72%, followed by word-of-mouth 56%, company's website 46%, paid social media advertisements 35%.
Figure 10 shows how the preferred marketing communications differ between genders. Again, the company's website was the most preferred marketing communication, with 50% of men voting for it and 44% women preferred social media. However, women preferred paid social media advertisement more than men, 42% of women voting it and only 14% of men voting.
Only in 46-55-year-olds, social media posts were not the most popular, rather than the company's website being the most popular with 65%. Paid social media

advertisements were mostly popular among under 25-year-old (42%), 25-35-year-olds (50%), 36-45-year-old (33%) and 56-65-year-old (33%).

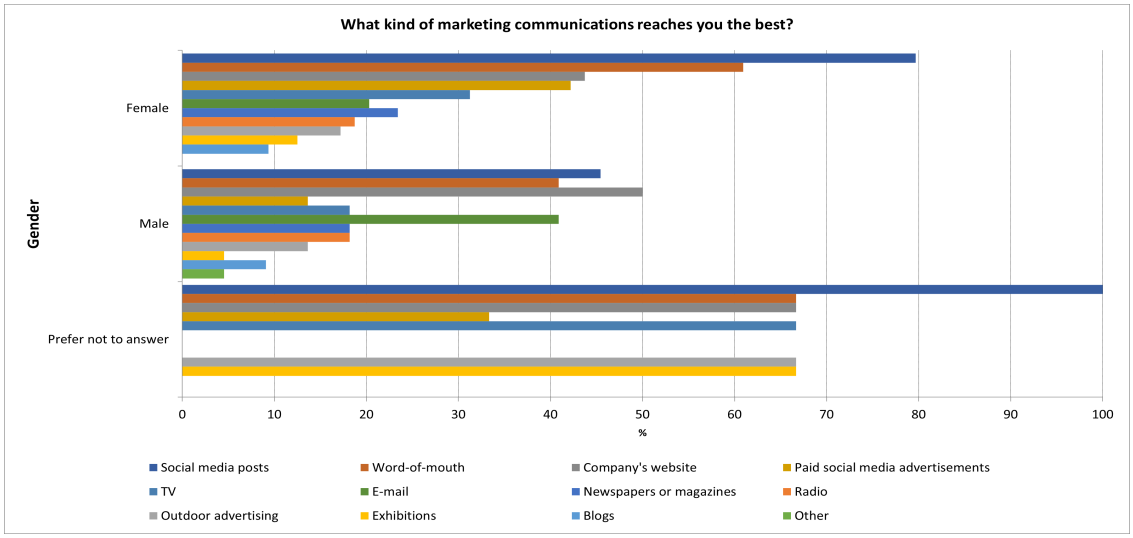

FIGURE 7. Preferred marketing communications of each gender

In the following section, the respondents were asked to choose what best describes their statement on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Disagree, 5= Agree).
It can be seen that respondents have purchased products that someone has presented on social media (3,15), that social media advertisements influence their purchasing decisions (3,13) and that they see targeted advertising as beneficial (3,01). However, most do not agree that celebrities affect their purchasing behaviour (1,95).

The same pattern can be seen when demographic factors, like gender in figure 11, are considered. The differences between genders were minimal, only in purchasing products that someone has presented on social media; men (2,38) do not agree with it as much as women (3,39) do. The 26-35-year-olds were most agreeing about social media advertisements affecting their purchasing decisions (3,56).

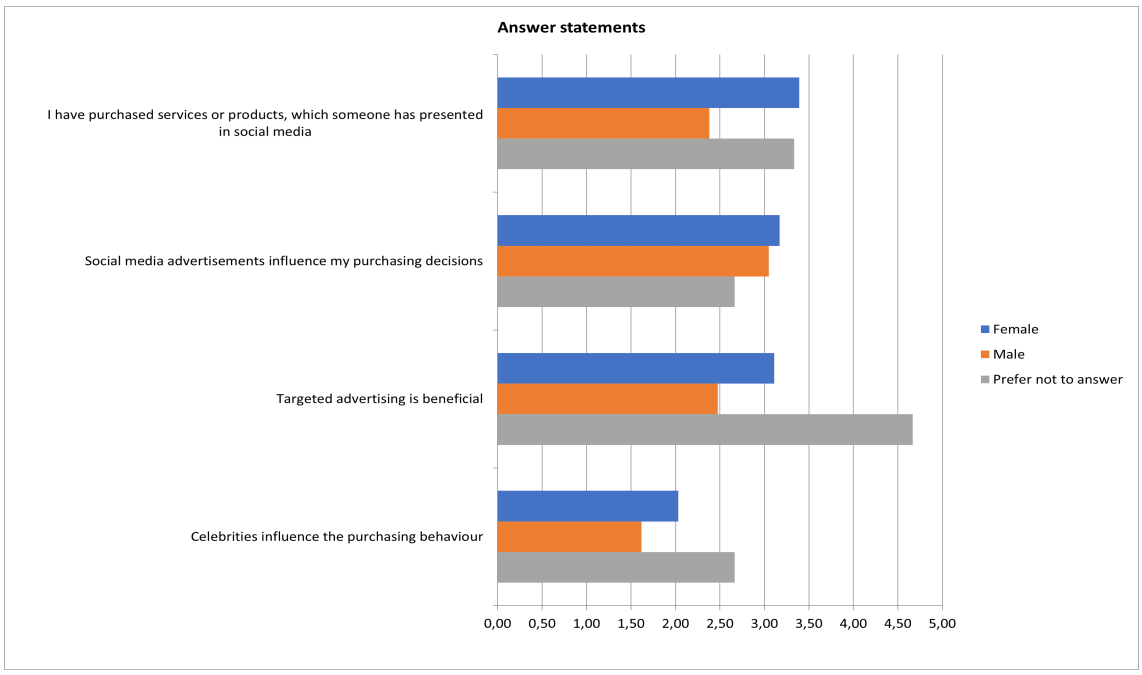

FIGURE 8. Purchasing behaviour statements among genders

The questionnaire asked respondents about difficulties they have encountered when purchasing a product or service from an online store. The respondents were able to answer question freely since the question was open-ended. The author categorized the answers into five sections: Incomplete or incorrect information, unsatisfactory websites, payment opportunities, reliability and delivery and availability issues.

Delivery and availability were the most significant difficulties the respondents have encountered. Many mentioned the long delivery times, expensive delivery costs, delivery taking longer than estimated, wrong product delivered, and the delivery information not readily available. The issues with availability had to do with not getting the product, hard to see if the product is available and what it costs, and the stock balance was incorrect.

The second most common issues respondents had, had something to do with incomplete or incorrect information or unsatisfactory websites. Unsatisfactory websites were slow, were illogical, hard to understand, and ordering was unnecessarily complicated. The incomplete or incorrect information often consisted of bad product pictures, had inadequate product information, or the products did not

meet up to the assumed quality the company claimed. In addition, some respondents had issues with the payment methods and the lack of them in online stores. Few respondents were also worried about the reliability of the websites, and they were not always assured if the websites were legitimate.

When asked about the preferred method of searching for roofing materials, Google search was most voted overall (90%) and most voted regarding age and gender. From figure 12, it can be seen that 100% of men 87 % of women would use Google search. Among men, the next option was an online store (32%), and among women, it was friends and family (48%). Women were more likely to use social media for searching, with 22% of women and only 9% of men preferring it. Under 25-year-old were more likely to ask from friends and family (49%) and use an online store for searching (49%). Also, 36-45-year-olds were more likely to search through an online store (44%), compared to 46-55-year-olds (26%) and 26-35-year-olds (19%).

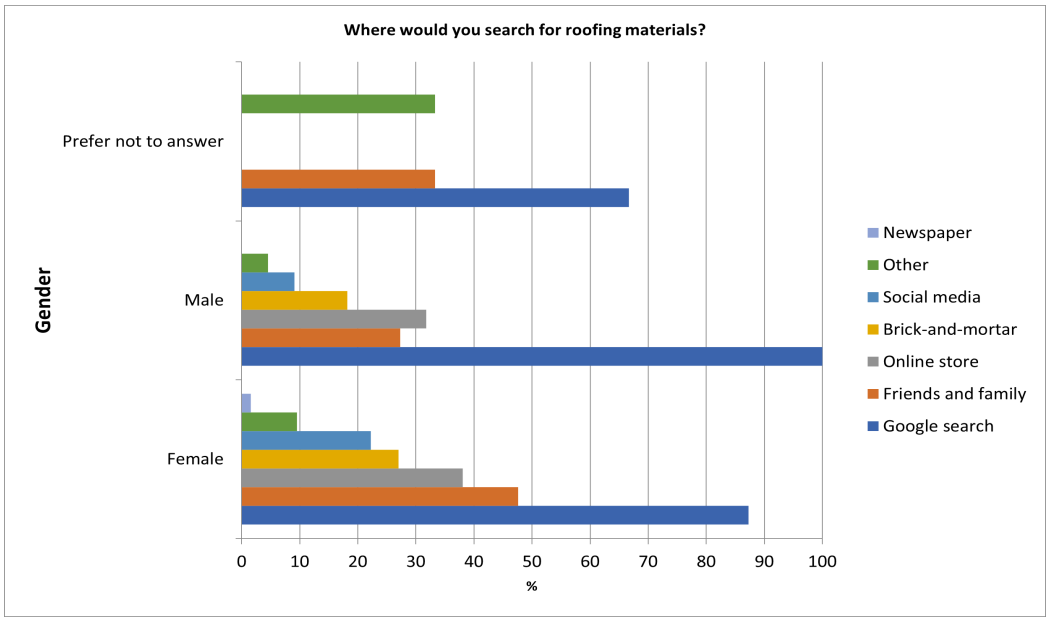

FIGURE 9. Preferred method of roofing material searching among genders

If the respondent answered social media in the previous question, they were asked which social media channels they would use to search roofing materials. Facebook was the most voted option in general (63%), followed by Instagram

(55%), YouTube (34%). It can be seen from figure 13 that among men, Facebook was the most voted (75%), and among women, Instagram was the most voted (67%), followed by Facebook (60%). Men were likely to use Youtube (25%) and TikTok (25%) as much for searching. However, TikTok (37%) was more likely to be used among women than Youtube (7%). Instagram dominated among under 25-year-olds as the most popular, with 93% preferring it over Facebook (53%).

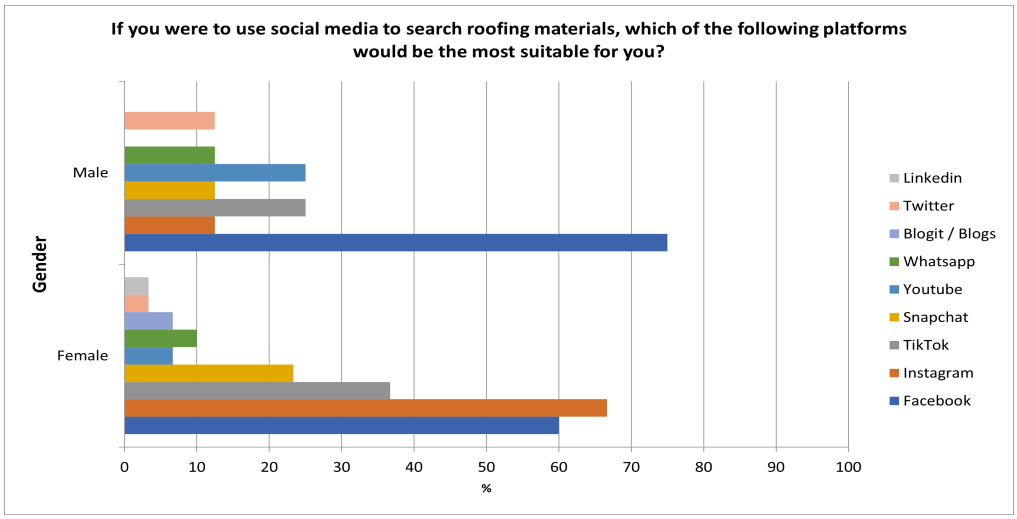

FIGURE 10. Social media as a search tool among genders

The respondents were asked to rate the most critical factors affecting their purchasing behaviour on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Not important, 5= Important).
The five most important factors were product quality (4,64), quality of service (4,38), seller's expertise (4,33), price level (4,19) and company's reputation (4,14). The three most minor factors were the company's location (3,13), opportunity pick up from the store (3,38) and the opportunity to buy from an online store (3,40). The results were very similar when taking age and gender into consideration. However, it can be seen that men (4,24) appreciated the company's reputation more than women (4,13) and the good product descriptions were more important to men (4,19) as well, comparing to women (3,70).
26-45-year-olds graded seller's expertise (4,78) and company's reputation (4,68) a lot higher than other groups, compared to the average 4,33 and 4,14.

The respondents also had an opportunity to voice factors that they wanted to mention but were not mentioned in the previous question. For example, the respondent's mentioned that they value products made in Finland, and they prefer using products that are made nearby, and they appreciate if the products have a low carbon footprint and the company has a trustworthy image. Also, free delivery is appreciated, as well as short delivery time.

6 DIGITAL MARKETING PLAN

The marketing plan will be executed by following the SOSTAC model created by Smith (n.d.) and parts of the marketing mix. The framework, seen in figure 3, consists of six parts: Current situation analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions and Control. The digital marketing plan utilizes the theories and questionnaire results from the previous chapters in order to create a digital marketing plan for Bitumipojat Oy.

6.1 Current situation

The analysis of the current situation is used to analyse the competitors, the market the company operates in and the internal analysis of the company. The analysis sets the base for the company to set their objectives, strategies and tactics. (Chaffrey & Smith 2013.) Therefore, this chapter is divided into two parts, internal and external analysis.

6.1.1 Internal Analysis

Bitumipojat Oy offers different roofing services in addition to their online store. The services are mostly roofing installations and roof inspections. Their online store's selection includes different sorts of shingles, eaves and ridge plates, roll equipment and additional accessories such as roof cleaner and sealing glue. The main products are shingles. (Bitumipojat oy n.d.) The company's marketing actions have been very minimal, and not many resources have been used. The lack of marketing strategy has resulted in irregular and spontaneous marketing actions that have not produced any leads. The company has only had few sales prior to this research, so they could not detect their customers' characteristics. However, it is fair to assume that the customer segment is quite broad because the company is operating in B2C markets. All the marketing activities are done by one of the founders, and the company does not have a marketing manager, and they do not use advertising agencies. The company does not have a marketing plan, and their previous marketing actions have consisted of Facebook and

Instagram posts as well as one radio commercial. However, the adverts and posts only mention the installation business. (Viitanen & Virtanen 2020.)

The company has an Instagram channel, and it has 128 followers, and they have posted 28 posts. The first post was published on 26.05.2020, which makes the account reasonably new. Their Facebook page has 218 followers, and it was established in 2015. After the company established their Instagram page, it can be seen that the account was linked to their Facebook since the posts are identical. Their Instagram and Facebook content does not include the promotion of the online store and its offerings. The content consists primarily of their roofing installation works and its progress shots. However, the Instagram description includes a mention of the products they offer on their website.

In this thesis, SWOT is used to analyse the company and its marketing actions. SWOT is a tool used to evaluate the company's competitive positioning by identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It analyses the internal factors. Strengths and weaknesses being internal factors and opportunities describing the external factors. (Investopedia, n.d.) Bitumipojat Oy's SWOT is visible in figure 14.

Bitumipojat Oy's main strengths come from their extensive expertise and quality products that have competitive pricing. Their selection is well-curated and having a limited selection helps them to differentiate from the competitors. Both founders have years of experience working in the field, which has resulted in experience in the installation service and gaining extensive product knowledge. Their product pricing is the lowest in the market, and the products are excellent quality. The products are made in the same region, which makes the logistics easy to manage. In addition, the website functions well, and the buying process is seamless.

Their weaknesses are their lack of marketing activities and experience in digital marketing. The company does not have a strong presence in social media, and they have not done any website optimization or content writing. As a result, their website does not attract visitors or offer anything to the viewers other than products. They also have minimal resources because marketing is done when they have spare time from their other tasks. They also have not collected any data of

their customers, and they have not utilized key performance indicators (KPI's), and because of this, there is no existing database to be utilized in the marketing plan.

Because the company has not done any strategically planned digital marketing, it can be seen as a possibility to start from a fresh ground. By carefully planning digital marketing actions, the company has an opportunity to increase its visibility, sales, brand awareness and strengthen their employer image. In addition, because most of the smaller companies in the industry have not done planned marketing, Bitumipojat have an excellent opportunity to differentiate and position themselves in the market.

Their biggest threats are the competitors, especially the corporations which have done marketing previously, and their brand awareness and visibility are notable. Also, the lack of expertise and resources are threats since the company does not have any specific person doing digital marketing, resulting in a lack of marketing activities, if they will not increase their resources.

FIGURE 11. Representation of Bitumipojat Oy's SWOT

6.1.2 External Analysis

It is essential to understand what is the current situation in the market and trends. Bitumipojat Oy operates in the construction industry. The construction industry

has stayed relatively stable regarding the pandemic. However, the pandemic has increased the sales of construction materials because the consumers have expressed more interest in renovating and doing small construction projects (Tammilehto 2020). In total, the sales grew 5% during the year. At the beginning of the year, the growth was 3,8%, and in the last quarter, it was almost 11%. However, the growth was not equal since most sales mainly consisted of gardening and small renovation products. Therefore, the heavy construction sales did not grow at all. A similar development has been reported in other Nordic countries and Central Europe. It is expected that the growth will continue in the next year. (Rasi 2021.) The construction market is explained more in-depth in chapter 2.2. This external analysis focuses mainly on the competitor analysis.

The author chose the competitors for the analysis. All three competitors are seen as solid competitors concerning the company's current state as all the chosen competitors use their webpage to sell products or utilize it to help consumers make offer requests. All competitors also sell same products from the same manufacturer, and all competitors have physical locations as well. The analysis focuses on analysing the companies digital marketing, social media channels and webpages. The competitors' names are replaced with A, B, C –letter to keep the information confidential. The competitor SWOT analysis is divided into two based on the size of the company. Thus, competitor A represents a larger company in figure 15 and competitor's A and B are represented in figure 16 as they are smaller companies.

Competitor A has 4447 followers on Instagram, 40 883 followers on Facebook. Their Instagram and Facebook content are pretty similar, both have inspirational posts where they style their products, but on their Facebook, they have more giveaways. Their Youtube page has 337 subscribers, and their Twitter has 90 followers, but the Twitter page has not been active in years. On their Youtube channel, they have over 800 videos which consist of advertisements, instruction videos and building content with influencers. The webpage is well made, and it is easy to use, and it is visually pleasing. The company delivers everywhere in Finland, and their delivery prices are around 15 euros depending on products. Their products have well-made descriptions, and all the necessary product infor-

mation is there. The company was founded in 2008, and its turnover is 48,4 million euros with 1,2% operating profit. They have multiple locations around the country, and they have 50-99 employees.

Competitor A represents a large company that has a strong established marketing strategy and actions. Their website is professionally made, and they have a strong brand. However, they are not explicitly focused on roofing materials, and their selection is vast, making it harder to differentiate and browse through. Because the company is enormous, their marketing and image lack personality, meaning the likeliness of a small company. They are more likely to phase a PR issue because they are a notable brand.

FIGURE 12. Representation of competitor A's SWOT

Competitor B only has a Facebook page and a website. On their Facebook page, they have 372 followers. Their content consists of the promotion of sales, product demonstrations and stylized images of the products. The website's functionality is mediocre, as the scalability is up to the mark, but the website is not visually pleasing. The product pictures are low quality and small, and the product description and info are short and hard to read. Furthermore, they do not deliver their products across the country, only in a small region, and the delivery can be up to 200 euros. The company was founded in 2004, and its turnover is 1,1 million euros with 0,9% operating profit is 0,9. The company has one location, and they have 1-4 employees.

Competitor C does not have an Instagram page, but they have been mentioned six times by other users. Their Facebook page has three followers, and they have

only posted few photos. The website is sleek, and it is easy to use. However, the product descriptions are short and do not obtain the needed information about the products. On the other hand, the pictures are of good quality and aesthetically pleasing. The company was founded in 1995, and its turnover is 1,5 million euros with 14% operating profit. The company has one location, and they have 5-9 employees.

Competitors B and C are smaller companies that do not have a strong brand, but their products are of high quality and their pricing is only few euros higher than Bitumipojat Oy's. Both of their websites operate well concerning the buying process, but both are lacking in the attractiveness. Competitor B's whole website is unattractive, their photos are low quality and the lack of information and product descriptions makes it dull and unattractive to potential buyers. Competitor C's situation is similar, but to their benefit, they have a sleek website and good pictures. However, neither of them has a robust online presence, and their marketing actions are close to non-existent. They do not have experience in marketing, neither they put effort into it. As a result, the content in their social media channel's and websites is disengaging, thus not creating benefits to the followers. Furthermore, competitor C does not offer the option to buy from the online store as there is only an option to make an offer, thus weakening the possibility of purchase and competitor B's shipment is extremely expensive. However, if they decide to execute strategical marketing actions, they are able to increase their positioning as well. Both of their current marketing situation is similar to Bitumipojat Oy.

FIGURE 13. Representation of competitors B's & C's SWOT

6.2 Objectives

When creating a digital marketing plan, it is pivotal to define the objectives. The objectives are defined by using the SMART approach. It stands for specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and timely. (Chaffey 2019.) The company's business strategy does not mention its marketing objectives, but the author set the objectives together with the commissioner. The commissioner desires to increase its sales and differentiate itself from the competitors with their strengthened brand awareness and visibility.

Further, the company should become one of the go-to online stores for roofing materials in the future. During the first year after utilizing the marketing plan, the company aims to get 50 sales and increase their social media following by 100% during the next year. Because there is no previous data on website visitors, conversion rates, number of unique visitors, these can not be taken into account, but after a year of monitoring and usage of the plan, the company can set these objectives.

6.3 Strategy

The strategy should be future-oriented, and the author decided to create a target for the next three years because the company has not established a marketing strategy previously. Therefore, the strategy consists of the strategic plan for the next three years, target groups and positioning.

TABLE 1. Bitumipojat Oy's digital marketing strategy

2021	2022	2023
Implement a digital marketing plan	Increase brand awareness	Increase brand awareness
Get customer insight	Use customer insight data to drive marketing actions	Update segments if necessary
Set up KPI's	SEO on the website: write articles	SEO on the website: write articles
Utilize social media channels	Utilize social media channels	Utilize social media channels
Update website		Reference marketing
Google Analytics keywords		Customer satisfaction survey

The marketing strategy for the year 2021 has many activities because there have not been any previous strategic marketing actions. The first year's actions include the implementation of the plan, collecting customer insight and data, set KPI's for marketing, social media channel usage, updating the website and setting up Google Analytics Keywords.

The years 2022 and 2023 only introduce few new actions that might help the company ease its marketing. Bitumipojat should focus on increasing their brand awareness, creating a solid positioning, using the collected customer insight data to drive their marketing activities, and paying attention to search engine optimization. If possible, the company should introduce reference marketing in 2023, but if there are no resources, the company should follow the 2021 and 2022 strategies and update the segments if needed.

6.3.1 Target groups

According to the commissioner, their target customers purchase their products for renovations or smaller construction projects such as garage roofs. On the other hand, consumers who are doing more extensive projects such as building roof for a house prefer to use contractors. Because of this and the questionnaire results, the author chose to create the segmentation of target groups on age demographics. Based on the questionnaire and conversations with the commissioner, the author came up with two segments. The segments are based on the buying and social media behaviour questions' answers the respondents chose. When creating both target groups, the author combined the results of two age groups and generalized them to create a combined group.

The first target group includes age groups from under 25-year-olds to 35-year-olds. This group's preferred social media channel is Instagram, followed by Facebook. Their preferred marketing content is videos followed by pictures, articles and other people's experiences. Their preferred marketing communications are social media posts.

The second target group includes ages 36-55. This group's preferred social media channel is Facebook, followed by Instagram. Their preferred content is articles, followed by videos and pictures. They are also more likely to enjoy newsletters. Their preferred marketing communications is a company's website.

Both target groups are influenced by social media advertisements and are likely to buy a product if someone has recommended it on social media. When rating factors that influence their buying, both groups valued them in the following order: product quality, quality of service, seller's expertise, price level and company's reputation.

6.3.2 Positioning

The company's positioning describes the consumer's perception of the product and brand offering compared to the competitors. Positioning defines how the company wants to differentiate in the market and what they have to offer in order to succeed in it. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 13, 170). The marketing mix's placement factor is part of the positioning since it aims to determine how the products or services are delivered to consumers.

Based on the research, their target customers value quality products, the expertise of the seller, price level and the company's reputation, short delivery time and products made in Finland. The company possesses all these attributes, which means they have a good chance of differentiating themselves if they put the effort in. The best way to gain better positioning in the market and generate more sales is to utilize these factors when creating promotional material and writing content. Because most of their competitors do not utilize social media marketing or website optimization, the company has an opportunity to strengthen its position with minimal effort. In addition, the younger target audience enjoys reading about other people's experiences and by sharing these on the website, and social media channels, the brand's image will strengthen, as it is proven that younger consumers trust reviews as much as personal recommendations (Hebblethwaite 2018).

6.4 Tactics

After setting the long-term strategy, the details on how to achieve set goals and objectives are defined in the precise tactics. Tactics define and detail how the objectives will be achieved by what tools and channels to use. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 538, 559) The marketing mix's physical evidence and promotion are apparent in all the tactics, because by choosing the correct channels and actions, the experience purchasing of the products becomes easier for the customers, while the promotion of products is at the core of the activities. The chosen tactics include the social media channels the company already has and updating the existing website, but also introducing new tactics such as search engine optimization, customer reference marketing and customer satisfaction survey.

6.4.1 Social media channels

In both target groups, social media marketing was the most preferred marketing communication method. The research questionnaire also aimed to detect what social media channels their customers prefer, and it was identified that in both target groups Facebook and Instagram were chosen as the channels they use daily, excluding WhatsApp and Snapchat. Based on the research results and the commissioner's resources, the chosen social media channels are Facebook and Instagram.

The objective of Facebook and Instagram marketing is to increase the brand's visibility and awareness and attract new possible employees by increasing the company's image. Based on the research results of the question about preferred content, Bitumipojat should produce more video and picture content for their channels. Also, customer testimonials are essential to share. This is explained more in-depth in chapter 6.4.4. Furthermore, the social media channels also work as remarketing channels, meaning that the produced content should encourage customers to visit the website. The company should also consider utilizing paid social media advertisements to gain more visibility.

All the produced content should have the same unified core message, but depending on the channel, the style can differ. For example, videos on Facebook

can be longer and possible horizontally filmed, but in Instagram, the videos should be under one minute in length and preferably shot vertical. In addition, the produced content should include product demonstrations, visually pleasing photos and videos of builds where the products have been utilized to showcase what the products look like. The company should also promote their short delivery time, low pricing and the fact that the products are made in Finland and close to their online store's location to gain the interest and trust of the target groups.

Furthermore, the author recommends that the company should combine their Facebook and Instagram accounts, because of the lack of resources. By combining them, both channels are updated regularly, and the company does not have to produce content separately to each channel, thus saving resources. In addition, the author suggests the company to consider making completely new social media channels for the online store or regularly promoting it as their service, thus separating it from the installation business.

6.4.2 Webpage

The company's website is very plain and stripped. It includes the products and all the necessary shipping and payment information, as well as the short story of how the company was founded. The website does not offer much for the visitor, and by not having the landing page, the visitor is immediately thrown into the product page, thus not allowing the visitor to browse different sectors. The website is lacking engaging content that would create organic traffic to the website.

As websites are the older target groups preferred marketing communications activity, the company should invest in it. Furthermore, the website acts as an online store, meaning every customer must use it. Thus, it is essential that it looks good and provides content for the customers, affecting the company's brand and sales. The author recommends adding more pictures of their products, both studio photos and customer reference photos. They should also write longer product descriptions and articles to the website to cater more helpful content for possible customers and to optimize their SEO. It is also essential to create a separate section for the articles and possibly create a lander page, where the visitors can choose what section they want to browse.

6.4.3 Search engine optimization

The research showed that the majority search for roofing products by using Google, which means there is a huge possibility for the company to gain visibility. However, to appear in the search engines, the company must invest in SEO. The company has not endeavoured in SEO, which would drive more traffic to their website, but if they implement it in their marketing actions, they can increase their ranking in the search engines and attract new customers. In order to succeed in SEO, the company has to create content for their website, and the content has to include the keywords their customers are using. Without well-made content, the SEO will not succeed. It is suggested that the company should look closely into Google AdWords to see what keywords their target audiences use and possibly ask for them when doing customer satisfaction surveys.

6.4.4 Reference marketing

Bitumipojat has previously done some reference marketing with their installation business on their Facebook and Instagram channels by sharing completed roofing installations. However, the posts include a minimal amount of information about the projects and customers behind them, making it hard for potential customers to recognize and identify similar customers with similar visions. According to Jalkala and Salminen (2010, 981-982.), if the company utilizes customer references in their marketing, the potential customer sees the company as more credible and reliable. Based on that, references should be used in both website and social media marketing to attract new customers. In their reference marketing, the company should explain the customer's vision and needs and explain the need for the product. Furthermore, if possible, share the background information of the customer if the customer agrees. The references can be done by posting pictures and videos of the process and finished result, and possibly customer statements. As the company makes more sales and gains new customers, they should ask their customers if they would like to provide statements and agree to be a reference.

6.4.5 Customer satisfaction survey

Before making the digital marketing plan, the company has collected any data of their customers. As a result, it was unknown how the customers found the online store and how they felt about the buying process. It is important to know about the customers' needs, wants, and motivations, as well as content and channel preferences, in order to improve the company's marketing activities. By utilizing customer feedback questionnaires in the future, the company can gain new customer insight, from which they can detect specific target groups, which makes personalised and targeted content marketing easier. (Chaffey & Chadwick 2019, 57). Knowing the target audience, they can create engaging content, thus increasing the company's visibility. The better the company knows their customers, the more likely they are satisfied and likely to purchase again or recommend the products to a friend.

6.5 Actions

Actions are one of the most challenging parts of SOSTAC to implement because even though the tactics are well defined, it needs to be planned and scheduled well so that it is realistic for the company to execute. Each tactical tool requires planning and implementation, which the actions define. It defines who is responsible for the action and how and when it should be implemented. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 564-565).

Because Bitumipojat have not done any major marketing, it is unknown how the workload should be divided since they have not scheduled resources for marketing previously. The author suggests that they follow the action plan and monitor how much resources it takes, and after a while, they divide the tasks based on the resources they have. It is important to note that the company might not have the competence to create content as well as they wish, use the required tools. Because of this, the author suggests that they should participate in some marketing course or hire a project or part-time worker to help them get started.

To make the actions clearer for the company, the author created a channel plan that includes the company's activities in each channel. Furthermore, the company

should make a content calendar for the year, including all the company's marketing activities during the year. It helps the scheduling and organising of the activities.

TABLE 2. Channel plan for Bitumipojat Oy

CHANNEL PLAN / 2021				
Channel	Tactic	Process	When	Content-type
Facebook	Increase the brand's visibility and brand awareness, attract new possible employees,	Create engaging content, increase the number of followers, follow the analytics, create a calendar	August -> 1-2 x week	Videos and photos, customer references
Instagram	Increase the brand's visibility and brand awareness, attract new possible employees, strengthen customer relationships	Create engaging content, increase the number of followers, follow the analytics, create a calendar	August -> 1-2 x week	Videos and photos, customer references, reels of product demonstrations
Website	Increase the brand's visibility and brand awareness, attract new possible employees, provide tactical information, lead generation	Search keywords, contact customers for references,	September -> Articles: 1 x 2 months	Articles, product descriptions, customer references in articles and photos

The activities are suggested to start after summer since during summer the founders are extremely busy. The author suggests that during the winter season, the company would start implementing the strategy to see how the activities have affected the company's visibility and sales during the following summer season.

6.6 Control

To measure how the actions perform, the company must set key performance indicators (KPI). KPI is a metric that calculates the performance of processes and whether set goals are achieved. (Chaffey 2019, 159). It helps the company to see what channels are most popular among their customers and which generate the most sales. The longer the company utilizes KPI, the easier it gets to analyse the importance of each channel and to which channel they should use and what they should drop (Chaffey & Smith, 2013, 569.)

Because the company aims to attract new customers and increase its attractiveness as an employer, the company should measure the engagement in their social media channels. For example, how much are they gaining followers, how much are they getting shared, how many posts are saved, and how many comments or likes they get and from whom. These indicate the brand's awareness and if the followers enjoy their content. Moreover, it can be seen which social media channels generate the most visitors to the company's website. The author suggests that the company should follow Facebook Business Manager's and Instagram's analytics to follow the engagement, but because the company should also follow their webpages performance, Google Analytics would analyse all their channels. To monitor customer satisfaction, the company should utilize customer satisfaction surveys.

One of the objectives was to increase the company's visibility and online sales. As the website is updated, it is essential to monitor does it attract visitors and are the visitors unique or returning visitors. In addition, it should be monitored do these visitors convert to customers and how many of the visitors convert. The conversion rate helps the company see if their website is efficient and easy to use and if the visitors value the company's offers. By utilizing web analytics, the company can see the page visits and the duration of visit, thus understanding what kind of content engages the visitors by seeing how long they spend time reading articles and product descriptions. If the visitors are there only for a short time, it can indicate that the SEO targets the wrong target groups, and the marketing actions need to be changed. The author suggests that the company utilizes Google Analytics to measure the website and the social media channel performance. The metrics should be followed regularly. Based on the resources, it should be weekly or monthly.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a digital marketing plan and strategy for the commissioner's online store to help them to generate more sales through their online store, gain new customers and possibly attract potential employees. With the development of a digital marketing plan, the company can detect what social media channels they should utilize and how should they improve their website to improve their digital presence. The research aimed to detect how their target audience uses social media and what factors they find relevant when purchasing products and create a marketing plan based on the relevant findings. After conducting this digital marketing plan, Bitumipojat is able to understand their target audience and know what marketing actions they should take.

The main research question *What are the digital marketing tools the company should use to increase its visibility and online sales?* Is answered well in the thesis, as chapter 6 explains all the tools the company should utilize in their marketing actions, which consist of social media marketing, website optimization and updating, reference marketing and additionally customer satisfaction surveys. The sub-questions *How to create a digital marketing plan for Bitumipojat Oy? and How should they use these tools to reach digital marketing goals?* Are also explained, as the digital marketing plan explains all the details of each tactic. The main points being regular and stable posting timetables, providing content that the followers will engage with. However, the author suggests that the company should first concentrate on improving the website and optimize it to create more traffic to the website, and only after those steps should they add more resources to their social media channel marketing.

The author suggests that Bitumipojat would do a more in-depth questionnaire about the customer preferences as their business grows and they gain more customers because previously, they have not collected any data on their customers. Moreover, by having information on customer preferences, they can excellence their marketing activities and possibly create new customer segments. The author believes that the digital marketing plan will increase the company's sales and positioning in the marketing since, in the situation analysis, it became clear that

their competitors are not active in marketing their products. This information and the commissioners' interest in marketing already gives them a competitive advance. The company should highlight their expertise, actively promote that their products are made in Finland and that the factory is few kilometres away. To further differentiate, they should make their marketing activities present them as the small company they are and use that likability as their advance. They are already a prominent name in the installation industry, which they can utilize in their online store marketing. The author believes that Bitumipojat has an excellent opportunity to grow their online store business. However, it is essential to point out that they need to invest in their marketing activities if they wish to grow. It is crucial for Bitumipojat to consider adding resources for their website optimisation and social media marketing to make the most out of this plan.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Thesis research survey about target audience's social media and buying behaviour

Kysely kohderyhmän some- ja ostokäyttäytymisestä / Survey about target audience's social media and buying behavior.

Kyselyssä tutkitaan kuluttajien käyttätymistä somessa ja markkinointipreferenssejä, sekä kohderyhmän ostokäyttäytymistä ja siihen vaikuttavia tekijöitä. Kyselyn tavoitteena on selvittää, missä kanavissa yrityksen kannattaa olla ja millaista sisältöä kuluttajat haluavat yritykseltä nähdä. Kyselyn tuloksia käytetään Bitumipojat Oy:n sisällön ja viestinnän parantamiseen ja kohderyhmä tuntemuksen lisäämiseen.

Kyselyyn vastaaminen kestää n. 5-10 minuuttia.

Kysely on tarkoitettu kuluttajille, joille kattomateriaalien hankinta on/oli ajankohtaista.

Vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti ja anonyymisti. Vastaamalla kyselyyn, annat suostumuksen vastaustesi hyödyntämiseen ja käsittelyyn.

Halutessasi voit jättää sähköpostisi kyselyn lopussa osallistuaksesi arvontaan. Arvonnan voittaja voi valita palkinnoksi joko veloituksettomat katonpesuaineet (riittää n. 150 neliölle) tai veloituksettoman kattotarkastuksen (vain Pirkanmaalla asuville).

Sähköpostia käytetään ainoastaan arvontaa varten jonka jälkeen sähköpostit poistetaan.

IN ENGLISH:

The survey examines consumer behaviour and marketing preferences, as well as the purchasing behaviour of the target group and the factors influencing it. The aim of the survey is to find out which channels the company should be in and what kind of content consumers want to see from the company. The results of the survey will be used to improve Bitumipojat Oy's content and communication and to increase their knowledge of the target group.

It takes about 5-10 minutes to answer the survey.

The survey is intended for consumers for whom the purchase of roofing materials is/was topical.

Responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. By responding to the survey, you consent to the use and processing of your responses.

If you wish, you can leave your email at the end of the survey to participate in the raffle. The winner of the draw can choose either free roof cleaners (enough for approx. 150 square meters) or free roof inspection (only for those living in Pirkanmaa).

The emails will only be used for raffle purposes after which emails will be deleted.

*Pakollinen

Taustatiedot / Background information

Ikä / Age *

- Alle 25 vuotias / Under 25 years old
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Yli 65 vuotias / Over 65 years old
- En halua vastaa / Prefer not to answer

Sukupuoli / Gender *

- Nainen / Female
- Mies / Male
- Muunsukupuolinen / Non-binary
- En halua vastata / Prefer not to answer

Asuinpaikka / County *

- Etelä-Suomi
- Itä-Suomi
- Länsi-Suomi
- Pohjois-Suomi
- Keski-Suomi

Somekäyttäytyminen / Social media behaviour

Mitä sosiaalisen median kanavia käytät päivittäin? / What social media platforms do you use daily?

- [ ] Facebook
- [ ] Instagram
- [ ] LinkedIn
- [ ] Twitter
- [ ] Snapchat
- [ ] Whatsapp
- [ ] TikTok
- [ ] Youtube
- [ ] Blogit / Blogs
- [ ] En käytä sosiaalisen median kanavia / I do not use social media
- [ ] Muu: _____

Mitä sosiaalisen median kanavaa käytät eniten? / Which social media channel do you use the most?

- ( ) Facebook
- ( ) Instagram
- ( ) LinkedIn
- ( ) Twitter
- ( ) Snapchat
- ( ) Whatsapp
- ( ) TikTok
- ( ) Youtube
- ( ) Blogit / Blogs
- ( ) En käytä social media channels / I do not use social media
- ( ) Muu: _____

Millaisesta sisällöstä pidät? / What kind of content do you enjoy?

- [ ] Videot / Videos
- [ ] Podcastit / Podcasts
- [ ] Artikkelit / Articles
- [ ] Uutiskirjeet / Newsletters
- [ ] Kilpailut tai arvonnat / Competitions or giveaways
- [ ] Keskusteluryhmät esim. Facebook-ryhmät / Discussion groups eg. Facebook groups
- [ ] Muiden kokemusten lukeminen / Reading about other consumers experiences
- [ ] Vaikuttajayhteistyöt / Influencer collaborations
- [ ] Kuvat tai infograafit / Pictures or infographs
- [ ] Muu: _____

Millainen markkinointiviestintä tavoittaa sinut parhaiten? (Valitse 1-5 vaihtoehtoa) / What kind of marketing communications reaches you the best? (Pick 1-5 options)

- [ ] Yrityksen nettisivut / Company's website
- [ ] Sosiaalisen median postaukset / Social media posts
- [ ] Sosiaalisen median maksetut mainokset / Paid social media advertisements
- [ ] Blogit / Blogs
- [ ] Sähköposti / E-mail
- [ ] Messut / Exhibitions
- [ ] Sanoma- tai aikakausilehdet / Newspapers or magazines
- [ ] TV
- [ ] Radio
- [ ] Ulkomainonta / Outdoor advertising
- [ ] Kavereiden tai läheisten kautta kuultua / Word-of-mouth
- [ ] Muu: _____

Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin / Answer the following statements

	Täysin eri mieltä / Disagree	Jokseenkin eri mieltä / Somewhat disagree	En osaa sanoa / Do not know	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä / Somewhat agree	Täysin samaa mieltä / Agree
Sosiaalisessa mediassa ilmestyvät mainokset vaikuttavat ostopäätöksiini / Social media advertisements influence my purchasing decisions	○	○	○	○	○
Pidän kohdennetusta mainonnasta / Targeted advertising is beneficial	○	○	○	○	○
Julkisuuden henkilöt vaikuttavat ostopäätökseni tekoon / Celebrities influence the purchasing decision	○	○	○	○	○
Olen ostanut palveluita tai tuotteita, joita joku muu on esitellyt sosiaalisessa mediassa / I have purchased services or products, which someone has presented in social media	○	○	○	○	○

Ostokäyttäytyminen / Buying behaviour

Mitä vaikeuksia olet kohdannut ostaessasi tuotetta tai palvelua verkkokaupasta? / What difficulties have you encountered when purchasing a product or a service from an online store.

Oma vastauksesi

Mihin tarkoitukseen ostat/ostit kattomateriaaleja? / For what purpose do/did you buy roofing materials

- ◯ Omakotitalon katto / Detached house's roof
- ◯ Rivitalon katto / Row house's roof
- ◯ Mökin katto / Cottage's roof
- ◯ Autotallin katto / Garage's roof
- ◯ Leikkimökin katto / Playhouse's roof
- ◯ Muu: _____

Mistä etsisit kattomateriaaleja? / Where would you search for roofing materials?

- ☐ Google-haku / Google search
- ☐ Sosiaalinen media / Social media
- ☐ Ystävät ja perhe / Friends and family
- ☐ Sanomalehti / Newspaper
- ☐ Verkkokauppa / Online store
- ☐ Kivijalkakauppa / Brick and mortar
- ☐ Muu: _____

Jos vastasit sosiaalinen media, mitkä seuraavista alustoista sopisivat mielestäsi parhaiten kattomateriaalien etsimiseen? / If you were to use social media to search roofing materials, which of the following platforms would be the most suitable for you?

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ Whatsapp
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Youtube
- ☐ Blogit / Blogs
- ☐ Muu: _____

Miten tärkeitä seuraavat asiat ovat sinulle ostopaikkaa valittaessa. Vastaa väittämiin asteikolla 1-4 (1= Ei lainkaan tärkeä, 3= En osaa sanoa, 5= Erittäin tärkeä) / How important are the following factors when choosing a place of purchase. Answer the statements in a scale of 1-4 (1= Not important, 3= Do not know 5= Very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Palvelun laatu / Quality of service	O	O	O	O	O
Hintataso / Price level	O	O	O	O	O
Myyjän asiantuntemus / Seller's expertise	O	O	O	O	O
Tuotteiden laatu / Product quality	O	O	O	O	O
Toimitusnopeus / Delivery time	O	O	O	O	O
Laaja tuotevalikoima / Broad product range	O	O	O	O	O
Yrityksen sijainti / Company's location	O	O	O	O	O
Yrityksen maine / Company's reputation	O	O	O	O	O
Hyvät tuotetekstit / Good product descriptions	O	O	O	O	O
Mahdollisuus ostaa verkkokaupasta / Opportunity buy from an online store	O	O	O	O	O
Mahdollisuus ostaa liikkeestä / Opportunity to buy from a brick-and-mortar store	O	O	O	O	O
Mahdollisuus noutaa tuote liikkeestä / Opportunity to pick up the product from the brick-and-mortar store	O	O	O	O	O
Ystävien ja perheen suosittelut / Recommendations by friends and family	O	O	O	O	O
Tuotteen brändi / Product's brand	O	O	O	O	O
Mahdolliset tarjoukset / Possible offers	O	O	O	O	O

Haluatko tarkentaa vastaustasi aikaisempaan kysymykseen tai mainita muun valintakriteerin? / Do you want to refine your answer to the previous question or mention another selection criteria?

Oma vastauksesi

Haluatko kertoa vielä jotain muuta? / Want to say something else?

Oma vastauksesi

Haluatko osallistua arvontaan? / Do you want to participate in the raffle?

Sähköpostiasi käytetään ainoastaan arvontaa varten. Sähköpostisi tullaan erottamaan vastauksistasi ennen tulosten käsittelyä, joten sitä ei käytetä vastausten tunnistamiseen.

Antamalla sähköpostisi hyväksyt sen, että säilytämme sen arvonnan suoritukseen asti. Sähköpostit poistetaan arvonnan jälkeen.

Your email will only be used for raffle purposes. Your email will be separated from your responses before the results are processed, so we will not use it to identify responses.

By submitting your email, you agree that we will retain it until the raffle is completed. Emails will be deleted after the raffle.

Osallistun arvontaan sähköpostilla.. / I participate in the raffle with this email..

Oma vastauksesi