

# Content marketing plan

## Case: Company unit X

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Content marketing plan  
Case: Company unit X

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The idea of the thesis was to create a content marketing plan for company X's event management unit's social media channels and websites. Before the implementation of the thesis the company unit did not have active operations or marketing in social media. In addition, the websites needed an update and a renewal. The target of the thesis was that the client gets a ready-made content marketing plan for their usage, which objective was to inform on the right content for the social networks and websites, what the ideal posting range is and what needs to be noted on each channel. Therefore it should be easy for the company unit to commission the new channels and begin marketing and communication on these channels.

The theoretical framework discusses content marketing, content marketing plan and marketing through social media channels and websites. Additionally, the thesis presents the most common digital marketing channels in the event management industry. The material for the theoretical framework was available through literature and Internet articles. In addition, the interview for the employers of the company unit X and the questionnaire for the target group were functioning as research materials.

The execution, the content marketing plan, was created as a separate attachment to the thesis and on behalf of the client's wishes it remained confidential. The material explains the company unit what the adequate content on different channels is and functions as a supplement for the personnel. The material is presented with examples that the client can apply in their social media marketing and websites.

Before publishing the thesis, the content marketing plan and the thesis were evaluated by the client in order to be able to do all necessary changes. The outcomes of the content marketing plan met with set goals and the client intends to use the finalised content marketing plan.

As a follow-up idea for the client a suggestion was given to measure the benefits of the content marketing plan, update the plan when necessary and in addition plan new relevant content when commissioning new social media channels. As a developing idea, a suggestion of new web pages for the company unit was made, since currently the websites function under an organisation's web pages and are not getting enough visibility.

Keywords: marketing, content marketing plan, social media marketing, digital marketing

Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulu  
Liiketalouden koulutusohjelma  
Opinnäytetyö

## Tiivistelmä

Kettunen, Saara & Silonsaari, Julia

### Sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelma Case: Yritysyksikkö X

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Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tuottaa sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelma yrityksen X tapahtumapalveluyksikön sosiaalisen median kanaville sekä nettisivuille. Ennen opinnäytetyön tuottamista toimeksiantajalla ei ollut aktiivista toimintaa tai markkinointia sosiaalisessa mediassa. Lisäksi nettisivut olivat päivityksen ja uudistamisen tarpeessa. Tavoitteena oli, että tapahtumapalveluyksikkö saa käyttöönsä valmiin sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelman. Siinä kerrotaan, millaista sisältöä valituilla sosiaalisen median kanavilla ja nettisivuilla pitäisi olla, kuinka usein kanavaa tulisi päivittää ja mitä asioita tulee kanavakohtaisesti huomioida. Näin ollen yrityksen tulisi olla helppo ottaa käyttöön uudet kanavat ja aloittaa toiminta sekä vuorovaikutus kyseisillä kanavilla.

Teoreettisessa viitekehyksessä käsitellään sisältömarkkinointia, sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelmaa ja markkinointia sosiaalisen median kanavissa sekä nettisivuilla. Lisäksi opinnäytetyössä käydään läpi tapahtuma-alan yleisimmin käytetyt digitaaliset markkinointikanavat. Teoriamateriaalia oli hyvin saatavilla kirjallisuutena sekä artikkeleina internetissä. Lisäksi haastattelun ja kyselyn vastaukset toimivat tutkimusaineistona.

Toteutus, sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelma, tehtiin erillisenä liitteenä ja salattiin toimeksiantajan toiveesta. Toteutettu materiaali kertoo toimeksiantajalle millaista sisältöä valittuihin kanaviin tulisi tuottaa sekä toimii apuna perehdyttäessä henkilöstöä. Materiaali on toteutettu sisältö-esimerkein, joita yrityksen on tarkoitus pystyä soveltamaan sosiaalisen median markkinoinnissa ja nettisivuilla.

Sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelma ja opinnäytetyö olivat toimeksiantajan arvioitavana, jotta mahdolliset muutokset voitiin tehdä ennen työn julkistamista. Työn lopputulos vastasi sille asetettuja odotuksia ja toimeksiantaja aikoo ottaa käyttöön valmiin sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelman.

Jatkoehdotuksena toimeksiantajalle ehdotimme sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelman hyötyjen mittaamista ja suunnitelman päivittämistä, kun se on ajankohtaista. Lisäksi jatkoehdotuksena toimii sisällön suunnitteleminen uusille sosiaalisen median kanaville, mikäli toimeksiantaja ottaa käyttöön uusia kanavia. Kehitysehdotuksena ehdotimme toimeksiantajan yksikölle omien nettisivujen laatimista, sillä tällä hetkellä tapahtumayksikön nettisivut toimivat organisaation nettisivujen alla, eivätkä saa riittävästi näkyvyyttä.

Avainsanat: markkinointi, sisältömarkkinointisuunnitelma, sosiaalisen median markkinointi, digitaalinen markkinointi

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## 1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to make a first content marketing plan for company unit X, an event management company unit operating in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The goal of the content plan is to support and guide new personnel and additionally provide information for the staff members. Moreover, it will begin the company unit's marketing online, increase their visibility and possibly even the sales. Along with theory, the content for the plan will be created from the outcomes of the research and it will provide information on all the future social media channels and websites. The idea of the thesis was innovated in the autumn of 2015 and the actual implementation and information gathering commenced in the beginning of the year 2016. The process was completed in March 2016.

The main problem for the client is the lack of usage on digital channels, since they solely have a non-active Facebook page. The content marketing plan intended to alter this by presenting content ideas for different social media channels and websites. The implementation is carried out in order to accurately reach customers through social media, get visibility online and additionally make a clear plan for the content on these sites.

Content marketing is a relatively new concept. However, the role of it has become essential in marketing, since new marketing channels have emerged and grown in value. Content marketing means delivering the right kind of information, content, to the right customers. Consequently, the information does not feel like advertising but useful and interesting. The right kind of information for the clients can be beneficial, interesting, entertaining and include current information about the firm. However, to succeed the firms have to understand and investigate the customer segments' needs and interests. (Sisältömarkkinointi 2015).

When the right kind of information is provided both the customer and the company benefit from the relationship. In the best-case scenario the companies can increase their sales, improve their image and build long-term relationships with customers. The consumers will get the right kind of information and a positive purchase conclusion. (Lieb 2012, 47-59).

The development in technology has relocated the consumers online. They normally want to find the information online before the actual purchase, which means the firms need to pay attention to all the knowledge they can offer the consumers through websites and social media channels. Content marketing is developing quickly because the importance of social media is increasing in marketing. (Lieb 2012, 47-59).

The digital technology has been in a turning point. First the information technology captured the markets. When it developed and the consumers got more decision making power, also the custom-

er relationship management (CRM) became important. Recently the importance of different social media channels and moreover the mobile devices have become an important factor for businesses. The expectation is that content marketing will only increase its value in the future, since new channels are created often and the markets are constantly changing into more virtual direction. (Merisavo, Vesanen, Raulas & Virtanen 2006, 29).

## 2 Starting points

This thesis is an activity analysis and will contain a thorough content marketing plan for the company unit X's social media channels and websites. The implementation included executing an interview with the client and a survey for the target group.

The intentions were to examine what kind of content social media users want to see in different channels when it comes to operating businesses. The other questions that support the main question are:

- What is a good time range for companies to post content on social media?
- What channels have the most important role in event companies' social media marketing?
- What kind of content format interests consumers the most?

The survey will be a supporting factor in the actual content marketing plan for the client. The meaning of the research is to improve the client's status on social media and the aim of the thesis is to make a clear content marketing plan for the client that will provide the right kind of information to be able to execute content marketing on social media channels, which they are planning to activate soon. The content channels are Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and websites, and these channels were figured out through an interview that was carried out for the client company unit. Before the research was actualized the client did not have any other social media channels than Facebook. Although the page has not been active after it was created. In principle, the client does not implement marketing online, which is the research problem in this thesis.



Figure 1: The structure of the thesis process

The thesis is divided in different parts: introduction, theory about content marketing, social media, marketing in event management and marketing plans, research, which include an interview



and a survey, outcomes and the final results. The interview of the client will determine the questions for the survey that will be targeted for the target group. The results will be analysed both with qualitative and quantitative methods and the analyses will be used in the content marketing plan, which is found in the appendices. The outcome for the thesis is the actual content plan that the company unit can use immediately in their marketing. The final results include the conclusions and the development ideas for the company unit.

During the implementation the authors will utilise different social media channels, such as Facebook and Instagram, and the theory will be based on literature and articles. The structure continues with presenting information on the client company and the goals for this process, the used theory and the analysed research methods.

## 2.1 The client company unit

The company unit X is an event management business that started operating in 2012 and it functions in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The business consists of two event managers and two event assistants. Additionally, the company unit uses extra event subordinates. The company unit is able to execute around 80 events, meetings, trainings, seminars and parties in a year. (Company unit X 2015a. Personal communication.).

As a company unit, the client aims to influence potential customers in different ways. Events are a strong way to influence on customers' behaviour and approach, which are factors the organisation unit intends to. The company unit wants to implement their events in the best way possible by knowing their customers and understanding how to create the event favouring the clients' intentions. (Company unit X 2015a. Personal communication.).

The client's operation is based on open interaction, clear goals, development and engaging workforce. The company unit X develops their operations constantly through educational institutions and international cooperation, which enables the best use of the latest information on the event sector for clients and the clients' events. (Company unit X 2015a. Personal communication.).

The company unit X services mainly everything that is connected to event organising, such as reviewing event places, helping with decoration, catering and photographing, planning and implementing the event. The company unit offers its services for public and private sector regardless of the industry of the client company along with customers inside the organisation. The client operates mainly in Helsinki metropolitan area but operational environment includes the whole Finland. The company unit's competitors are mainly other event organizing companies in Helsinki metropolitan area and additionally other event organizing companies in Finland. Besides Finnish, the client services also in English. (Company unit X 2015a. Personal communication.).

## 2.2 Analysing the present state

The analysis of the present state offers a basis on planning the content marketing plan. The analysis describes the company's starting points, possible shortcomings and development objects. Additionally, it presents the environment of the business activity, such as the demands and challenges, competitors, products or services and clients. A thorough analysis of the present state is a requirement for a specification of a successful customer strategy. (Hellman, Peuhkurinen & Raulas 2005, 119).

Customers' needs and wants have changed along with customer behaviour over the recent years and content marketing has arisen to an important role in marketing. The technology has developed and the usage of the Internet has brought the customers opportunities to find more information on different services. Moreover, customers have become more price conscious and they tender out services increasingly. Therefore companies have begun to invest in customer relationship management (CRM) to be able to react better to customers needs. Customer oriented approach challenges the product centred thinking, which previously possessed an important role in business. (Hellman, Peuhkurinen & Raulas 2005, 122).

At the moment the client does not practice marketing on social media and the company unit has little marketing whatsoever. A Facebook page was created in 2013 a while after the company unit was established but the page is not active. All in all the company unit has a need to utilise marketing online. Therefore in the thesis a content marketing plan will be implemented for the client's social media channels and websites, which is why the company unit will be able to start using the mentioned channels on marketing purposes and get wanted visibility for themselves. The thesis will merely focus on opening new social networks and therefore the company unit is not yet planning to start using paid marketing such as advertising on Facebook.

At this point the fact needs to be taken into account that the company unit is not familiar with their possible future customers on social media and therefore learning the right content is crucial. The challenge of making the plan is to stand out from competitors and be able to market themselves as an event management unit. A demand for the organisation unit is to create a thorough content marketing plan that the maintaining of several social media channels will not create inconvenience.

## 3 Goals

The purpose of the thesis is to implement a content marketing plan for company unit X's social media channels. Additionally, a specific focus will be given to content on the websites. The plan

will be easy to use and it will provide all the needed information to do marketing online respecting company's values and targets. Because the company unit operates with just a few employees they have low resources in conducting their own plan. In addition, the content marketing plan will save the client company unit's resources in the future when familiarising new personnel for communication in social media. The plan will be a solution for the organisation unit's process of allocating time for various tasks.

The goals for the thesis are to improve the company unit's marketing online, increase their visibility and even the sales with the help of the content marketing plan. The plan will bring the company unit X many advantages through the proposed social media channels. The channels can improve the visibility and even increase the sales. Social media can help the company connect with their customers and even future customers from B2B and B2C field. That is to say, they have the possibility to increase their clientele. (Levy 2010, 1,3).



Figure 2: The goals of the content marketing plan

The content marketing plan will be created and based on theory and research, which will provide us with information about the appropriate content for an event management company. The goal for the research is to find out the relevant content to influence the target group through the survey for the content marketing plan. The theoretical framework is based on the research field and consists of content marketing, marketing plan, and social media marketing and social media channels.

#### 4 Marketing in event management

The increasing information flood has caused all the event management businesses to compete with each other more to stand out. The traditional marketing regimes do not influence effectively the target groups anymore and the purchase decisions are made differently these days. The customers want more information about companies and they usually rely on the comments that they read online, the informative labels and the company blogs and articles rather than on the traditional marketing communication. (Vallo & Häyrynen 2012, 19).

Like stated above, in the field of event management the visibility and recognisability are in an important role. There are many ways to market an event management business such as through traditional ways by giving out business cards and brochures. Other marketing traditions that the companies use are advertisement, promotions, television marketing and sponsoring (Vallo & Häyrynen 2012, 33). However, social media channels especially Facebook and Twitter have grown in importance among marketing event companies. (Entrepreneur 2016).

When marketing in event management customer service is essential, since satisfied customers will usually return. All the organised events such as fairs, exhibitions, promotions and seminars can be counted as marketing in event management since people encounter in other words personal sales work has a voluminous impact. (Vallo & Häyrynen 2012, 33).

A research created by Tapahtumantekijät, Finnish event researchers, in November 2015 lists the biggest trends in event management business. The results were equivalent to an extensive re-research called “Digital trends 2015” released by Adobe and Econsultancy early in the 2015. It appears that one trend has become essential for businesses and is one of the most valuable features in event management. This megatrend is customer satisfaction and it is related to the other top trends that the research lists. They are personal participation experience, communication, memorability, commitment and joined development. Digitalisation works in the background of these elements as an accelerator and enabler. (Tapahtumantekijät 2015).

##### 4.1 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be mentioned as one of the most important indicators when it comes to successful businesses. Customer service, quality and expectations to the service are all connected to customer satisfaction. (E-conomic 2016).

Knowing your customers and reacting to feedback can create a desirable customer relationship management. Moreover, customer satisfaction is the basis for event marketing, since the marketers create and promote events that satisfy customers’ needs and makes the clients want to choose

the company despite other competitors in the marketplace (Robinson, Wale & Dickson 2010, 137). Furthermore, with an on-going customer relationship management the companies can create a long-lasting customer base, which can bring the companies competitive advantage. (Yritys-suomi 2016).

#### 4.2 Marketing channels in event management business

Benchmarking was executed for the biggest event management operators in Helsinki metropolitan area to examine the most used marketing techniques. Social media channels, such as the above-mentioned Facebook and Twitter, but also Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube play a fundamental role in today's marketing when marketing event management services. Moreover, the companies' websites has a significant part in marketing. Consequently, the client should also focus on these exact channels.

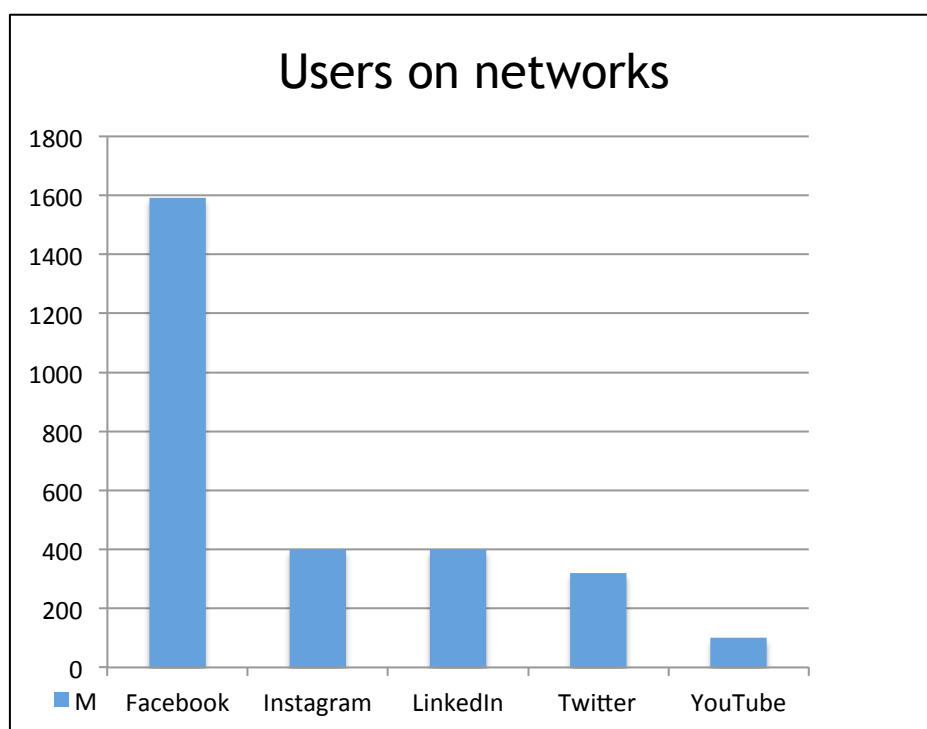


Figure 3: Social media users in February 2016

An examination was made for these social networks by looking into the user amounts of each channel. The amount of users reflects to the possible marketing visibility on these channels. Figure 3 shows the amount of users in the above-mentioned social media channels in February 2016. Facebook is overwhelmingly the most used social media channel with almost 1600 million users (Smith 2016). Instagram and LinkedIn have over 400 million users (Instagram 2016, LinkedIn 2016). Twitter and YouTube are the two channels with the lowest user amounts out of the five channels presented in the table. Nevertheless, the amount of users in Twitter is over 320 million (Twitter

2016). YouTube instead has around 100 million active users (YouTube 2016). As the figure 3 shows these channels have all over one billion users, which is why it is important for companies to join these networks, be active and create content that will separate them from competitors.

## 5 Social media marketing

Social media channels have become important tools for companies to market their products and services, communicate in real-time and reach out to customers. In addition, firms can collect information, target their marketing and provide information in their social media channels. Moreover, an important feature on social networks is the ability for businesses to humanise themselves. Levy states that: “Companies can now cut out the phone trees and instantaneously interact with a single customer who is having an issue.” Communicating with customers and listening to their opinions is a stepping-stone to improving the brand. (Levy 2010, 1,3).

Marketing through social media is becoming more and more essential, since most of the channels are used with mobile devices. A research made by Flurry Mobile states that people today use more mobile applications than watch television. However, the television usage has not decreased, which is why it shows that people use mobile simultaneously as they watch TV. (Ylävaara 2015).

Since the usage of mobile has increased channels like Facebook and Instagram now also allow companies to target their marketing by improving location targeting and mobile targeting that helps the target audience to see the posts easier (Social Media Examiner 2014). Visibility can additionally be increased by linking the sites together, which makes the paths from one social media channel to another easier. Different channels can be important for different companies depending on where their most valuable customers operate.

Online marketing is essential for organisations and can be executed without a big budget. However, the marketers need to keep in mind the relevant way to operate online, meaning to have a customer service mind set and create the posts respecting the company’s style and image.

### 5.1 Social media channels

Social media consists of channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, Tumblr, Periscope and Snapchat, which all work differently for companies marketing purposes. For the client the most valuable social media channels in the beginning of their marketing operations will be Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn, which are demonstrated in the Figure 4.

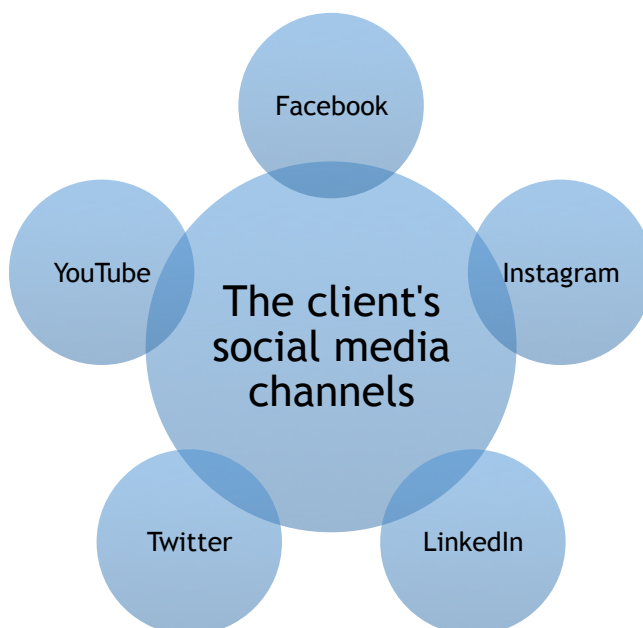


Figure 4: The company unit X's social media channels

Listed below are the social media channels that the client is planning to use. These mentioned channels are also presented in the content marketing plan along with the websites.

#### 5.1.1 Facebook

Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and is a social media channel, which is one of the fastest growing social networks of all time. Additionally, most firms use it in their daily marketing, since it comprehends many consumers who they want to reach with their marketing. In Facebook people can connect and stay connected with each other, share and express thoughts by written text, photos or videos. Therefore companies marketing their products and services on Facebook have great opportunities to increase their visibility and connections worldwide (Facebook 2016).

In addition, companies have the ability to buy advertisement space on Facebook. The advertisements on the channel are targeted marketing and therefore various groups of people can see different advertisements due to their different interests. Consequently, allocation of target groups is necessary in order that the target audience sees the applicable information and furthermore that the advertising is efficient. (Olin 2011, 16).

Facebook is the third used website in Finland and therefore it is important for the client to join the network (Alexa 2016). Facebook has a platform that allows users to produce content in all forms: written, audio, graphics, video and interactive applications. Additionally, it allows users to create events and invite others to take part in them. Facebook works well for event management

companies and since the client sells event management services it can easily market their happenings through the channel. Moreover, the company unit targets the services for the Finnish markets and Facebook is the most popular social network in Finland, which is why it is essential to be active there. (Lieb 2011, 64).

### 5.1.2 Instagram

Instagram, established in October 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger is a free mobile application where companies and private persons can share photos and videos in real-time (Instagram 2016a, Instagram 2016b & Miles 2014, 52). The channel is the first social network that has increased massively without having a desktop version (Miles 2014, 12).

In 2012 Facebook bought the company and started collaborating with the application. Later on during the same year Instagram launched a version also for the desktop (Instagram 2016c). In January Instagram had over 400 million users and is one of the world's most popular networks (Statista 2016).

Instagram was selected to be one of the client's future social media channels because its popularity and composition. "Instagram is ideal for brand-building", writes Miles, which is one reason why the channel was chosen. The client company wants to increase their recognisability and build their brand. The application allows creating visual pictures or videos with different filters, which helps to create good content and personalise the posts. In Instagram photos and videos can reach the wanted visibility for companies and create interesting content to hook the customers, and therefore it suits the client company's purposes. (Miles 2014, 105-107, 114).

### 5.1.3 Twitter

The social networking channel Twitter, founded in 2006, is a short message and micro blogging service where messages with a maximum of 140 signs called "Tweets", can be published. The idea for Twitter became from Jack Dorsey but the channel was founded by Noah Glass, Jack Dorsey, Christopher Stone and Evan Williams. (Gilbert 2015, 5-10).

Twitter is designed for personal and company use. In addition, Twitter is popular in celebrities' society. In year 2009 Twitter had become the third most popular social networking site and passed a one billion tweet mark. In 2011 Twitter launched a redesigned version and made it easier for consumers to use. Nowadays the channel has hundreds of millions of users worldwide. (Gilbert 2015, 22,38).



The channel is a platform for web and mobile usage and it allows the users to broadcast something that can immediately be seen around the world (Gilbert 2015, 19). Twitter's mission is: "To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers" (Twitter 2016).

The client can use Twitter to reach out other businesses and business users. The client can present information and content for example on sustainability, newest information on the company unit and its missions and visions.

#### 5.1.4 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is used among businesses and working citizens where they can share their information through a profile, which can additionally work as a CV. Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Konstantin Gericke, Eric Ly and Jean-Luc Vaillant founded the site in May 2003. LinkedIn has grown to the world's largest professional platform for job hunters and organisations but it also is a platform to share business information. Nowadays LinkedIn has over 400 million users worldwide. (LinkedIn 2016a, b).

The platform allows creating a company site where businesses can inform recruiting news and share other information regarding the business. LinkedIn also allows users to post content, such as YouTube videos on their pages. (Seppälä 2014, 59).

LinkedIn suits well for the client, since they can connect with other professionals and perhaps use it as a recruitment channel in the future. LinkedIn allows sharing different content such as blog posts, videos and pictures and additionally it works as referral traffic to other social media channels, which suits the organisation unit's needs. Alongside with Twitter the client can reach out to professional users and companies and share the relevant content for this target group.

#### 5.1.5 YouTube

When YouTube launched in 2005 it quickly became the fastest growing site of that time. In one year the company increased the monthly users from 50 000 up to 17 million. In 2006 Google purchased the firm and it has been functioning under Google ever since. Today the channel has around 1 billion users. (Miles 2014, 3).

Many companies have adopted YouTube as their marketing channel. The channels allow users to share the videos, subscribe to other channels and comment on posts. YouTube can be used with

mobile devices through their application or with computers through their websites. (Miles 2014, 16).

Videos are predicted to grow even more essential in the future usage and a big part of online traffic (Lieberman 2016). A new edition for video usage is online video that Periscope and Facebook offer. Video works as good content, since it appeals to emotions and is engaging (Mahon 2016).

With the multiple ways to use the channel, the many users and the importance of video in the future the company unit X is planning to begin their marketing on YouTube. The client company can for instance create informative content on the company, film tutorials on successful events or show some clips on their events.

## 6 Content marketing

Content marketing means providing the right kind of information about their products or services, that is to say the relevant content for clients to retain and attract them. Content marketing has the same intentions as normal marketing: to increase visibility and sales for firms. However, it also means to create useful information for the clients that normal marketing might not always do. Content marketing differs from normal marketing with exactly differentiated information, when marketing in general provides technical information and moves customers towards the purchase situation. (Sisältömarkkinointi 2015).

Content marketing stated by Lieb is: “a pull strategy - it’s the marketing of attraction. It’s being there when consumers need you and seek you out with relevant, educational, helpful, compelling, engaging, and something entertaining information.” Content marketing contains different kind of marketing that interests the target market. The idea is to find out what the customers want to see to be able create the suitable and appealing content for each customer segment. In other words it is essential to know for whom the content will be made for and whom the followers are. Without knowing them, the content will not connect with the target audience and it will not make the best impact. (Lieb 2012, 1).

As mentioned earlier content marketing is a relatively new concept. However, only the term is relatively new. Companies have been creating content for many years without even noticing it. Over the years marketing has become even more important for companies. With the digitalising environment and increasing competition communication has shifted online and the content has become essential in marketing. Therefore content has a greater meaning to companies’ visibility and competitiveness. With good content marketing the clients will engage themselves to the firms’ marketing channels and the firms have a place to influence on the customers and even cre-

ate differentiated products by communicating with them. Therefore an important factor is to know the customers, what kind of persons, companies or associations they are, since various segments can find different content interesting. A successful content can improve the company image and the loyalty towards the company. (Lieb 2012, 47-59).

### 6.1 Executing content marketing

With the increasing competition in the markets the marketers need to create new and interesting communication that will be more relevant and addictive than before. Therefore content marketing has become an essential tool for businesses. It can be implemented through the versatile marketing channels that at the moment are a set of social media channels. (Kahri 2016).

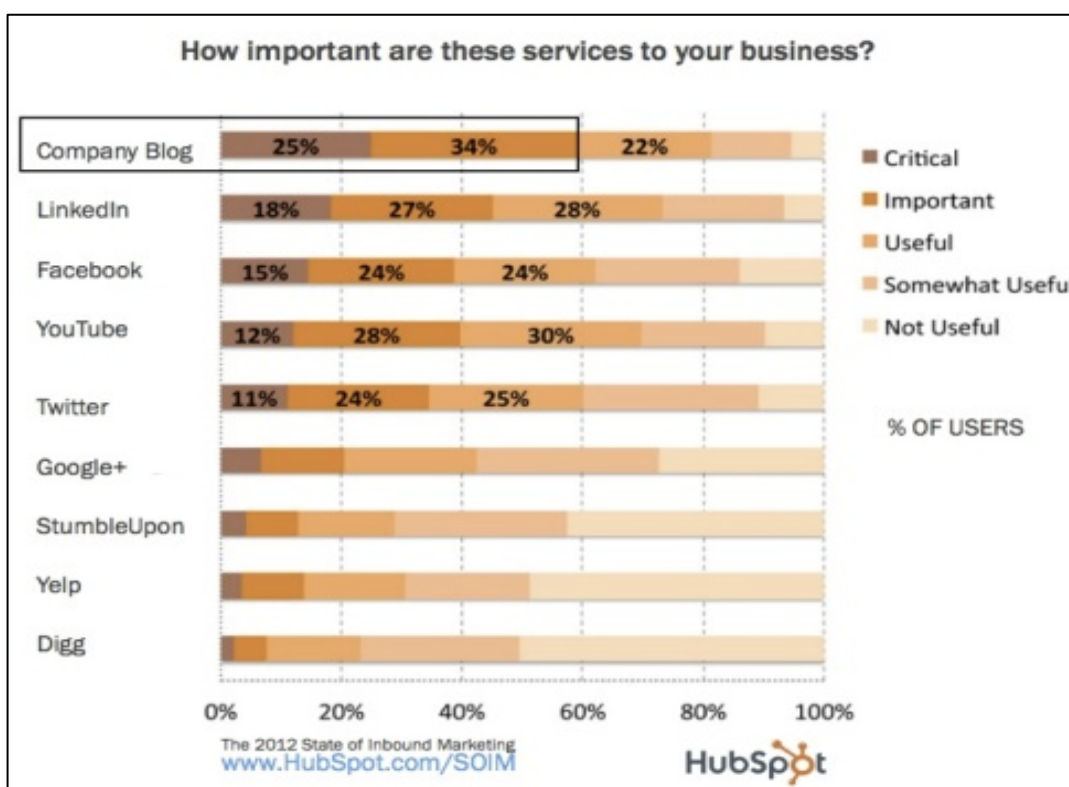


Table 1: The most important services to businesses by HubSpot  
 (Social Media Examiner 2016).

HubSpot created a research that shows the most effective channels to carry out content marketing. Table 1 shows that blogs are the most effective way to provide information and a platform for companies to implement crisis management in different situations. Other necessary channels for companies to express their information as shown in the table 1 are LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, which all are chosen as the clients' social networks. (Social Media Examiner 2016).

Content marketing is usually implemented through social media channels and websites. The content is good when it is appealing and has quality. Different and interesting content can be made

with videos, visual content such as with good photographs, presentations and blog posts. Therefore Facebook, Instagram and YouTube were chosen as the social media channels for the client to provide visual content. LinkedIn and Twitter were chosen to target the business audiences.

#### 6.1.1 Websites

Functioning websites are an important tool for companies' visibility online. Websites usually impart all the needed information about companies and their services but additionally work as a marketing centre with an access to all the companies' social media channels. Moreover, Internet pages have developed simultaneously with digital technology. Therefore now besides the normal information about companies they also offer a place to communicate with consumers and create different content, such as blog posts. The development has moreover made it necessary to update the site often to keep the visitors hooked. (Juslén 2011, 59-60).

Websites usually comprehend content that the company can share on their social media channels. Hence, many businesses use websites as their content creator and social media channels as utilisation for the links to websites and gaining exposure. (Nyyssönen 2014).

The client's websites should include information about the services and work as a content creator for example through blog posts and interesting information about the company events. The company unit can boost their revenue if the page includes an invitation for tenders. After creating good content the websites should also be easily found with the help of social media but also with the precise keywords to allow many visitors on the page. (Juslén 2011, 64).

#### 6.1.2 Blogs

Blogs can be used to express the voice of the writer and additionally to create interesting and addictive content and add value to the readers. Usually blogs allow readers to leave comments for the writer, which makes blogs a communication platform. Moreover, blog posts are easy to manage, whereupon the content creators can easily modify the publication. (Gillin 2007, 5).

Blogs bring companies many content marketing possibilities. Blogs allow an easy way to express the organisations' own opinion and inform the customers on different matters quickly and under the company's name. Through blogs companies can distribute news, developments and trends or use it to operate as a conversation tool with readers. The two-way conversation can moreover enchant companies' customer service. (Lieb 2011, 73).

A fundamental matter to consider when blogging is the target audience. The blog posts should be targeted to a specific audience such as clients, customers, prospects, the media, influencers or even act as internal communication for the companies. Blogs have an unrestricted form whereupon they can be in written or audio form. The content of the blogs can be multimedia, video or podcasts. (Lieb 2011, 75).

A blog will be suggested on the web page for the client to create appealing content for the readers. For the company unit's purposes the blog can advertise and inform about the upcoming events but additionally function as a platform to list their own opinions on the event management business.

### 6.1.3 Videos and visual content

Videos and visual pictures are stated as content marketing since visuality and remembrance are meaningful to humans. Pictures have the ability to state something by one glance and it is claimed that people process visual material efficiently and faster than other information, which makes pictures and videos effective tool to use. Moreover, videos and visual pictures plead easily to emotions. (Mahon 2016).

Researchers claim that by 2017 video usage will dominate up to 80% of all the Internet movement. YouTube has established a clear position in the markets but other video channels such as Periscope and Snapchat are quickly capturing the markets. Therefore videos will become a leading marketing regime to companies and also the client should harness YouTube. (Mahon 2016).

Videos and visual pictures are important content creators, which is why the company unit X should implement these on their social media channels. For this reason the video channel YouTube and the visual video and picture application Instagram were chosen to be the social media marketing channels for the company unit X in the content marketing plan.

## 6.2 Social media in content marketing

Social media allows the users post content, such as texts, videos and pictures, and consequently the networks are suitable for content creating. Social media is a communication platform between companies and target groups and the companies can easily collect information and figure out what the consumers want to see, which helps them to create the suitable content. The followers can differ on various channels, which allows companies to create different content for several target groups in example the followers can represent a different target group in LinkedIn than in Instagram.

Social media is a good platform to execute content marketing, since it hooks customers and it can transform them into followers. It allows firms to combine traditional marketing into their social networks and maximise the profitability. (McPhillips 2014).

## 7 Marketing plan

Marketing plans are needed in today's marketing, since many companies create content and it is necessary to be able to stand out from other businesses. Marketing plans have shifted to the digital side, since marketing is more affordable online than on television and magazines. (Juslén 2011, 40).

Marketing plans are important for companies' current and future success. They embody subjects such as where a company sits at the moment, what they are pursuing, how to achieve this and reach the goals. The plans are all diverse and the content of the plan depends on what companies want to pursue with their marketing plan. (Jay & Sealey 2012.)

The creation of a marketing plan starts by going through the starting point and current position: what are the products or services wanted to market, who are the most important customers and competitors and what the business is striving for. Additionally, marketing plans usually include a SWOT analysis, where company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are presented in a figure. (Jay & Sealey 2012).

### 7.1 Content marketing plan

Content marketing plans usually are a segment of marketing plans. Content marketing plans focus on the content of the marketing where marketing plans focus on all kinds of marketing and advertising. The purposes of a content marketing plan differ from a marketing plan's intentions, since content marketing means communicating with the clients and creating valuable and intriguing content instead of normal advertising that marketing plans include. Content marketing is an ongoing process and non-interruption marketing, where the point is not to be selling but attracting and maintaining customer ships. A content marketing plan should be updated and refreshed regularly, since new channels can increase their importance in marketing. (Content Marketing Institute 2016).

There is not an exact model or layout for content marketing plan. Therefore the plan for the client company unit is created with the help of theory, the research and the authors' creativity. The next chapter will discuss the content marketing plan for the client.

## 7.2 Content marketing plan for the client

The purpose of the thesis was to create a content marketing plan to a company unit, since the client did not obtain one previously. The company unit did not practice any marketing on social media before the thesis was executed. Additionally, the websites needed updating. Therefore there was a need for a content marketing plan. The content marketing plan was created for the event management company unit to create a better knowledge on their brand and services and hook the customers to good content and increase their visibility on the markets. The plan focuses on the organisation unit's several social media channels and websites.

The material forms the accurate content for the client's websites and social media channels. Moreover, the idea was to create an output for company unit's personnel and trainees. It was conducted as a word-file, where different social media channels' and websites' contents are planned and suggested one at a time.

## 8 Executing the research

Researches can be divided into empirical and theoretical analysis. Empirical analysis is based on persons' experiences and in the material collecting and analysing methods. Theoretical analysis is based on conducted research theory and no direct method is used in the analysis. Research methods can be allocated into qualitative and quantitative research (Kananen 2014, 20). This empirical analysis was implemented as a qualitative theme interview and a quantitative survey. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 20-22).

The interview was organised to provide us with the relevant information to become aware of the client's pursuits for the content marketing plan. The survey was implemented to examine what kind of posts function and make people want to follow the social accounts of an event management business. The survey was to send out to different members of the target group to be able to examine what they consider as interesting content and to execute the best possible content for the output for the client. The study did not require a budget, since the research did not have any actual economical capacity.

The research methods were chosen carefully to get the wanted results objectively. The quantitative survey needed the accurate questions, which were received from the qualitative interview from the company unit X. Therefore an interview was chosen as the first research and a survey to answer the research questions. The goal was to find out the relevant content to influence on the target group. This content was included in the content marketing plan for the company unit. The research results have the ability to increase the visibility online, get more clientele and possibly to affect on the sales positively.

### 8.1 The interview

Common natures for qualitative interviews are unstructured, informal, open and narrative styles. Therefore qualitative interviews are useful when a topic is wanted to explore extensively and from the interviewees point of view. Interviews are mainly connected to qualitative research when it comes to field of marketing and consumer research. The method is stated as a powerful tool for data collection (Mosander & Valtonen 2006, 71).

For the research purposes the semi-structured interview, and even more precisely a theme interview was the most suitable selection, since the goal was to clarify variable aspects from different themes for the company unit. Semi-structured interviews are suitable when specific information is wanted. These interviews differ from structured and open interviews, since the style is more flexible than in structured interviews but proceeds through specific questions that are all equivalent for all of the interviewees. Specifically a theme interview was chosen, since the interview wanted to be flexible but also include deep conversation. In addition, there were many different themes that needed to be handled, which is why it was easy to process them through themes. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2014, 47).

The employees chosen for the interview were two of the staff members who are in charge of the organisation unit's development and marketing. Therefore they could provide us with the accurate answers and development criteria. The interviewers had previous contact with the interviewees from the organisation unit. The questions for the interview were created to figure out the starting points for the company unit and they handled different themes such as the target group, the wanted social media channels, resources for social media use and the purposes for the content marketing plan. The interview gave information about the company unit to be able to generate the right kind of survey to the target group. The idea was to inquire what the company unit X needs in their marketing and what kind of resources they have to execute the output. The output should respond to their needs and solve the company unit's marketing online.

The interviewees knew the themes of the interview beforehand, since the commission for the thesis was chosen with the employers. The interview was executed orally and the answers were writ-



ten down as different themes were addressed. The amount of information was extensive because the interview was more like an interaction between the interviewers and interviewees.

## 8.2 The survey

Quantitative research methods answer to the questions "how much" and "how often". It is a research method, where relation and difference can be measured. The method is a way to figure out phenomena, causations or issues presented with numerical figures. Mainly, the research includes a hypothesis, which is a proposed explanation for a phenomenon. A hypothesis can be figured out through a survey, an interview or an observation. (Vilkka 2007, 13, 23-24).

In the thesis the research was implemented as a form survey. The form survey is mainly a way to collect quantitative material. With the collected material the hypothesis can be tested and the material quantification can be executed (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 74). The form survey was chosen to target a wide amount of professionals in the line of business. Additionally, the company unit could collect information about their target group. In a quantitative research the survey asks the same questions in the same order and in the same way from each of the answerers (Vilkka 2007, 27). The survey inquires in the beginning the respondents age, gender and the line of business to be able to observe the differences between various groups.

The survey research questions focused more on content marketing than advertising online, since the company is just starting marketing online and want to focus on presenting themselves and the services at first. The most important research questions are mentioned below:

- What is the good time range for companies to post content on social media?
- What channels have the most important role in event companies' social media marketing?
- What kind of content format interests consumers the most?

For the research an implementation of a quantitative questionnaire for the clients' potential customer groups was made. The survey was implemented in Finnish, since the receivers of the survey were employees of different Finnish companies. The questionnaire included both, multiple choice questions and open questions. The questions were expressed from different angles to be able to get the most valid answers.

With the questionnaire an examination of what kind of content the client should use in their social media marketing was made. Research results were used for implementing a content marketing plan for the client's social media channels. The questionnaire was implemented during January and February in 2016. The survey questions can be seen in the appendices as the appendix 2.

## 9 Results

The research results for qualitative research differ from quantitative research. The qualitative research is usually presented in written form and a normal analysing method is content analysis that means examining the material by differentiation, finding for differences and summarising. (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 93).

The results in quantitative examination should be objective and the way to present the results should be chosen in a way that suits them. The quantitative research results are usually presented numerally, orally and graphically. The graphics can be charts, bar charts or pie charts. (Vilkka 2007, 134-148).

In the next chapters information is provided about the interview findings and survey results. The interview results are shown as a simple table format and the research results for the survey are presented in different types of charts.

### 9.1 The interview findings

In theme interviews different methods can be used to collect the information, such as interviewing, observing, videotaping and collecting documents. The analysis should be contemplated already in the collecting phase and implemented shortly after the execution. Additionally, it can be implemented already in the interview situation. Therefore the analysis in qualitative research differs a lot from quantitative research. Usually the finished analysis will be presented in verbal form and collected in a chart. It can be produced in different ways:

1. The material will be dismantled and the analysis will be implemented with the interviewers intuition,
2. Dismantling the material, coding it and thereafter analysing it,
3. The dismantling and coding phases are combined and thereafter analysing it. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2014, 135-136,141).

What was agreed upon in the beginning of the interview was the importance of social media channels for companies to use. The client wants to activate several accounts on social networks and implement marketing through them. In the interview turned out that the client has the enough of resources to implement social media with the help of the content marketing plan. (Company unit X 2015b. Personal communication.).

According to the interviewees the target group will contain organisations without a specific line of business in the metropolitan area of Finland. The company unit is planning to use tentatively the

most popular and used social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. The multiple social media channels will help the company unit to target different customers and companies, both B2B and B2C customers. The company unit was not able to give any exact amount of posts for each channel. Instead they prefer to hear the authors' opinion on the matter, which will be based on the survey results and theory. (Company unit X 2015b. Personal communication.).

Theme question	Company unit X
Target group	Public and private sector customers, mainly B2B customers in Helsinki metropolitan area regardless of the business line.
Goals	Increasing the visibility, communicating with the clients and developing the communication and the knowledge among the whole organisation. Additionally, building the brand and selling and marketing the services outside the organisation.
Added value	With the help of the thesis we can reach out to potential customers, adduce the brand selling and marketing the services online.
Social media channels	Tentatively Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. In addition LinkedIn and Twitter for professional use.
Resources	Effective but not spamming, certain posts will be planned beforehand so the actual posting time does not take long.

Table 2: Theme interview chart

The table 2 presents all the different themes that the interview included. The findings in the interview confirmed the outlook on the client's social media usage. The answers were helpful for the creation of the survey for the target group, since the goals for the survey were invented through the answers. They are stated in the table above.

## 9.2 The survey results

Vilkka writes: “Sampling means a method where a sample is picked from the universe. Universe is formed from an observation unit. The observation unit -- is the one that we want information on. It can be a person, a nature’s phenomenon, a product, picture or text.” In the survey the wanted information was content marketing. The population in the survey was the company unit’s target group and the sample from the population included 259 members of the biggest client’s target group companies in the Helsinki metropolitan area. For the survey, the marketers, communicators, human resources and possible event corresponding persons of these companies were approached. (Vilkka 2007, 52).

The survey was sent in the middle of February and the response time for the questionnaire was eight days. During these eight days, all in all 51 responses were received, which made the answering percentage 19,7%. Even through the survey time was limited the amount of respondents were a desirable percentage. The specific results can be seen in the figures.

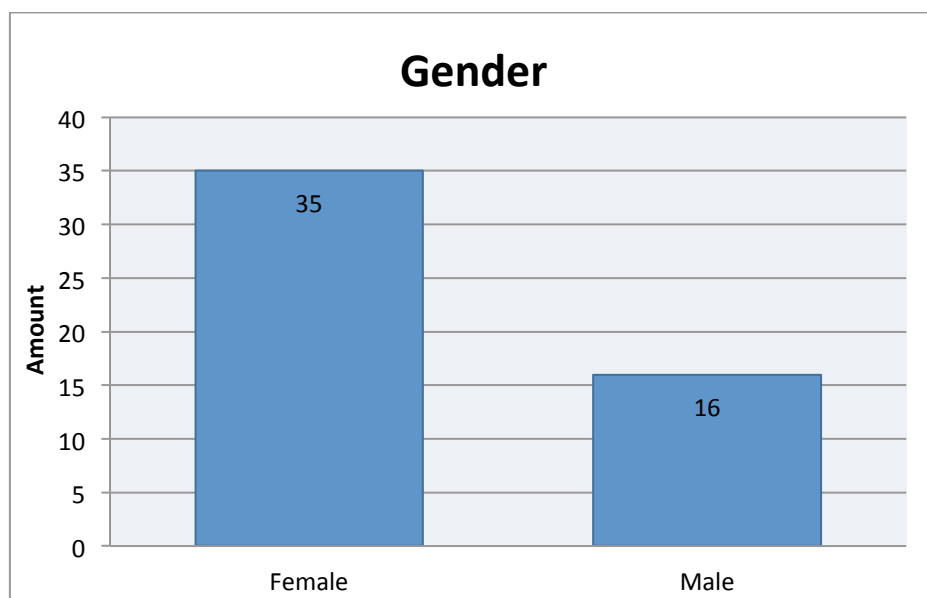


Figure 5: The genders of the respondents

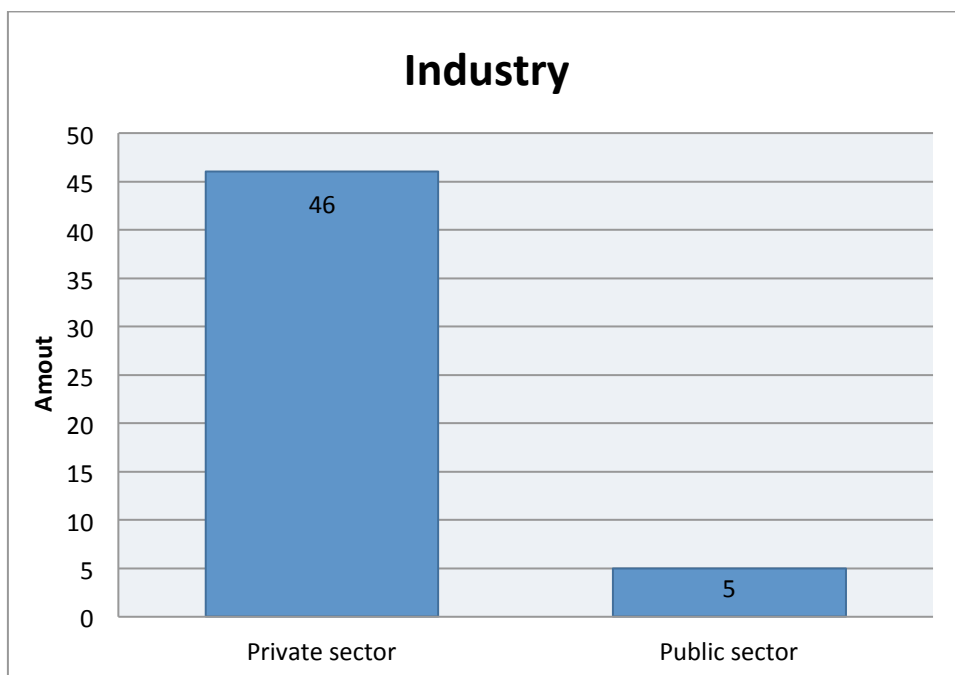


Figure 6: The industry of the respondents

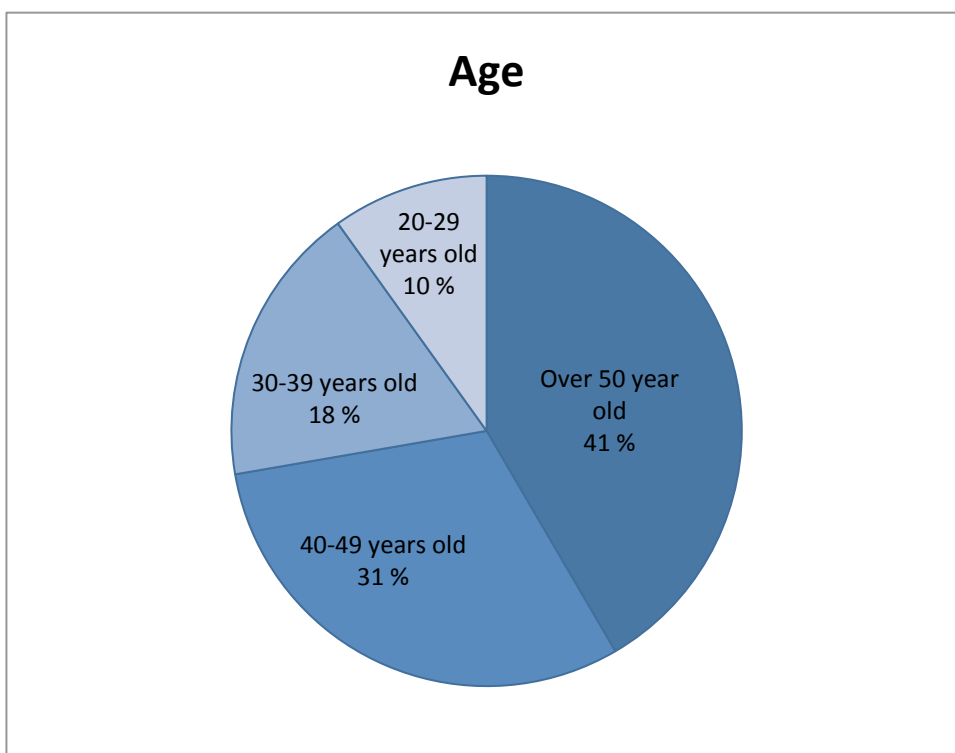


Figure 7: The age groups of the respondents

As the figures 5 and 6 show most of the participants in the survey, 35 of them, were women and the rest, 16 were men and mainly represented persons from the private sector. Referring to figure 7, 42% of the answerers were over 50 year olds, 31% of them were 40-49 year olds, 18% were 30-39

year olds and the rest 10% were 20-29 year olds. This is explained with the fact that the survey was sent to personnel in high positions, who usually already have many years of work experience. However, enough replies from all the four age groups were gotten to balance the answers, since different age groups might represent different users online.

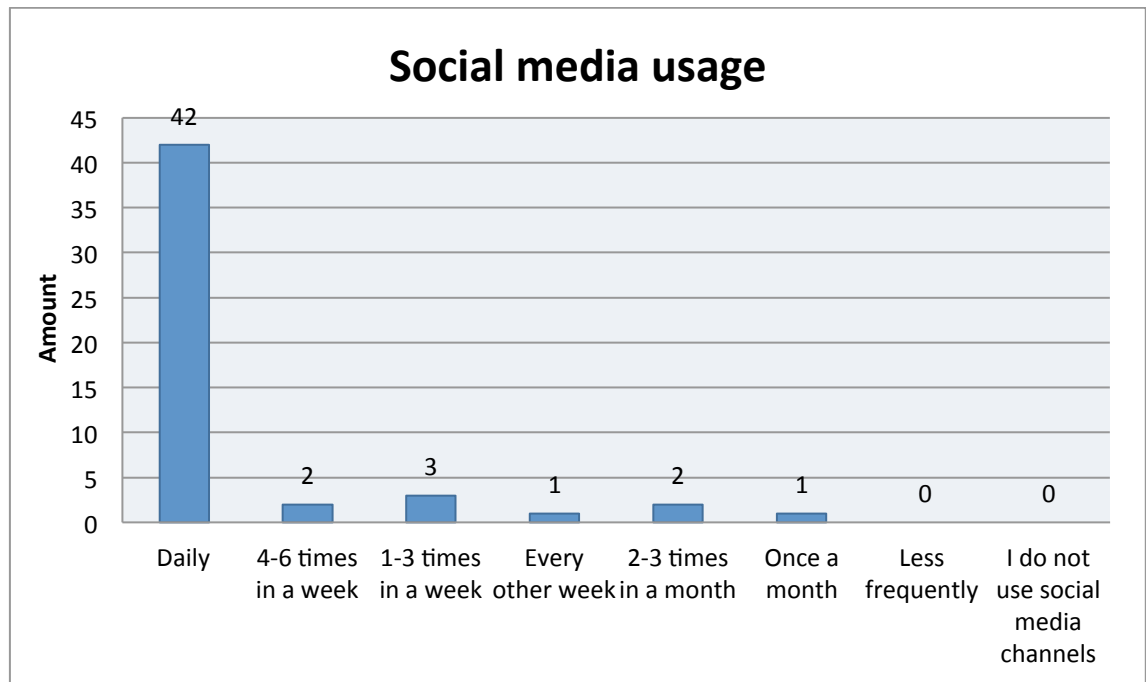


Figure 8: The social media usage of the respondents

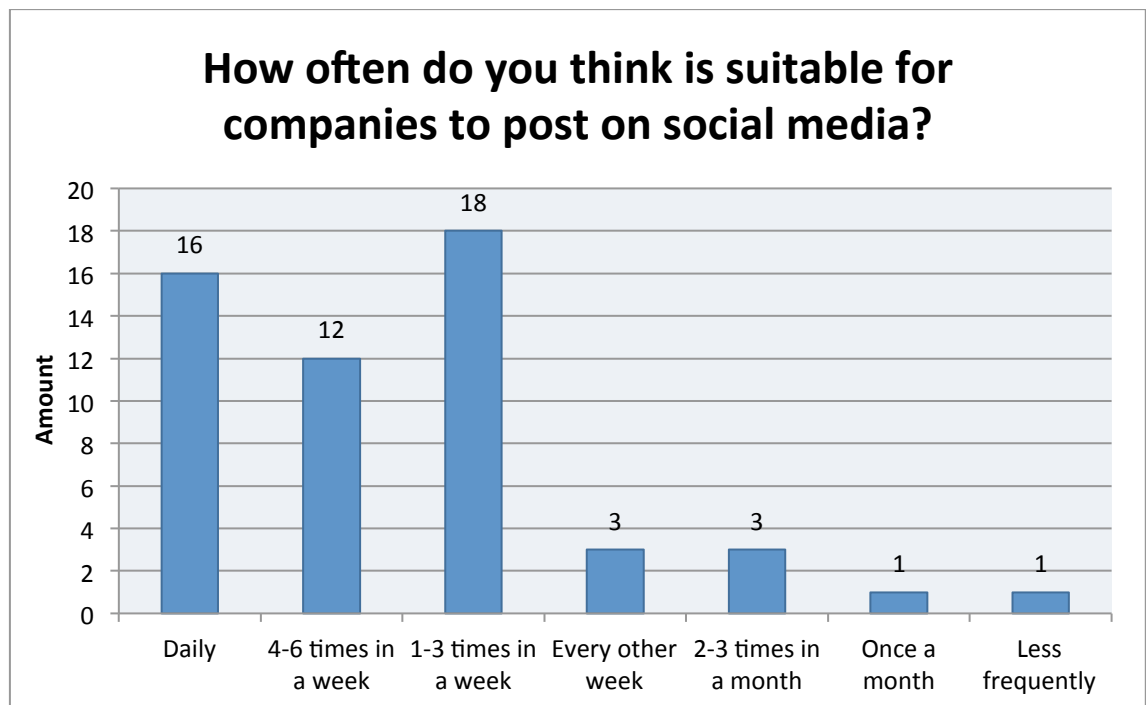


Figure 9: The most suitable posting range for companies

Recently different social networks have increased their value in marketing, since companies can reach their audiences on the channels and the markets are constantly changing into more virtual side (Merisavo, Vesanen & Raulas 2006, 29). As can be seen in the figure 8 a significant amount 82% of the participants in the survey read social media channels daily. Therefore the company unit X can reach their target group through social media. A realistic posting range for the company unit is daily, 4-6 times in a week or 1-3 times in a week. This is explained with the results. As the figure 9 shows, the opinion of the target group is for companies to post content 1-3 times a week. However, even 4-6 times a week and daily were popular choices. Anything less than 1-3 times a week will not be good for the company unit. Consequently, a realistic and ideal posting range for a small company unit with little resources should be one to three times a week, but even more is suitable, which depends on the social media channel.

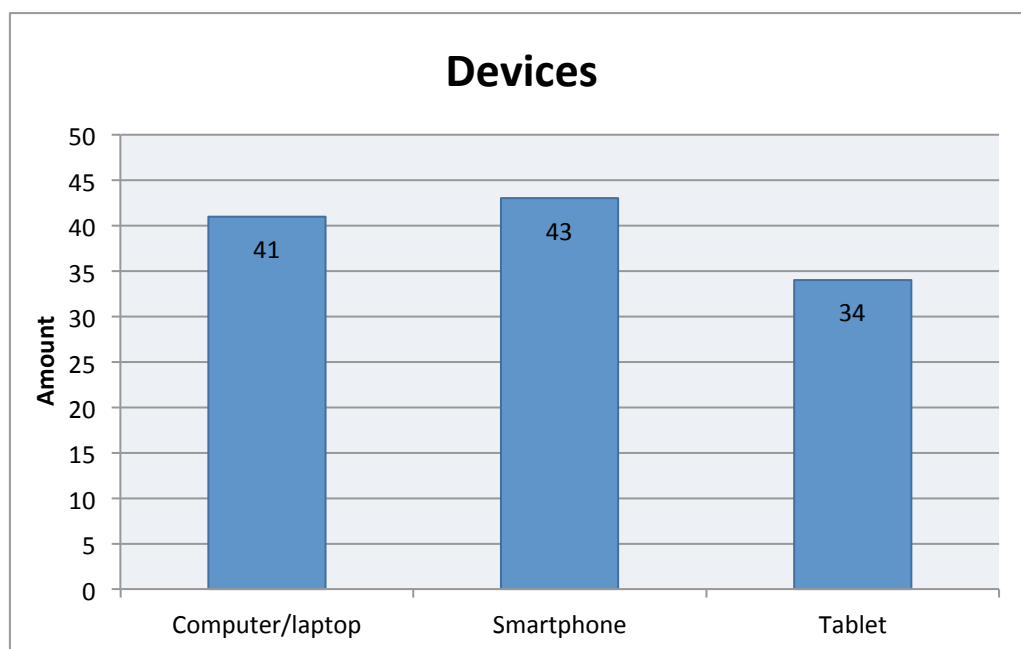


Figure 10: The most used devices for social media

Like stated before, the mobile devices have increased in usage and therefore it is important for companies to be seen in applications (Ylävaara 2015). In addition, it is important to have the web-sites functioning with mobile view. Therefore the client company unit will focus on several channels and hopefully be able to create completely new websites in the future. Like the figure 10 points out most of the respondents from the target group use mobile devices for social media utilisation.

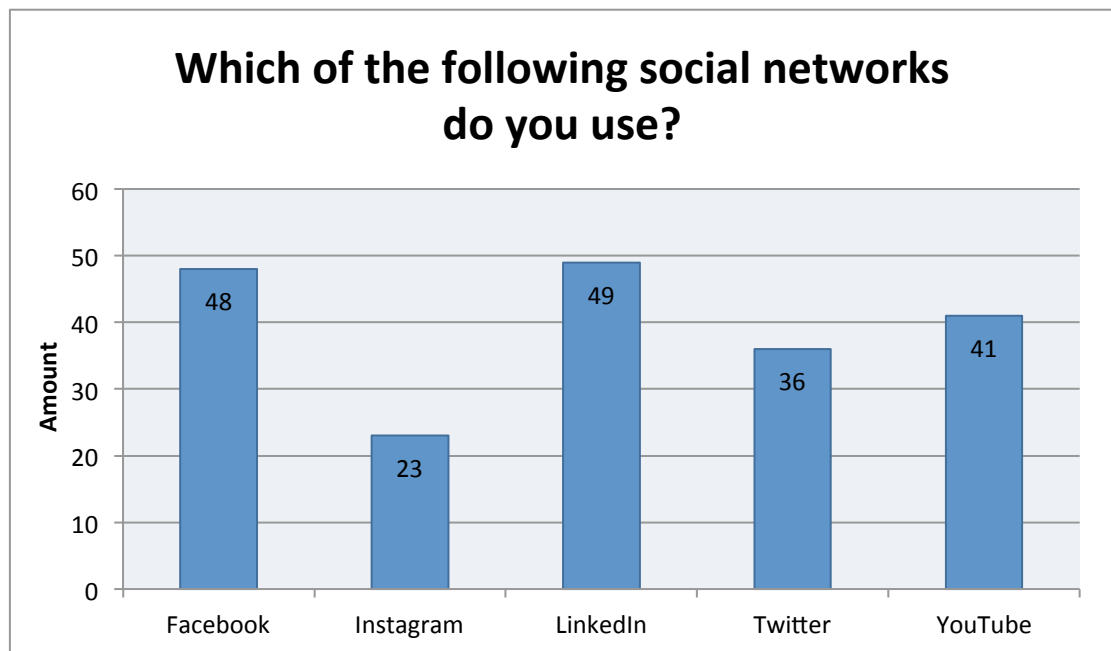


Figure 11: The usage on social networks

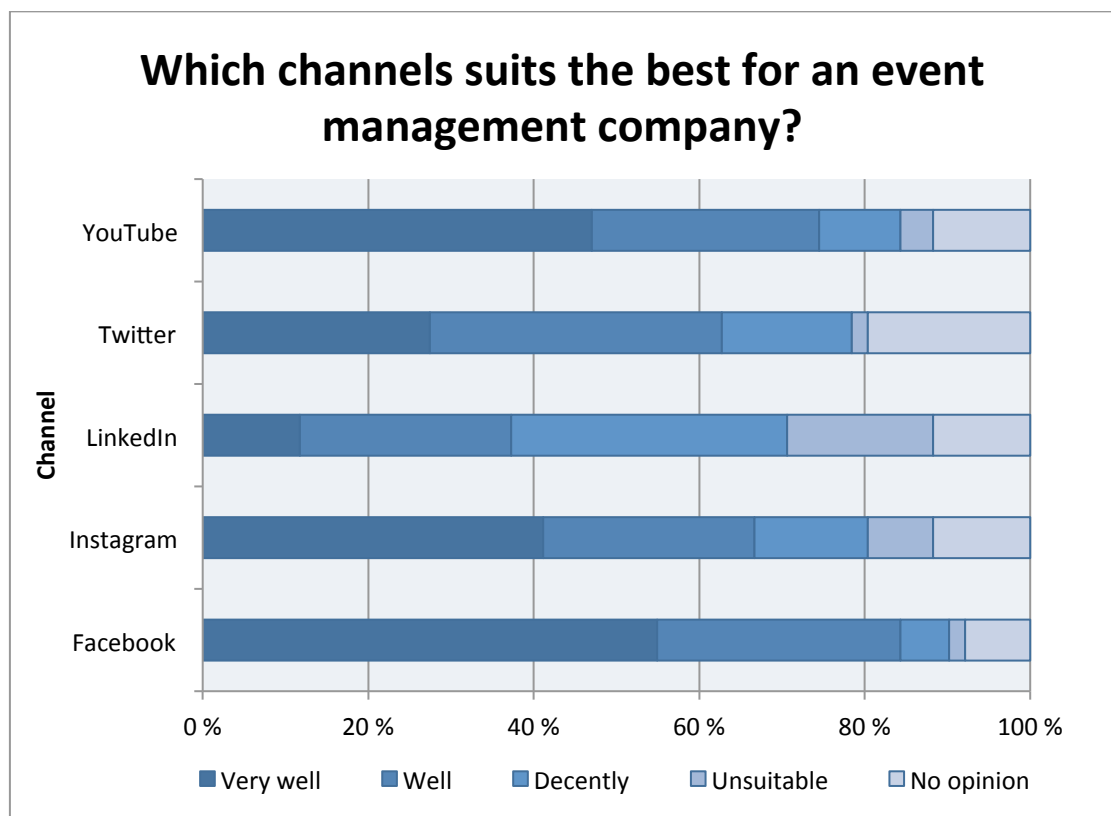


Figure 12: The most suitable social networks for companies

Since customers these days need and want to find information online the visibility in different channels is crucial for companies and additionally the companies can have an impact on customer



actions (Vallo & Häyrynen 2012, 19). To be able to affect on the customers' mind-set and target all the potential members of the target group the company unit should their operations in many different channels simultaneously. In the survey the most suitable channels were confirmed for the company unit, where they could reach out to their target audiences and post the accurate content to keep them interested. The channels were figured out partly by benchmarking other operators in Helsinki metropolitan area and by looking at the user amounts of the selected channels. Moreover, the survey verified the chosen channels.

Additionally, it is important to be seen where the customers are to increase the competitiveness on the markets. The survey states and is shown in the figure 11 that the channels suggested for the client are the most suitable ones, since all the channels consist of over 45% of the survey participants. However, Facebook contained 94% and LinkedIn contained 96% of all of the 51 respondents and therefore the company unit X should focus more on the visibility and resources on these channels. When asked about the channels that the target audience thinks are suitable for an event management company, Facebook and YouTube stood out as the figure 12 points. This is understandable, since like stated in the thesis previously Facebook is the third most used Internet page in Finland and videos are predicted to become valuable for companies in the near future and are a great content creators (Alexa 2016, Mahon 2016).

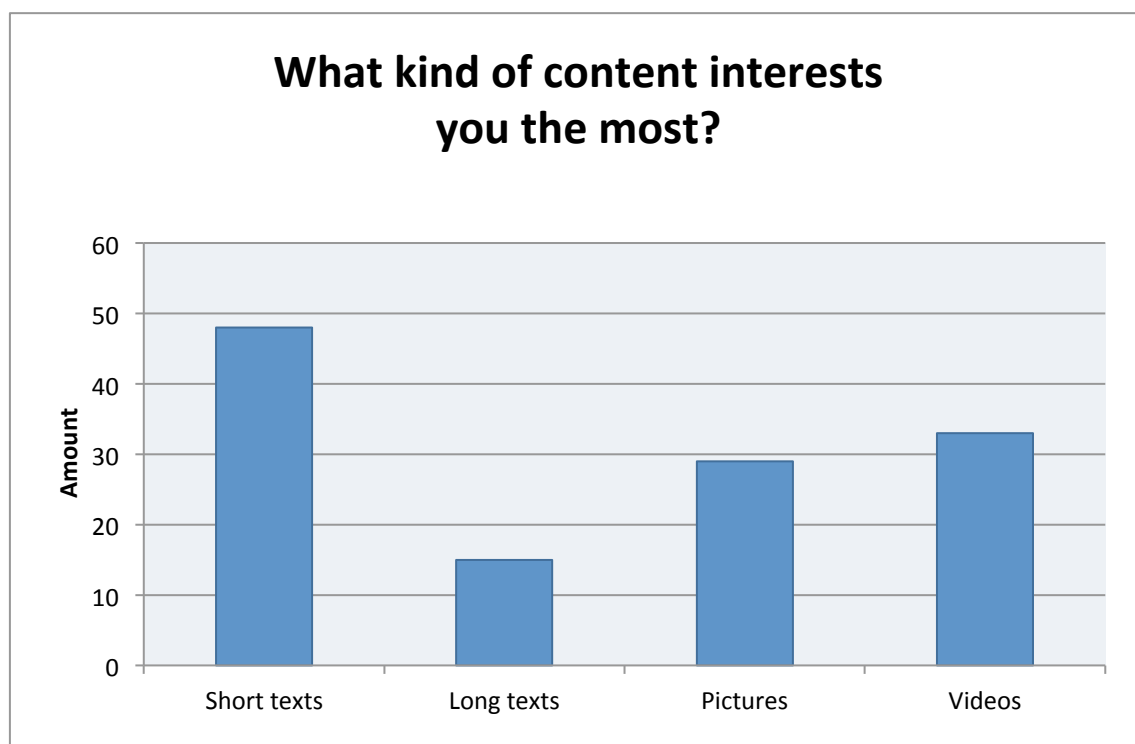


Figure 13: The most interesting content for the target group

It is important for a company to produce content that feels appealing to the target group to be able to increase the visibility and the sales (Lieb 2011). The content that the target audience are

interested in was one of the most important questions when planning the output for the client. As the figure 13 shows almost all of the respondents answered short texts such as newsletters and information about companies. Another one that stood out was videos, which probably will grow even more important in the near future (Mahon 2016). However, some members of the target group was only interested in long texts such as blog texts, which is why all of these content forms will be suggested for the company unit X.

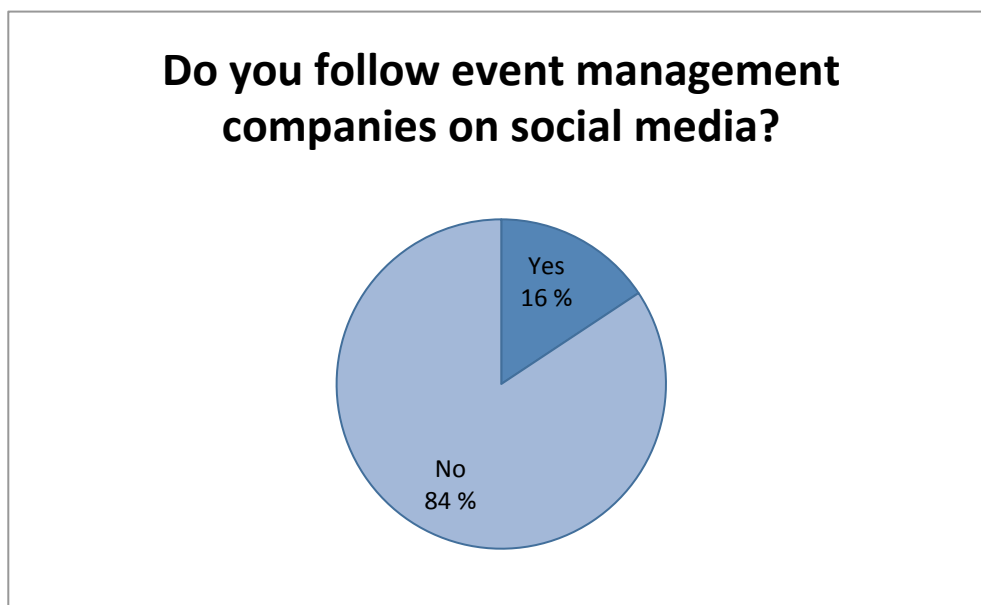


Figure 14: The percentage of the target group that follow event management companies on social media

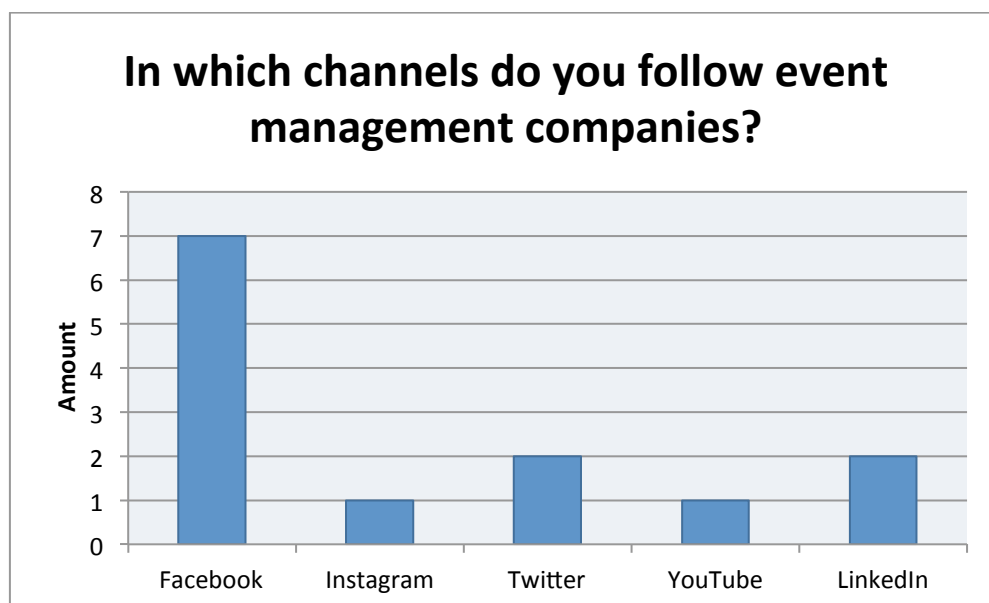


Figure 15: The channels where event management companies are followed

As the figure 14 shows most participants in the survey from the target audience do not follow event management businesses on social media and therefore can be concluded that the markets do not have a leading company that operates well online. Consequently, the company unit X should start to create interesting content to influence on potential customers and possibly to increase their awareness and clientele. The figure 15 shows that the ones that follow event management companies follow them on Facebook, which supports the prediction mentioned above that the company should focus more on their resources on that channel.

### 9.3 Reliability and validity

A research is valid when it measures the exact phenomenon that is wanted to observe. Therefore the interview questions should be precise to be able to get the desired answers. Usually in theme interviews the material is substantial and therefore the quality of the material is valid. When the dialog is deep between the interviewee and interviewer and the interview lasts a long time the quality of the material can become even richer. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2014, 135).

The theme interview was held as a meeting at the company unit's premises. The material from the interview was substantial, since different methods were used for the information collection, such as writing the answers on a word file. Additionally, the interview functioned like a normal discussion. The interview lasted an hour and all the wanted themes were discussed composedly. All the wanted answers were given and the implementation of the survey could begin.

In a quantitative research the researcher should pay attention to the set requirements when realising the research. The research should be evaluated in its entirety from the planning phase to the outcomes. In addition, it should be honest: All the errors should be mentioned. (Vilkka 2007, 149-154).

The survey included questions from different aspects, which is why the results could be summarised correctly. The set requirements for the survey came from the client in the qualitative interview and they were met by these differentiated questions in the survey. The idea was to figure out if the chosen social media channels were the most suitable for the client. Therefore the target audience was asked what they thought on the matter and where they self were influencing and operating. This means that the research was concordant. The respondents had different options in the survey, which means that they had the ability to state their opinion and that the survey was objective.

The reliability on quantitative research depends on how well the sampling was implemented (KvantiMOTV 2016). The sampling was chosen carefully by operators that make the companies decisions on marketing and communication. Consequently, they knew about the relatively new sub-

ject, content marketing and could provide us with authentic answers. In addition, the operators represented different age groups, from 20 year olds to over 50 years olds. That was considered to be important, since social media can be executed differently by different age groups. The research conducted for the target group of the company unit X came out some significant results, which means that the research was accurate.

#### 10 The output for the client company

The assignment was invented during autumn 2015 when the company unit's current marketing was observed and studied how it could be improved. Since social media marketing and marketing in total are important, a great opportunity appeared to combine the subjects to the thesis. The idea was suggested, to plan and implement a content marketing plan, to the employers who agreed with the idea, since they were struggling with the resources in conducting their own plan.

The project was divided as following:



Figure 16: The division of the project

The thesis process began with contemplating the concept for the work. Since the company unit X needed a plan to cover the channels online the “Content marketing plan for the company unit X” was invented. Content marketing as a subject has been very current recently and it has been addressed in different theory articles. The process continued with planning the phases of the actual work and the timescale. Furthermore, theory was easily collected since the subject is topical.

Moreover, the interview and the survey were implemented and analysed. Thereafter, the content marketing could be actualised. A ready layout for the content marketing plan could not be found, which for instance can be found for marketing plans. Therefore the opportunity to create a layout for the plan was presented. However, the content needed to be thought about carefully to figure out all the needed aspects for it.

### 10.1 The content of the output

The plan begins with an introduction, which briefly goes through the whole plan. The introduction includes among other things the present state, the purpose of the content marketing plan, the demands of marketing, the strategy and the budget. The plan continues with a thorough presentation of all the social media channels that the company will use in their online marketing and different post suggestions for each channel presented with pictures taking into account the survey results. Moreover, it includes separate points on related content for each channel. Table 3 presents an example of an outlook on one of the channel’s features.

<b>Structure</b>	Connecting with professionals
<b>Goal</b>	Sharing real-time updates related to the company and business
<b>Goal for posts or updates</b>	1-2 times per week
<b>Target group</b>	The business audience
<b>Types of content</b>	Mainly text related to the company and field of business
<b>Strategy</b>	Informing and creating added value to the target group by sharing information about sustainability, missions and visions

Table 3: An example of a social media channel table in the content marketing plan

The content marketing plan presents the advantages for the company unit X. Firstly, helping with commissioning the new channels by letting the client know how often each channel should be updated and which features on the different channels should be notified. Secondly, the plan gives an overall review on the social networks. Other advantages are post suggestions and propositions for the future use, saves resources and gives the user a holistic overview for the company unit X's content marketing. If commissioning the plan and sticking to the posting range the visibility should increase for the company unit. The channels for the plan were confirmed through the survey and the chosen ones are: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

The post suggestions included all details for the posts, such as hashtags, possible picture or video ideas and text ideas, since the target group found all of them appealing. In addition, communication with consumers and information gathering through different surveys were in important role for the company unit, since they are beginning their operations. Additionally, the quality of the videos and visual pictures were taken into account, when considering appealing content. The videos were discussed precisely in the plan, since they are considered to increase their importance in the future (Mahon 2016). Furthermore, how to build a good video and a blog are discussed in the plan.

A blog was suggested for the websites of the company unit X. The blog was proposed, since the company unit can create interesting content for the target group that wanted to read longer texts. The blog posts allow the client company unit to post content under their name and to emphasise their persona and operation mode.

The layout for the plan was chosen to be thorough, since content marketing is quite a new concept. Therefore the plan would be easy to read and straightforward. Additionally, the commissioning wanted to be as easy as possible for the company unit. However, the client company unit wanted to keep the plan confidential, since they are developing their brand and starting their marketing on social media. Therefore at the moment the company unit does not want to share the information and damage their competitive advantage.

## 10.2 Increasing the visibility through the content marketing plan

Recently the social media usage has become popular, which is why the companies have allocated their resources online and joined different social networking sites. Social media has opened new marketing channels where businesses can create themselves considerable recognisability and visibility. (Lieb 2012, 47-59).

The goal for the content marketing plan was to increase the visibility. Based on the survey and theory can be stated that right kind of content has a great meaning in firms' prosperity in social

media. Therefore it is important to plan what, why and when the company social networks should be updated. These factors effect on the wanted visibility and recognition. An important given idea was to link the sites together to be able to maximise the visibility online and even increase the sales. For instance the linkage increases visibility whenever new sites are activated and advertised on the functioning sites.

Content marketing means delivering the most suitable information to the customers. When the business is able fulfil this, the marketing feels interesting and beneficial to the target group. The survey for the potential target group verified the social media channels for the company unit: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. The web pages will function as a base for all the information, since the company unit can share for instance the blog posts and other informative content from their Internet page on the social networks.

The wanted visibility can be achieved by producing content that the target group wants to see (Sisältömarkkinointi 2015). Chapter 9.2 provides the information about the desires of the target group, such as application for mobile devices and versatile posts: videos, pictures and texts multiple times in a week. The post and the content examples in the content marketing plan were invented through benchmarking other companies social media channels and web pages, the survey results and own creativity.

## 11 Conclusions

In conclusion, the main problem of the thesis was the lack of usage of social media channels, which nowadays are extremely important for companies to be able to succeed in the digitalising world. Furthermore, the websites needed updating to respond today's needs in marketing. The suggestion is that the client should add a blog for their websites, since blogs are important content creators for consumers these days (Lieb 2011, 73). The company unit X can communicate with their clients and provide important and current information through blog posts. These are discussed in the chapter 6.1.2. Additionally, the client should consider joining new channels whenever they increase the importance in marketing.

The research was conducted to figure out the accurate content for the event management company unit by a qualitative interview with the employers of the client company unit and a quantitative survey for the target group. The survey results imparted the information about the content and social media channels. The results from the survey supported the realisation that was made about the chosen social media channels and that videos should be included in the company unit's marketing, since they are an excellent content creator. In addition, the importance of the mobile

devices should be taken into account in marketing and join the networks that function well with mobiles. Therefore the results came up to expectations.

For the follow-up study a suggestion for the research benefits of the content marketing plan was given to be able to observe the most important content type for the company unit. Once the marketing operations executes the company unit X could join Google Analytics to observe the popularity of different posts. At this point the company unit should additionally consider paid marketing for instance through Facebook and Instagram.

The development idea is to update the content marketing plan often and whenever new channels emerge on the markets where the company should commence their marketing. The survey respondents of the target group already suggested that the company unit joined applications such as Snapchat and Periscope, which are newer video applications and growing with popularity. The channels are suggested additionally by the authors of the thesis, since the videos are expected to increase in value like stated in the thesis.

Moreover, as a developing idea a suggestion for the company unit is to create their own web pages to increase their visibility, since the ones they have at the moment are functioning under the main organisation's web page. More flexible websites could help the company unit X to present more information about them and answer the needs in today's marketing world. If the content marketing plan comes to expectations and increases the visibility and even the sales, the company unit could need more employees to the company and be able to grow as a company unit.

### 11.1 Evaluation from the client

In the beginning of the thesis process the client hoped that the content marketing plan would help them to get the wanted visibility online, reach potential customers and adduce the brand selling and marketing online. Moreover the goal was that the plan would be easy to use, save resources and include concrete examples of the posts in order that the actual posting will not consume much time for the client. The client also wanted to know what the readers and followers are interested in, which is the most valuable content for each channel.

Referring to the client the work was done as agreed and the client will use the plan for executing content marketing on social media and web pages. The client will benefit from the plan by saving time and resources when planning and implementing content on selected channels but also when briefing personnel for company unit's social media channels and websites. Co-operation functioned smoothly and the case was executed diligently and precisely.



Since the client have not been able to implement any post suggestions from the content marketing plan at the time of the evaluation, the functionality of the work cannot be measured at the moment. The future followers on social networks, profits of the company unit, increased amount of work and hopefully even increased amount of personnel can in the future measure the results of the content marketing plan.

## 11.2 Self evaluation

With reference to evaluation, a good plan was carried out for the organisation unit even though a ready format for the content marketing plan did not exist. In addition, different alternatives were observed and created for a small company unit to begin their marketing and create visibility online. The plan was clear and included enough information for the company to be able to commerce marketing online. Theory and research were used extensively for the plan additionally with the authors' own perceptions and knowledge on the subject.

All of the tasks were completed on schedule and the thesis was completed about one month sooner than expected. Creating a thorough content marketing plan with the help of an interview and a survey were listed as the purposes. The task was completed and a plan for an immediate use for the client could be created.

Since content marketing is a relatively new and current concept the thesis was quite innovative. Multiple sources were used as theory, both theory books and online articles. By using additionally online articles as theory the most recent information on content marketing was found, since the concept is new and most of the recent information can be found online and not through theory books. In addition, reading different sources of theory developed the knowledge in content marketing and social media channels.

The research was executed through qualitative and quantitative methods. The methods were correct, since the research questions were answered and the company got a thorough plan. As the qualitative method an interview was used to clarify the relevant survey questions for the target group. The survey was implemented as a quantitative research and the results were presented in different tables and charts. Without the changes in the time schedule the sampling could have been larger since the bigger time range could have increased the amount of answers. Nevertheless, the answering percentage was sufficient.

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## Tables

Table 1: The most important services to businesses by HubSpot

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Appendix 1: The interview questions for the client

1. What is the company unit main target group wanted to reach by marketing on social media?
2. Which channels will be the company unit's social media channels?
3. What is realistic goal for amount of posts?
4. What is the goal for the content marketing plan from company unit perspective?
5. How does the company unit hope to benefit from the content marketing plan?

## Appendix 2: The survey questions

### Gender:

- Female
- Male

### Age:

- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- Over 50 years

### Industry:

- Public sector
- Private sector

### Email (optional):

1. **How often do you use or read social media channels?**
  - Daily
  - 4-6 times in a week
  - 1-3 times in a week
  - Every other week
  - 2-3 times in a month
  - Once a month
  - Less frequently
  - I do not use social media channels
2. **Which of the following social media channels do you use?**
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
  - LinkedIn
  - Twitter
  - YouTube
  - Something else, what or which?
3. **What devices do you use for social media (you can have multiple choices)?**
  - Laptop/computer
  - Tablet
  - Smartphone
4. **How often do you create content or post something on social media channels?**
  - Daily
  - 4-6 times in a week
  - 1-3 times in a week
  - Every other week
  - 2-3 times in a month
  - Once a month
  - Less frequently
  - I do not create content or post anything on social media



5. **How often do you read companies' posts on social media channels?**
  - Daily
  - Weekly
  - Monthly
  - Less frequently
  - I do not read companies' posts on social media
6. **Name the companies that you follow on social media:**
7. **How often do you think that companies should post or create content on social media channels?**
  - Daily
  - 4-6 times in a week
  - 1-3 times in a week
  - Every other week
  - 2-3 times in a month
  - Once a month
  - Less frequently
8. **What kind of content interests you (you can have multiple choices)?**
  - Short texts such as newsletters
  - Long texts such as blogs
  - Pictures
  - Videos
  - Something else, what?
9. **Do you follow any event management companies on social media?**
  - Yes
  - No
10. **If yes, which companies?**
11. **If you answered yes to question 10, in which channels do you follow them (you can have multiple choices)?**
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
  - LinkedIn
  - Twitter
  - YouTube
  - Something else, what?

12. Which channels suit the best for an event management company?

	Suits very well	Suits well	Suits decently	Does not suit	No opinion
Facebook					
Instagram					
LinkedIn					
Twitter					
YouTube					
Something else, what?					

Appendix 3: Content marketing plan for the company unit X's social media channels and websites (confidential)