

# **Marketing plan for social media**

## **Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona**

Milla Broström

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Abstract  <p>The purpose of the thesis was to make a relevant marketing plan for social media for the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. The research question was: How to develop social media marketing at the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. The author also used sub-questions: In which social media platforms do their customers prefer to follow Sleep Green in the future and get information about the hostel and Barcelona, What do their customers do on social media, and What kind of content do their customers wish to see on social media in the future.</p> <p>In the study quantitative research method was used. The quantitative research was created by the Webropol survey tool, and the survey was implemented as a paper form at the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. 77 responses were received.</p> <p>The research results indicated that Sleep Green's customers wished to follow the hostel on Facebook and Instagram, instead of other platforms. There was not significant differences between different age groups, and where they wished to follow the hostel in the future. All Sleep's customers wished to follow the hostel on the above mentioned platforms. The plan for marketing on social media was targeted to all customers. According to the research results, it is encouraged to implement the propositions in marketing in order to increase the visibility of the hostel on social media, the satisfaction of customers and the number of visitors.</p> <p>The results showed important knowledge of customer's opinions about social media today. The results also showed what the most used platforms and customer's activities on social media were. The results can be applied for further development of marketing social media.</p>		
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Tiivistelmä <p>Opinnäytetyön tavoite oli laatia sosiaalisen median markkinointisuunnitelma Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelonalle. Tutkimuskysymys oli, miten kehittää sosiaalisen median markkinointia Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostelissa. Tutkimuksessa käytettiin myös alakysymyksiä: missä sosiaalisen median kanavissa asiakkaat haluavat seurata hostellia tulevaisuudessa ja saada tietoa hostellista ja Barcelonasta sekä minkälaista sisältöä asiakkaat haluavat nähdä tulevaisuudessa sosiaalisessa mediassa.</p> <p>Työssä käytettiin määrällisen tutkimuksen menetelmää. Kvantitatiivinen tutkimus tehtiin Webropol-kyselytyökalulla, ja kysely toteutettiin paperiversiona paikan päällä Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelonassa. Kyselyyn vastasi 77 vastaajaa.</p> <p>Tutkimustulokset osoittivat, että hostellin asiakkaat haluavat seurata hostellia Facebookissa ja Instagramissa enemmän kuin muissa sosiaalisen median kanavissa. Eri ikäryhmissä ja kanavien suosiossa tulevaisuudessa ei ollut merkitsevää eroa. Kaikki hostellin asiakkaat haluavat seurata hostellia yllä mainituissa kanavissa. Sosiaalisen media markkinointisuunnitelma suunnattiin kaikille asiakkaille. Tutkimustuloksiin perustuen suositellaan toteuttamaan ehdotuksia markkinoinnissa, kasvattaakseen hostellin näkyvyyttä sosiaalisessa mediassa, asiakastytyväisyyttä ja hostellin kävijämäärää.</p> <p>Tulokset tarjosivat tietoa asiakkaiden mielipiteistä tämän päivän sosiaalisesta mediasta. Tulokset osoittivat myös mitkä ovat useimmin käytetyt sosiaalisen median kanavat ja asiakkaiden aktiivisuuden sosiaalisessa mediassa. Tuloksia voidaan soveltaa edelleen sosiaalisen median markkinoinnin kehittämisessä.</p>		
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# 1 Introduction

The world has changed a lot during the last decade because of the development of technology. The Internet and social networks have made it possible to market on social media instead of newspaper and other media.

Marketing has also changed from a selling concept to a marketing concept. The aim of selling focus is to get every possible sale, not worry about satisfaction after the sale or revenue contribution of the sale. The marketing concept is a more recent business philosophy and it has been adopted in the hospitality industry. The marketing concept starts with well-defined market, it focuses on customer needs and integrates all the marketing activities that affect customers. It meets the organizational goals by creating long-term customer relationships based on customer value and satisfaction. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 16.) This means that the main focus is on customer. Companies put the customer needs and satisfaction first.

Because marketing has changed more customer focused, organizations have to market where the customers are. Nowadays the marketplace is on the internet. It is almost certain in these days that every company uses social media for marketing, and customers assume that most companies have a Facebook or Instagram account.

The idea of the thesis came from the hostel where the author worked as an intern in 2014. The Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel is located in the heart of Barcelona, in Spain, and it was founded in 2013. The owner couple have worked in hospitality sector over ten years. The owners also have another youth hostel near Sleep Green. The other hostel, Alternative Creative Youth home hostel Barcelona, has served customers since 2006. Both hostels are very cozy and have a small capacity, around 30 beds in each hostel. This makes both hostels also very unique.

The hostels recycle nearly everything, from waste to towels. Both hostels are environmentally friendly, but the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel is the first urban EU eco-label certified youth hostel in Spain.

The owners started to use social media for marketing in the very beginning. Alternative Creative launched Facebook in 2006, and Sleep Green in 2013. In 2015 they noticed also other options to market on social media.

Other Social networks such as Instagram and Snapchat are relatively new, yet powerful form of media that many companies are trying to incorporate into their marketing plans. The Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel has started to use social networks. In 2013 they launched a Facebook page that has now almost 4500 likers. In summer 2015, they launched an Instagram-account that has now over 360 followers. Sleep Green has also created an account for Twitter and Pinterest. All these four social media platforms cause a lot of work and require control every day. The main purpose of the thesis was to make a relevant social media marketing plan for the Sleep Green Eco Youth hostel Barcelona.

Research question is: How to develop marketing on social media for the company.

The sub-questions are:

- In which social media platforms do their customers prefer to follow Sleep Green in the future and get information about the hostel and Barcelona?
- What do their customers do on social media?
- What kind of content do their customers wish to see on social media in the future?

Traditional advertising on TV or in newspaper is not enough anymore. It is important that a company is, where their target market is, and nowadays the market is on social networks. Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel wishes to have satisfied customers who will tell their friends about great experiences at the Sleep Green Hostel.

## 2 Marketing services

The world's travel industry is alive, exciting and challenging. Hospitality companies and tourism planning/promotion departments are filled with college graduates from across the globe. Competition is strong and getting tougher each day. Yet opportunities are greater than ever before. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 6.)

The travel industry is the world's largest industry and the most international in nature. International travel has receipts of over \$1 trillion and 1 billion travelers. For example China's 1,3 billion people take over 2,1 billion domestic trips each year spending US \$237 billion. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 6.)

Today marketing is not simply a business function: It is a philosophy, a way of thinking, and a way of structuring your business and mind. Marketing is much more than a new ad campaign. The task of marketing is never to fool the customer or endanger the company's image. Marketing's task is to provide real value to targeted customers, motivate purchase and fulfill consumer needs. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 6.)

Marketing, more than any other business function, deals with customers. Creating customers value and satisfaction is at the heart of hospitality and travel industry marketing. Many factors contribute to making a business successful. However, today's successful companies at all levels have one thing in common: They are strongly customer focused and heavily committed to marketing. Successful hospitality companies know that if they take care of their customers, market share and profits will follow. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 6.)

In the accommodation industry, marketing and sales are often thought to be the same, and no wonder: The sales department is one of the most visible in the hotel. In reality, selling and advertising are only two marketing functions and often not the most important ones. Advertising and sales are components of the promotional element of the marketing mix. Other marketing mix elements include product, price, and distribution. Marketing also includes research, information system and planning. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)

The four-P framework calls on marketing professionals to decide on the product and its characteristics, set the price, decide how to distribute their product, and choose methods for promoting their product. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)



The marketing mix must be just that—a mix of ingredients to create an effective product/service package for the target market. If marketers do a good job of identifying consumer needs developing a good product and pricing, distributing and promoting it effectively, the result will be attractive products and satisfied customers. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)

Marketing is the process by which companies create value for customers and society, resulting in strong customer relationships that capture value from the customers in return. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)

## 2.1 Marketing in tourism and hospitality

The hospitality industry is one of the world's major industries. In the United States, it is the second largest employer. In more a than half of the fifty states, it is the largest industry. The two main industries that comprise the activities we call tourism are the hospitality and travel industries. Successful hospitality marketing is highly dependent on the entire travel industry. Without travelers there is no hospitality industry. Hospitality and travel industry consist of transportation, destinations, accommodation, restaurants and activities for attendees. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 10.)

Travel industry members, as travel agents cooperate with hotels and restaurants etc. to get better results in marketing. For example, airlines and auto rental firms develop packages with cruise lines. This requires coordination in pricing, promotion, and delivery of those packages. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)

Travel and hospitality industries are interdependent, and this will increase in complexity. The travel industry will require marketing professionals who understand the big picture and can respond to changing consumer needs through creative strategies based on solid marketing knowledge. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 11.)

## 2.2 Marketing 3.0

Over the years, marketing has evolved through three stages that we call Marketing 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. Long ago, during the industrial age – when the core technology was industrial machinery – marketing was about selling the factory’s output of products to all who would buy them. The products were fairly basic and were designed to serve a mass market. The goal was to standardize and scale up to bring about the lowest possible costs of production so that these goods could be priced lower and made more affordable to more buyers. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 3.)

Marketing 2.0 came out in today’s information age – where the core is information technology. Today’s consumers are well informed and can easily compare several similar product offerings. The product value is defined by the consumer. Consumers differ greatly in their preferences. The marketer must segment the market and develop a superior product for a specific target market. Consumers can choose from a wide range of functional characteristics and alternatives. Today’s marketers try to touch the consumer’s mind and heart. Unfortunately, the consumer-centric approach implicitly assumes the view that consumers are passive targets of marketing campaigns. This is the view in Marketing 2.0 or the customer –oriented era. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 4.)

Now we are witnessing the rise of Marketing 3.0 or the values-driven era. Instead of treating people simply as consumers, marketers approach them as whole human beings with minds, hearts, and spirits. Increasingly, consumers are looking for solutions for their anxieties about making the globalized world a better place. In a world full of confusion, they search for companies that address their deepest needs for social, economic, and environmental justice in their mission, vision and values. They look not only functional and emotional fulfillment but also human spirit fulfillment in the products and services they choose. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 4.)

In times of global economic crisis, Marketing 3.0 gains more relevance to the lives of the consumers as they are impacted more by rapid social, economic, and environmental change and turbulence. Diseases become pandemics, poverty increases, and

environmental destruction is under way. Companies practicing Marketing 3.0 provide answers and hope to people confronting such issues and, therefore, touch consumers at a higher level. In Marketing 3.0, companies differentiate themselves by their values. In turbulent times, this differentiation is arguably a strong one. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 5.)

To understand Marketing 3.0 better, let us examine the rise of three major forces that shape the business landscape toward Marketing 3.0: the age of participation, the age of globalization paradox, and the age of creative society. Observe how these three major forces transform consumers to be more collaborative, cultural, and human spirit-driven. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 6.)

### **The age of participation and collaborative marketing**

Since early 2000, information technology has penetrated the mainstream market and further developed into what is considered the new wave technology. New wave technology is technology that enables connectivity and interactivity of individuals and groups. New wave technology consists of three major forces: cheap computers and mobile phones, low cost Internet, and open source. The technology allows individuals to express themselves and collaborate with others. The emergence of new wave technology marks the era that Scott McNealy, Chairman of Sun Microsystems, declared as the age of participation. In the age of participation, people create news, ideas, and entertainment as well as consume them. New wave technology enables people to turn from being consumers into prosumers. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 7.)

One of the enablers of new wave technology is the rise of social media. We classify social media in two broad categories. One is expressive social media, which includes blogs, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and photo sharing sites like Flickr, and the other social networking sites. The other category is the collaborative media, which includes sites as Wikipedia, Rotten Tomatoes, and Graigslist. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 7.)

### 3 Social media

Social media, roughly defined as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan and Haelein 2010: 60), form a new online layer through which people organize their lives. Today this layer of platforms influences human interaction on an individual and community level, as well as on a larger societal level, while the worlds of online and offline are increasingly interpenetrating. (Van Dijck 2013, 4.) Social media is defined as the way in which people interact to create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media is different from traditional/industrial media and advertising in many ways such as immediacy, permanence, cost, quality, frequency, and reach. (Katona, Z. 2014, 145.)

Success in social media is not so much about the different social networks, your tool, but your strategy for how to use them as part of inbound marketing (Shah and Halligan, 2009). To apply them effectively for communications, one has to recognize that socializing online is all about participation in discussions and sharing of ideas and content. (Chaffey D 2013, 214.)

CIRP Social Media Panel describes social media well: Social media is the term commonly given to the Internet and mobile-based channels and tools that allow users to interact with each other and share opinions and content. As the name implies, social media involves the building of communities or networks an encouraging participation and engagement (CIRP, 2011) (Chaffey D 2013, 214.) This definition shows that the most important feature of these social media channels is that we encourage our prospects and customers to interact and create user-generated content. Social media can be used as another broadcast-only channel, but that is a mistake! Chaffey D 2013, 214.)

To simplify it to its essence of why social is social, we can say: social media are digital media which encourage *audience participation, interaction and sharing*. (Chaffey D 2013, 214.) Social media marketing has to be focused on using these media to help achieve your marketing objectives – both protecting and expanding your brand: *Monitoring and facilitating customer-customer interaction, participation and sharing through digital media to encourage positive engagement with a company and its*

*brands leading to commercial value. Interactions may occur on a company site, social networks and other third-party site*(CIRP, 2011) (Chaffey D 2013, 214.)

With social media, it is especially important to think how it will support your business. Start with the business goals; make these as specific as possible by understanding how customers use social media now. (Chaffey D 2013, 220.)

Social media, which relates to the sharing of information, experiences, and perspectives throughout community-oriented websites, is becoming increasingly significant in our online world. Thanks to social media, the geographic walls that divide individuals are crumbling, and new online communities are emerging and growing. Some examples of social media include blogs, forums, message boards, picture- and video-sharing sites, user-generated sites, wikis and podcasts. Each of these tools helps facilitate communication about ideas that users are passionate about, and connects like-minded individuals throughout the world. (Weinberg 2009, 1.)

A one recent survey of people aged 18 to 30 from 18 countries reported 90% of them using their smartphone the first thing in the morning, often before they get out of bed. Today the Internet is the backbone of our society. We call the current version that allows users to interact with senders Web 2.0 – we have moved from a fairly simple one-way communications device (that is Web 1.0) to an interactive social system that is available to most of us 24/7. Widely spread access to devices like personal computers, digital video and audio recorders, webcams, smartphones, and wearables like “smart watches” ensures that consumers who live in virtually any part of the world can create and share content. Whether you are 18 or 80, the odds are that you already participate in this wired world. (Tuten 2015, 4.)

This fundamental change in the way we live, work, and play is characterized in part by the prevalence of social media. Social media are the online means of communication, conveyance, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, communities, and organizations enhanced by technological capabilities and mobility. Social media exist within a complex and rapidly advancing environment. (Tuten 2015, 4.)

Every day the influence of social media expands as more people join online communities. Facebook, a social utility that offers synchronous interactions (which occur in real time, such as when you text back and forth with a friend) and asynchronous interactions (which do not require all participants to respond immediately, such as when you email a friend and get an answer the next day), content sharing of images, videos, and music, games, applications, groups, and more, has as of the time of writing this more than 1,2 billion active users. More than 1 billion of those users are mobile users. (Tuten 2015, 6.)

It is difficult to fully capture the realm of social media because of the expansive nature of sites, services, and behaviors that are a part of this rapidly expanding digital universe. More generally, however, we can think of social media as the way digital natives live in a social life. (Tuten 2015, 6.)

### 3.1 Development and future of social media

The first 10 years of the Internet Revolution were all about getting computers connected to World Wide Web. But next 10 years are going to be all about getting people connected to one other. More seriously, this sea change in how people spend their lives and leisure hours has created a challenge for those in traditional marketing roles. (Weinberg 2009, Foreword)

*As Tamar Weinberg says in The New Community Rules: Marketing On The Social Web: As I spent more time diving deep into this Ocean of Social, I realized something important was happening and changing how people were communicating. Starting somewhere between 2001 and 2005, a whole bunch of non-geeks were getting computers, digital cameras and mobile phones, getting broadband connections, and getting online. The internet and the browser were just the beginning: by the time YouTube arrived 2005, the Internet had already been taken over by the masses. This was the glory of the World Wide Web, and people were doing a whole lot more of the following: using search engines (aka the Google) to find all kind of stuff, reading blogs, looking at pictures, listening music, watching videos, creating profiles, browsing and flirting on social networks, sending messages and links via email. (Weinberg 2009, Foreword)*

As each of these activities in turn spawned entirely new ecosystems and communication channels dedicated to legions of fans, online populations similarly dedicated themselves to the creation and consumption of new media/social media in these

online environments. Not only had we become addicted to the Network, we had become the Network. (Weinberg 2009, Foreword)

Web 2.0 reaches well beyond the personal computer today. The Internet is no longer hardware-specific, tied to a physical device in a static location. Rather, we access the Web via tablet PCs and laptops, mobile phones, smart televisions, and even watches and other wearables. This also means that users interact with Web 2.0 services and applications in a host of different situations, locations, and times. (Tracy L. Tuten 2015, 13.)

As communications is empowered by the capabilities of Web 2.0, we enter the most recent evolution in the history of communication. Communication is no longer one-to-many, mass, and vertically oriented. Instead, communication is now multi-way and multi-directional. Publishers, the media, and traditional marketers now share the power with anyone who can pick up a wireless signal. *This shift is a critical aspect of social media culture.* Web 2.0 levels the playing field between producers and consumers. It invites each of us to be co-creators in product design, delivery, pricing, and promotion. This means that users have a say in what producers and marketers offer in the marketplace. (Tuten 2015, 13.)

The growing trend toward collaborative consumers has affected business. Marketers today no longer have a full control over their brands because they are now competing with the collective power of consumers. This growing trend of consumers taking over the job of marketers is what Wipperfurth anticipated in Brand Hijack. Companies must now collaborate with their customers. Collaboration begins when marketing managers listen to the consumers' voice to understand their minds and capture market insight. A more advanced collaboration takes place when consumers themselves play the key role in creating value through concreation of products and services. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 11.)

Trendwatching, a large trend research network, summarizes consumers' motivation for product co-creation. Some consumers enjoy demonstrating their abilities in value-creation for everyone to see. Some consumers want to tailor a product or service to their specific lifestyles. Sometimes consumers target reward money given

by companies for co-creation efforts. Others see co-creation as an opportunity to secure employment. There are also people who undertake cocreation just for fun. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 11.)

The victory proved that a user-generated content can often reach consumers better because it is more relevant and more accessible. This increase in consumer participation and collaboration is examined in *The Future of Competition*. Authors Prhalad and Ramaswamy argue that consumer roles are changing. Consumers are no longer isolated individuals, rather they are connected with one another. In making decisions, they are no longer unaware but are informed. They are no longer passive but are active in giving useful feedback to companies. (Marketing 3.0: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit; Kotler 2010, 11.)

### 3.2 Social media platforms

Leverage highlights fun facts about some of the most popular social sites. Pinterest, a social site which is all about discovery has 70 million active users. Most of the users 68%, are female. Twitter is a micro blogging social site that limits each post to 140 characters. Twitter has 560 million users and 5700 tweets happen every second. Twitter has the largest penetration, but it is spreading slowly and steadily. Facebook is a social sharing site that has 1 billion users worldwide. Facebook has the largest opportunities communicating with consumers in a non-obtrusive way. Facebook users share 2,5 billion pieces of content each day. Instagram is a social sharing site all around pictures and now one minute videos. Instagram has 150 million active users. Many brands are participating through the use of hastags and posting pictures consumers can relate to. (Tuten 2015, 5.)

Social communities describe channels of social media that focus on relationships and the common activities people participate in with others who share the same interest or identification. Thus, social communities feature two-way and multi-way communication, conversation, collaboration, and the sharing of experiences and resources. All social media channels are built around networked relationships, but for social communities the interaction and collaboration for relationship building and maintenance are the primary reason people engage in these activities. (Tuten 2015, 9.)



The channels in the social community zone include social networking sites, message boards and forums, and wikis. For example, social networking sites (SNS) are online hosts that enable site members to construct and maintain profiles, identify other members with whom they are connected, and participate using various services the site offers. The most famous social network is Facebook. We differentiate Facebook from typical SNS though, because of the expansive nature of its offerings. Facebook defines itself not as a social network (although it did begin as one, and retains networking functionality), but as a social utility. (Tuten 2015, 9.)

### **Facebook**

“Social networks” and “social networking sites” are generic terms for sites that are used to connect users with similar backgrounds and interests. Social networks are profile-based sites that encourage users with relatively comparable backgrounds to meet and initiate relationships with one another. (Weinberg 2009, 149.)

As well as connecting users who have shared interests, family backgrounds, or political views, social networking sites also foster relationships based on sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or radical identities. People also connect by virtue of having similar hobbies (common favorite TV shows, musicians, and more). (Weinberg 2009, 150.)

The premise behind social networks is to create a profile displaying your identity that you can then share with your friends. These profile are typically interactive and users can often comment on or share with other friends. The profiles are fully customizable, and as the owner of your profile, you have complete control over what is displayed on the profile page. (Weinberg 2009, 150.)

Facebook is a simply laid-out website that allows users to share information about themselves, from their names to their birthdays to their favorite television shows, and then some. Facebook also has a very heavily used photo tool that encourages “tagging”. Tagging is an image-sharing tool that allows you to identify other Facebook users in your photos. Once you tag an individual, she is alerted to the existence of the photo and the photograph shows up in her personal profile. (Weinberg 2009, 151.)

For marketing and identity association, individuals on Facebook can also align themselves with many different companies and brands by interacting with existing Facebook fan pages or by creating one from scratch. (Weinberg T. 2009, 151.)

According to Leung's study and practical implications. The findings of study suggest several important practical implications for the hotel industry to leverage Facebook marketing. The social psychology model was the best model to explain fans' intentions to join hotel Facebook pages; that is, customers join hotel Facebook pages not because Facebook is a new technology or a new communication platform, but because Facebook has important social implications for them. Facebook is not only a channel for hotels to disseminate information and promotion, but also a place for hotels to create a social community to involve their customers. Hotel managers should focus on creating social interactions, relationships, and outcomes on hotel Facebook pages. The creation of the social community through the hotel Facebook page is the key to attract customers to join the hotel Facebook page. It also means that hotel managers do not have to rely on intricate technological effects on Facebook pages to attract potential guests. (Leung 2016, 338.)

In line with Seidman (2013), the self-expression factor was also identified as an influencer for users' satisfaction with the hotel's Facebook page in this study. By encouraging guests to share their feelings and opinions, users will be more satisfied with the hotel's Facebook fan page, and users will feel more attached to the hotel brand. (Choi 2016, 788.)

### **Twitter**

Twitter is one of the most popular social networks in the world with 320 million active users as of April 2016, according to Statista. (Nations 2016) Twitter is microblogging. Twitter, and 'tweeting', is about broadcasting daily short burst messages to the world, with the hope that your messages are useful and interesting to someone. Conversely, Twitter is about discovering interesting people online, and following their burst messages for as long as they are interesting. (Gil 2016)

Twitter capability of connecting individuals seamlessly through so many devices created a sense of intimacy and closeness and forged incredible bonds. Individuals not only decided to answer the question, "What are you doing?" but also used

Twitter to share their thoughts and feelings, and to let the world know exactly what was most important to them. (Weinberg 2009, 125.)

Once people discovered that Twitter had a real purpose in business world, the service became saturated with businesspeople and marketers alike. These groups have taken advantage of the ability to tap into the targeted audience for relationship-building, networking opportunities both online and offline, achieving business objectives, and personal gain. (Weinberg 2009, 126.)

Further, since Twitter is a broadcasting medium, if you have a sufficient number of friends on Twitter (followers are people who subscribe to your updates), you can share a single 140-character message with hundreds or thousands of people. And finally, since people love to share high-quality tweets (message that are sent via Twitter) with their followers, if you provide valuable content, people will likely retweet it (share it with their followers), thereby letting your content travel even farther than previously imagined. (Weinberg 2009, 126.)

In reality, Twitter has proven itself to be a reputation management tool, but it is also a tool that brings people all over the world closer together for business and personal goals. Businesses realize that consumers are talking about them, and they are taking advantage of the opportunity to respond quickly. (Weinberg 2009, 127.)

### **Instagram**

Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone. Similar to Facebook or Twitter, everyone who creates an account has a profile and a news feed. When you post a photo or video on Instagram, it will be displayed on your profile. Other users who follow you will see your posts in their own feed. Likewise, you will see posts from other users who you choose to follow. (Moreau 2016) Instagram is all about visual sharing. Every user profile has a "Followers" and "Following" count, representing how many people they follow and how many other users follow them. Instagram has come a long way since its early days in terms of posting options. (Moreau 2016)

For companies Instagram offers an opportunity to market by figurative communication ways. Through pictures can be presented business, persons and services from a

new viewpoint. At best Instagram acts as a recommendation of the company through shared experiences of consumers. Company's Instagram pictures can be exploited on company's web-sites to brighten the appearance. (Flow House website, 2018.)

Through Instagram competitions of photos can be created and followers can participate to share their experiences. You can simply participate in a competition by uploading a picture on Instagram and by adding a certain hashtag (#), which is related to the competition. (Flow House website, 2018.)

### **Pinterest**

Pinterest is like an online pin board – mostly for collecting visual pieces of multimedia (mostly images). You can create as many boards for your pins as you want, which is great for organization. For example, if you like collecting pictures of zoo animals, you can create a board and label it "Animals." On the other hand, if you also like collecting recipes, you can create another board and label it "Recipes." Pinterest users interact with each other through liking, commenting, and repinning each other's pins. That is what makes it such a hot social network. (Moreau 2017)

If you come to find that you really like the boards and pins of specific users, you can follow them so that their pin will show up on your personal homepage board feed (when you are signed in to Pinterest). (Moreau 2017)

Pinterest's intuitive user platform makes it extremely easy for anyone to share and interact with other people. You can interact in the following ways on Pinterest: Save a pin to one of your own boards, Send a pin to other users on Pinterest or share it on social media, comment and add a photo or note. (Moreau 2017)

Regardless of the numbers of pins per day, make sure you are pinning pins that are useful and pretty. One amazing pin is better than 10 blah pins. Pin the best and you will be rewarded. (Ahl 2016)

### **Snapchat**

Snap Inc. is a camera company. The company believes that reinventing the camera represents their greatest opportunity to improve the way people live and communicate. Their products empower people to express themselves, live in the moment, learn about the world, and have fun together. (Snap Inc. 2018)

Snapchat is an Android and iOS app. It is headed by co-founder Evan Spiegel. One of the core concepts of the app is that any pictures or videos or messages you send are only available for a short time before they become inaccessible. The temporary, or ephemeral, nature of the app is thought to encourage a more natural flow of interaction. (Betters 2018)

The key thing to realize is that Snapchat is about instant communication, through photos and videos, which are sent or received on your mobile phone. Prior to Snapchat, social media was very desktop-based, and it was all about accumulating data, like statuses or tweets or photos and videos, and you would post all those things online so that all your friends could comment on them and you would keep them forever. In other words, Snapchat has changed the way we communicate online. With it, you can quickly send a photo of yourself at work to a friend, maybe with a rainbow-puking AR lens applied or a doodle scribbled on top, and then they can open it, screenshot it if they want, and reply back with their own photo or video response, which they can also broadcast to their story for friends and followers to see. (Betters 2018)

## 4 Marketing on social media

Social Media marketing is more than just a buzzword. It is a way of life and a means of survival in today's Internet lifestyle. Whereas the Internet of the past was more about "me, myself, and I", the past few years have brought about substantial change: our online interactions are now more social. Our product purchases are often driven by user's reviews. We enjoy reading interesting stories shared with us by our friends and colleagues. We have seen the rise of online communities where individuals with similar backgrounds or interests can connect to one another. (Weinberg 2009, preface)

The idea behind marketing on social media is to leverage the "social" through its "media" (communication and tools) to "market" to your constituents. The big idea behind marketing on social media that you are focusing on is communication. Fortunately, communities exist that already have active participants – those passionate

about a specific subject – and better yet, there are numerous tools that can help facilitate this kind of communication. If you are a small-business owner or even a member of a corporate entity but are unfamiliar with this territory, there are many ways to dive in and become part of the conversation. (Weinberg, T. 2009, preface)

Conversation is a two-way dialogue. Unlike traditional marketing, social media marketers are required to start listening and talking to their constituents. This is possibly the biggest hurdle facing a social media marketing initiative. (Weinberg 2009, preface)

Social media marketing is a process that empowers individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. Social media, most importantly, emphasizes the collective rather than the individual. Communities exist in different shapes and sizes throughout the Internet, and people are talking among themselves. It is the job of social media marketers to leverage these communities properly in order to effectively communicate with the community participants about relevant product and service offerings. Social media marketing also involves listening to the communities and establishing relationships with them as a representative of your company. (Weinberg 2009, 4.)

Social media has enabled customers to participate and collaborate with each other and companies. Companies are able to mobilize thousands of fans through the dialogue the fans create in Facebook or Twitter. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 18.)

Social media is changing how people communicate, participate and collaborate. The customer has become very powerful. One can tap into customer power and enable the customer to help design and shape products. These practices use customer power in a positive way. If companies provide poor products, have no service recovery, or abuse customers, customer power will be a very destructive force. Conversely, if companies provide excellent products and treat customers with respect, customer power can be a very positive force. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 18.)

Social media is not always positive. Today when a company fails to treat customers as whole human beings with minds and spirits, customers have the ability to make their case public, where it can go viral. This creates a greater need for marketers to make sure they treat customers with respect and work to resolve their problems. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 18.)

The impact of Internet marketing can be felt across all sectors in the hospitality industry, from large to small service providers. Hudson (2008) outlines several key functions of the Internet in the hospitality industry: direct email marketing, advertising, providing information, distribution and sales, customer service, relationship marketing, and marketing research. Moreover, the same author states that online promotion in the hospitality industry holds four distinct advantages: “targetability” (it can be focused on users corresponding to specific profiles), “tracking” (how users interact with their brands and each other, what is of interest to them, their response to certain ads/offers/information etc.), “deliverability” and “flexibility” (permanently available, with fast launching, updating or cancelling), and “interactivity” (consumers can “interact” online with the offer, study it etc.).(Moisescu 2015, 22)

#### 4.1 Future of marketing on social media

A technology executive stated, “ The pace of change is so rapid that ability to change has now become a competitive advantage.”(Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 27.) Rapid changes can quickly make yesterday’s winning strategies out of date. Now social media has made an impact on marketing that has been a major driver of a new concept, marketing 3.0. Social media will forever change how we do marketing. (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 27.)

Marketing is the activity, a set of institutions, and a process for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. The classic view is that organizations accomplish these goals through a marketing mix that includes the so-called Four Ps: Product, Price, Promotion, and Place (or distribution). (Tuten 2015, 21.)

As social media marketing techniques continue to sprout around us, today we need to add a fifth P: *Participation*. It is fair to say that just as social media are changing the way consumers live on a daily basis, so too these new platforms transform how marketers go about their business. Whether our focus is to improve customer service, maintain customer relationships, inform consumers of our benefits, promote a brand or related special offer, develop a new product, or influence brand attitudes, new social media options play a role. Marketing on social media is the utilization of social media technologies, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization's stakeholders. We can see this definition play out emerging trends in social media. While social media marketing initially influenced brands' promotional plans, more recent business applications include social funding (e.g., Kickstarter for funding new business ventures) and social indexing (e.g., Preference data from social users from sources like Google+). (Tuten 2015, 21.)

Even as digital technology developed in the 1990s and beyond, marketers still essentially applied the traditional Four Ps model to reach customers. Over time they embraced the Internet as an environment for promotion and distribution. E-commerce began to blossom as an alternative to other forms of promotion such as television and radio. Consumers increasingly began to learn about products online – and purchase them online as well. E-commerce sites are websites that allow customers to examine (onscreen) different brands and to conduct transaction via credit card. (Tuten 2015, 22.)

As it became clear that the Internet was not going to go away, marketers flocked to cyberspace. However, most of them still applied the familiar model of the Four Ps to the digital domain. This form of marketing, tradigital marketing, is characterized by improvements in interactivity and measurement, but it retains the primarily vertical flow of the power in the channels of communications and distributions. (Tuten 2015, 22.)

Both traditional and tradigital marketing work on the basis of the interruption-disruption model we discussed earlier. This means that the source of a communication delivers messages to audiences whenever they want to receive them



or not, and regardless of whether these messages are directly relevant to their unique needs. (Tuten 2015, 22.)

In contrast, social media empower customers. It is not enough to interrupt the consumer experience and steal a few moments of attention. With marketing on social media, the ability for consumers to interact and engage with brands is greatly enhanced. Social media channels give consumers unparalleled access. Consumers discuss, contribute, collaborate, and share – with brands and each other. The culture of marketing has shifted to an informal one focused on the belief that customers are in control. Marketing guru Peter Drucker once famously said , “The purpose of a business is to create a customer.” With the reach and community influence of social media, we can expand this definition: the purpose of a business is to create customers who create other customers. *That participation in the process is the new fifth P of marketg.* (Tuten 2015, 23.)

As Lodging In Spain forecast from 2017 showed that Online channels continued to drive the category, led by intermediaries such as Booking, lastminute, eDreams and Atrápalo. Notably, other lodging intermediaries recorded double-digit growth in 2017 within the online channel. Hostels continued to increase, which raised the number of reservations made through online platforms as this channel offers the user easy access to promotions and offers, and websites offer search tools and previous customers’ reviews that allow users to find the perfect room for their getaway. (Lodging in Spain. 2017) The online channel will continue to grow driven by millennial travellers. For all categories within lodging, the online channel will continue to offer better deals and the opportunity to plan trips in advance. Companies will continue to develop and optimise apps to facilitate the booking of rooms or even extra services and activities. Mobile sales are expected to increase over the forecast period. (Lodging in Spain. 2017)

## 4.2 Benefits of marketing on social media

In the few years of social media’s existence, social media marketing has expanded rapidly as much for its efficiency given its low absolute costs as for its potential business applications as a tool for garnering customer attention, managing customer

relationships, developing new product ideas, promoting brands, driving store (online and off) traffic, and converting consumers to customers. Social media are not a substitute for traditional marketing communications, but they are also more than a complement to traditional methods. (Tuten 2015, 24.)

Now that we've established some of the benefits of social media marketing, it should be clear the traditional marketing tactics are not as effective as they once were, because consumers trust in these media forms has declined. Today, information is more easily accessible online, and more significantly, that information is a lot easier to find. Generations are becoming increasingly digital-savvy. Text messaging and web activity are becoming second nature (and are claiming addicts on a daily basis). If consumer is seeking out information about a particular product, she won't necessarily sit down with a cup of coffee and read her favorite magazine to find information about the products; she is more likely to turn on her computer and look for reviews and endorsements from other individuals just like her. (Weinberg 2009, 6.)

There are other reasons to engage in a solid social strategy in addition to traditional marketing:

#### **Marketing on social media facilitates natural discovery of new content**

Content crafted properly can be exposed to hundreds of new website visitors, from the casual surfer to the extreme enthusiast, in a very spontaneous fashion. Unlike paid advertising, which is forced upon web surfers, social media let visitors view content that is not necessarily associated with commercial intent. If I like a website because the marketing piece is hip, innovative, and genuine, I'll pass it on to my peers using social media sites and they'll pass it on to their peers because they also like it. Content can reach thousands of new eyeballs quickly without interfering with traditional marketing, but social media marketing does not interfere with other marketing strategies, either. (Weinber 2009, 7.)

#### **Marketing on social media boosts traffic numbers**

Traffic comes to websites from sources other than search engines, and many of those sources include social media sites. Once you have established yourself as a community participant worth following, people will be interested in what you have shared

and will likely pass relevant your blog posts, videos, or articles on to their peers. (Weinberg 2009, 7.)

### **Marketing on social media builds strong relationships**

If you are genuinely paying attention to members of the communities that are part of your marketing message (or not even associated at all), you can build strong relationships when you take the time to respond to concerns or feedback. Even communities that are not necessarily related to your company, brand, product, service offering have members who may individually be interested in knowing more about you and what you have to offer. And since it is so easy to spread your message via word of mouth online, if you really leave a good impression on those who you interact with on a regular basis, it's almost certain that they will recommend you to a peer who is seeking your service or product – that is, if they believe in it (and you!) (Weinberg 2009, 7.)

Social media marketers still need to understand the rules of engagement, participate in communities on a regular basis, and capitalize on emerging trends. Such activity will prove to be highly cost-effective. Buying hundreds of links on untargeted sites, for example, may cost thousands of dollars, but if you practice the creative strategy of social media marketing, the return on investment can be substantially higher. Plus social media marketing has the added benefit of heightened awareness about product offerings. (Weinberg 2009, 7.)

Social media marketing is about listening to and sharing great content with the collective. This helps drive links, raise brand awareness, increase conversions, and kick-start conversations. This is a much more powerful tactic than old practice of traditional advertising; the old strategies are no longer as effective. (Weinberg 2009, 17.)

Just as the horizontal revolution changed the way society communicates, the advent and adoption of social media changes the way brands and consumers interact. Traditional marketing focuses on push messages (one-way communication delivered to the target audience) using a large dose of broadcast and print media to reach a mass audience. There are minimal opportunities for interaction and feedback between customers and the organization, and boundary spanners (employees who interact directly with customers) mediate these dialogues. The brand message is controlled in a

top-down manner by brand leadership within organization. (Tuten 2015, 22.) Like traditional media, social media include several channels, and within each channel there are specific vehicles. For example, television is a broadcast media and The Today Show is a vehicle within the medium of television. Social media communities are a channel of social media and LinkedIn is a vehicle. (Tuten 2015, 36.)

According to Mizrachi's study about small businesses and social media. Harris and Rae (2010) emphasize the importance of social media marketing for small and medium size businesses, and argue that it has the potential to assist particularly those businesses with a restricted advertising budget. They suggest that social media per se for a small business is affordable in terms of establishment and maintenance costs, making it a valuable platform for online experiments. (Mizrachi 2015, 66.) Tour operators have been noted to use Facebook as a channel allowing price comparisons of products—however, that alone does not guarantee customer loyalty, but contributes to building closer relationships with users (Senders, Govers, & Neuts, 2013). (Mizrachi 2015, 66.)

## 5 Planning Marketing Promotion

### 5.1 SOSTAC

SOSTAC is used by thousands of professionals to produce all kinds of plans (marketing plans, advertising plans and e-marketing plans). (Chaffey 2013, 3.) SOSTAC stands for Situation analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions and Control. It is described in more detail in Smith (2011) and Smith and Taylor (2004) who note that each stage is not discrete, but there is some overlap during each stage planning – previous stages may be revisited and refined. For creating marketing an e-marketing plan, the planning stages are:

**Situation** analysis means "where are we now?" This includes definition "e" terms, growth in users and change in the marketplace, examples of good and bad e-marketing. (Chaffey D. 2013, 3.) For multi-channel marketers, how many of your customers are buying or influenced online? Full customer analysis answer the questions "Who, Why and How". What is the growth forecast? What are your competitors doing?

What is the impact of the new intermediaries? What's working for them? What seems to work online and offline and what seems not to? How have you performed online? What's changing in the online world? (Chaffey 2013, 538.)

**Objectives** means "where do we want to be?" What do we want to achieve through online channels, what are the benefits? (the five "Ss" as the main objectives of, reasons for, or benefits of being online). (Chaffey 2013, 3.)

**Strategy** means "How do we get there?" Strategy summarizes how to fulfil the objectives. What online value propositions (OVPs) should we create, and what positioning should drive the overall marketing mix and the promotional mix, right down to the different contact strategies for different segments, and which digital media channels should be selected? Getting your digital strategy right is crucial. As Kenichi Ohmae says (1999), "There is no point rowing harder if you're rowing in the wrong direction". (Chaffey 2013, 3.)

**Tactics** reviews the tactical tools and the details of marketing mix. (Chaffey D. 2013, 3.) Highlighting on, say a Gantt chart, exactly which tactics occur when; e.g. execution of Pay Per Click ads or a series of opt-in emails. What level of integration is there between tools, database and e-CRM? Tactics explain how to implement the strategy. (Chaffey 2013, 538.)

**Actions** refers to action plans and project management skills-essential skills. (Chaffey D. 2013, 3.) Actions is the detailed working out of tactics. Who does what, what process are required to make things happen? Each tactical e-tool is a mini project that needs to be managed. What actions have to be taken to create and optimize a web site, to develop a Pay-Per-Click campaign, an opt-in email campaign? Everything degenerates into work! (Chaffey 2013, 538.)

**Control** looks at how you know if your e-efforts are working, and what improvements can be made. (Chaffey D. 2013, 3.) This is where web analytics systems measure and monitor regularly the key online measurable – visitors, durations, enquiries, subscriptions, sales, conversion rates, churn rates, loyalty levels and more. (Chaffey 2013, 538.)

In this thesis the author focus on three first stages SOS – Situation, Objectives and Strategy. Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel will manage the rest of stages TAC – Tactics, action and Control.

Many organizations have short- and long-term plans or roadmaps. Ultimately they must integrate the goals, the timeframes and resources required. We can distinguish between short-term (one year) plans, medium-term (two to three year) plans and longer-term (three to five year) plans. All these plans can use SOSTAC. For example, all these plans include strategy and tactics sections. Strategy gives clear guidance and direction for all subsequent tactical details. Strategy for a short-term plan summarizes how the one-year objectives will be achieved. (Chaffey 2013, 536.)

The shorter- term operational e-marketing plan can address the mix of communications techniques such as search marketing and online advertising, used to acquire new customers; and the tools used to engage and retain customers online such as incentive programmes and customer contact strategies delivered through opt-in email marketing integrates with traditional direct media such as phone and direct mail. (Chaffey 2013, 537.)

## 5.2 S – Situation

To effectively plan your e-marketing to predict your results, you need to tap into the wealth of research about current Internet usage and future trends. (Chaffey 2013, 7.)

More customers are spending an increasingly part of their lives in the virtual world. Marketers need to analyze demand by consumers for online services and respond to customers' needs in this new connected world. (Chaffey 2013, 9.)

Traditionally, the bulk of Internet transactions are between business to business or industrial and commercial markets (B2B) and between business to consumer markets (B2C) like cola. More recently, a dramatic growth in C2C interactions has been fueled by the growth of social networks: the “Big 4” – that’s Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn and Twitter- are now the key to reaching many customers through “social outposts” and key influencers on these platforms. C2B also involves customers developing their own content online, which is known as user-generated content (UGC), with business facilitating it. (Chaffey 2013, 11.)

### 5.3 O – Objectives

One reason why many new businesses, and in particular new e-businesses, go horribly wrong is often because objectives are not clearly agreed, and companies keen to get on with it jump straight to tactical e-tools (such as web sites and banner ads) without first agreeing clearly defined objectives and razor-sharp strategies. (Chaffey 2013, 22.)

So before making the change to e-marketing, first be clear: Why do you want to go online? What are the objectives? What advantages and benefits are expected? You must be clear why you're getting into e-marketing and the areas on which you want to focus as you improve your e-marketing. There are five broad benefits of, reasons for or objectives of e-marketing:

1. Grow sales (through wider distribution, promotion and sales)
2. Add value (give customers extra benefits online)
3. Get closer to customers (by tracking them, asking them questions, creating a dialogue, learning about them).
4. Save costs (of service, promotions, sales transactions and administration, print and post), and so increase profits on transactions.
5. Extended the brand online. Reinforce brand values in a totally new medium.

All these e-marketing objectives can be summarized as the 5Ss – Sell, Serve, Speak, Save and Sizzle. Once you have defined (and quantified) “where you are going” (your objectives), you can then decide “how to get there” – strategy. (Chaffey 2013, 22.)

#### **5S's model in online objectives**

Companies must be able to sell or transact online to meet these customers' new online needs. A key objective to set is direct *online revenue contribution* for different products and different markets. This defines the proportion of sales transactions completed online. For example, a bank might try to achieve 15 per cent of its insurance sales in the UK (Chaffey D 2013, 25.) The clearest benefit of e-marketing is the capability to sell from an online presence. Although this may not be practical for all products, an online presence is still important in supporting the buying decision leading to sales through traditional channels. You should use your web analytics system

to tag different types of value event web pages which indicate that your goals are being achieved. An online presence also offers opportunities to sell into new markets and reach particular segments. (Chaffey 2013, 29.)

Another e-marketing objective is serving or adding value. How can web site help customers improve their experience or add value to their experience? Newspapers can allow readers to create their own newspapers through personalization. They are no longer constrained by publication times, but can be accessed at any time. Their readers can set up alerts to be notified by email as soon as an event breaks. Social media give new and important customer service channels. Add value through your web sites and social media channels. (Chaffey D 2013, 30.) A web site's main purpose is to help customers (and other stakeholders such as suppliers and distributors). The big question to ask is: "How can my web site help my customers? How can I add extra value?" The search for new ways to add value is continuous.(Chaffey 2013, 32.)

A web site and "outposts" on social media and other partner sites are powerful new communications channels to increase awareness, build brand, shape customer opinion and communicate special offers. While marketing investment to increase awareness used to focus on paid media with additional PR activity, new categories of owned and earned media have become more important. (Chaffey D 2013, 33.) As well as speaking to customers, the Internet provides a tool to listen customers – to get closer to them. The world of e-marketing opens up the opportunity to get close to customers again... to speak to them and to listen to them in ways that were not previously possible. Your web presence gives great opportunities to get feedback from customers on your brand and communications using the tools. (Chaffey 2013, 33.)

Another e-marketing objective is "saving". This is what will catch the financial director's ear together with "sell", since the two together increase profitability \_ saving money, time and effort. Savings emerge in digital media channels, customer service, transactional costs and, of course, print and distribution. Good systems help customers to service themselves. This obviously saves money, and, if done in a simple, speedy, and efficient manner, increase customer satisfaction. (Chaffey 2013, 38.)



The Internet offers new opportunities to build and strengthen the brand – to add some “sizzle” to the brand. To add extra value (or “added value”), extend the experience and enhance the image. Ask yourself, “What experience could a web site deliver that would be truly unique and representative of the brand?”. A newspaper that allows you to build your own newspaper and have it delivered electronically as an app.(Chaffey D 2013, 40.) Brands are important as they build trust, recognition and, believe it or not, relationships between the buyer and supplier. Sometimes brand imagery is the only real differentiator between products. The brand is affected by both reality and perception: the reality of the actual experience enjoyed (or suffered) when using the brand; the perception, or image, associated with the particular product. In addition to the real experience, these perceptions are built through advertising, sales promoting, direct mail, editorial exposure (PR), exhibitions, telesales, packaging, point of sale, web sites and the most potent communications tool, word of mouth. (Chaffey 2013, 40.)

#### 5.4 S – Strategy

Strategy summarizes how you achieve your objectives. Strategy is influenced by both the prioritization of objectives (sell, serve, speak, save and sizzle) and, of course, the amount of resources available. (Chaffey 2013, 41.)

You should think of e-marketing strategy as a channel strategy where electronic channels and digital media support other communications and distribution channels. It requires clear prioritization as to how the channel should be used. Your e-marketing strategy should identify target markets, positioning, online value proposition (OVP), the choice of mix of digital media channels to acquire new customers, and contact strategies to welcome and develop existing customers. (Chaffey 2013, 41.)

E-channel strategies are most effective when they are creating differential value for all parties to a transaction compared to other channels. But e-channels do not exist in isolation, so we still need to manage channel integration and acknowledge that the adoption of e-channels will not be appropriate for all products or services or generate sufficient value for all partners. (Chaffey 2013, 41.)

Key elements of an e-channel strategy are:

1. It delivers against the goals that we have set through the 5 Ss.
2. It defines and communicates the specific benefits as to why customers should use the e-channel (online value proposition OVP) For B2B office supplier Eurooffice, the OVP centres on the next-day delivery, price guarantee and the rewards programme which are promoted prominently on their site.
3. It prioritizes audiences for whom e-channel adoption is most appropriate. Online services will not be equally effective for all customer segments, so decide which you will target.
4. It prioritizes products sold or purchased through the e-channel. Some will be more appropriate than others.
5. It specifies the mix of digital channels used to acquire new customers and balances this against targets of sales revenues and profitability. This will be constrained by the objective of cost of customer acquisition. So, e-channel strategy guides the choice of target markets, positioning and propositions, which in turn guide the optimum marketing mix, sequence of e- tools (such as web sites, opt-in email, e-sponsorship, viral marketing)service level and evolutionary stage. (Chaffey 2013, 41.)

E-strategy also affects the traditional marketing mix as the *product* can be extended online, the *place* of purchase can be expanded, not to mention web *price* transparency, online *promotions* and the *people* who service the web site enquiries, the automated *processes* and the importance of having a professional presence or *physical evidence*. (Chaffey 2013, 42.)

## 5.5 Tactics, action and control

Tactics are the details of strategy. Tactical e-tools include the web site, opt-in email, digital media channels such as paid search and display advertising, virtual exhibitions and sponsorship. Tactics require an understanding of what each e-tool can and cannot do. Tactics may also involve where and how each tool is physically used, whether with a kiosk, interactive TV, mobile or alternatives (such as microwave).(Chaffey 2013, 43.)

Each one is a mini project requiring careful planning and good project management skills combined with tactical “nous” and creativity. To help to keep your tactics focused on customer-centric content marketing, is there PRASE framework to reach and engage customers to meet business objectives. PRASE Stands for:

Step 1 *Plan*. Planning involves working through the tried and trusted marketing fundamentals of customer research, segmentation, positioning and development of value propositions.

Step 2 *Reach*. Reach means building awareness of a brand, its products and services on other web sites and in offline media in order to build traffic by driving visits to different web presences like your main site, microsites and social media sites.

Step 3 *Act*. Act is about engaging the audience through relevant, compelling content and clear navigation pathways so that they don't hit the back button. The *bounce rates* on many sites are greater than 50 per cent, so getting the audience to act or participate is a major challenge, which is why we have identified it separately.

Step 4 *Convert*. Conversion is where the visitors commits to forming a relationship which will generate commercial value for the business. It's about delivering on marketing goals such as leads or sales on web presences online and offline.

Step 5 *Engage*. Here we're building deeper customer relationships through time in order to achieve retention goals. Encouraging advocacy or recommendations through word of mouth is a key part of engagement.(Chaffey 2013, 43.)

Real marketers also want constantly to improve. Which tools are giving the best return on investment? Other control mechanisms include measuring the number of hits, number of unique visitors, number of conversions (visitors that purchase or subscribe), churn rate (number of people who ask to be taken off the subscription list or database).(Chaffey 2013, 45.)

Finally, control also includes competitive intelligence, monitoring your competitors – what they're doing; what they're repeating; what works for them; what they are stopping. Good marketers also have contingency plans or practice risk management. What happens if plan “A” doesn't work? What happens if the completion cuts prices?

Or worse still, what happens if the server goes down and your network crashes?

Good marketers think things through.(Chaffey 2013, 45.)

## 6 Research Process

The main purpose of the thesis was to make a relevant marketing plan for social media. The research question is how to develop marketing on social media for the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. The author used also sub-questions to investigate which platforms were the best for Sleep Green. The sub-questions are:

- In which social media platforms do their customers prefer to follow Sleep Green in the future and get information about the hostel and Barcelona?
- What do their customers do on social media?
- What kind of content do their customers wish to see on social media in the future?

### 6.1 Research Method

There are three research methods quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research. (Kananen 2011, 146.) In this research the author chose quantitative method, because it helps to understand the most of customers' opinion about social media platforms. Quantitative research method was chosen for this research because it helps us understand the behavior of masses in the light of numerical data. Quantitative research requires understanding of the phenomenon concerned. The research problem is then solved by means of quantitative tools. (Kananen 2011, 146.)

In quantitative method the author conducted a compact survey for Sleep Green's customers to get to know better customers opinions and experiences about social media platforms. The survey was targeted for all Sleep Green Eco Hostel's customers. The survey was conducted by **Webropol** survey tool, but it was implemented as a paper form at the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. The survey contained 13 questions and included background information (Appendix 1.). The respondents were the target group because they were all customers of the Sleep Green Eco Youth hostel. The measurement of this study was activity on social media, opinions of social media platforms and background information.

## 6.2 Data collection

The data was collected from the target group, all Sleep Green's customers. The data collection was implemented during one month, and it started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May and ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May in 2017 in Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. Data collection was made by using Webropol survey tool, but the survey was implemented as a face-to-face questionnaire, which was implemented at the reception of the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel.

The questionnaire was anonymous, and the survey form was in English. The questionnaire included 13 questions about social media platforms and background information. The questionnaire included mostly multiple-choice questions. In two questions the respondents had to give their opinion in writing. 77 responses were received, which is quite many responses. There were also around ten empty forms, or semi filled forms in the end, which caused problems later in analyzing the data.

## 6.3 Reliability & Validity

One of the basic requirements in scientific research is the reliability and validity of the research results. Scientific research should be conducted by using scientific data collection and analysis methods. (Kananen 2011, 138.)

Reliability and validity are concepts related to natural sciences, and therefore they are easily applicable to quantitative research. Reliability refers to the consistency and repeatability of the measurement and research results, i.e. if the research is repeated, the results will be the same. Validity refers to whether the thesis answers the questions it is intended to answer, i.e. are you researching the right things. Both concepts have sub-concepts, of which external validity, i.e. generalizability of the research results is the most important. Generalizability invalidity means that the results can be transferred or applied to other situations and circumstances. (Kananen 2011, 66.)

Another cornerstone of reliability/validity is that the amount of the material is sufficient to allow reliability/validity estimation. (Kananen 2011, 139.) There were around

eighty responses, which is a sufficient size for material and to show that the research is reliable.

In external validity: Only part of the population is included in the study, but the members are selected in such a way that they form a “miniature model” (sample) of the population. The sample has to represent the population in every way. (**Kananen 2011, 126.**) The selection of sample was only Sleep Green’s customers on the spot in Sleep Green and all the respondents represented the population in every way, which verifies that the research has external validity.

The best response rate can be achieved by means of a face-to-face interview. In mail surveys, the response rate is generally around 30%, depending on the target group and subject. In online surveys, the response rate is even lower. (**Kananen 2011, 93.**) In general the response rate of the survey was quite high. Having quite many responses, it will be enough to show that most customers in Sleep Green agreed, and it indicates what the most of customers thought about social media platforms at the moment of the study. There were around ten customers who did not return the form, and in the sample there were partly filled forms too.

In some questions the response rate was low, which made it difficult to interpret the results. Especially in cross tabulation, a small number of responses (Ns) caused problem. The results were not reliable, because they contained a lot of zero classes. The author had to combine some age groups before cross tabulation. It was notable that empty spaces were in the end of the survey, and some respondents did not answer the last questions. The last, open question “13. Would you like to share new ideas of Social Media use in Accommodation business?” was difficult to understand or respondents wanted to give an opinion about hostel in general. Nevertheless, there was a high response rate to the questions of the beginning of survey.

## 7 Results

Quantitative research results are presented in different types of tables (frequency distributions, cross tabulations) and statistics. The basic table formats for interpreting the results are frequency distribution and cross tabulation. (**Kananen 2011, 101.**)

The purpose of the survey was to investigate which platforms were the best to market the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel. It was also a purpose to get an answer to the research question: How to develop marketing on social media for the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel. Sub-questions helped to find out in which platforms their customers preferred to follow Sleep Green in the future and what kind of content their customers wished to see on social media.

The data was collected by a survey. The survey was made in Webropol survey tool, but the survey was carried out as a paper form at the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona. The survey was given to around 90 customers, and 77 respondents responded. All respondents responded in English, except one of them in Spanish. There were around ten customers who took the survey with them, but never returned it to the reception.

There were 13 questions in the survey. 11 of the questions were multiple choice questions and two were open questions. In the beginning there were four questions about the background. The first three questions were background questions: gender, age and nationality. The first question was gender. 35,1% (27) of the respondents were women and 64,9% (50) were men.

The second question was age. Most of the respondents 44,2% (34) were aged between 26 and 35. The second largest age group of the respondents 40,3% (31) were under 25 year olds. 10,4% (8) of the respondents were aged between 36 and 45 and 3,9% (3) were aged between 46 and 55. The least of the respondents 1,3% (1) were aged between 56 and 65. There was not any respondent over 65 years.

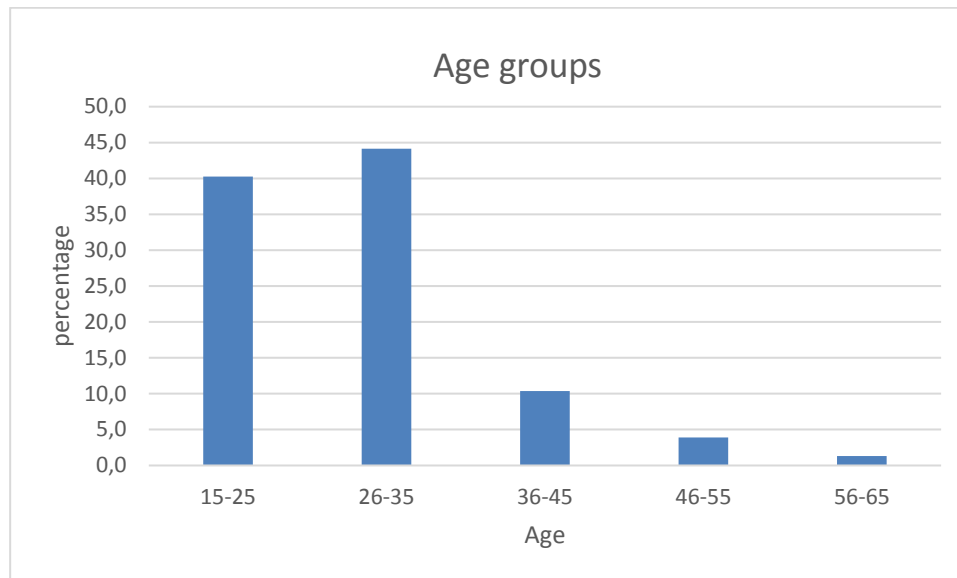


Figure 1. Age groups

The third question was nationality. Most of the respondents were French, 16 of the respondents. Eight of the respondents were American. Six were Italian, five were Argentinian. There were four English, four Brazilian, three Dutch, three Belgian, two Australian, two Colombian, two Taiwanese and two German respondents. In addition, there were one respondent of the following nationality: Austrian, Canadian, Spanish, Greek, Jersey, Japanese, North-Korean, South-Korean, Mexican, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Saudi Arabian, Slovakian, Turkish and South-African. Four of the respondents did not want to tell their nationality.

In the question four respondents could tell their nationality, if they could not find it on the list. Three people answered. One of the respondents was Swiss and another was Algerian. One of them did not want to tell nationality.

The fifth question was about activity in different social media platforms. The fifth question was “How often do you use these social media platforms”. The question was multiple choice, and the respondent was able to choose from four time options for each social media platforms. The platforms options were Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat and other, what. The time options were Never, Occasionally, Weekly and Daily. The most of respondents 64,9% use Facebook daily, the second largest age group of the respondents 42,9% use Instagram daily. The third largest age group of the respondents 22,2% said to use Snapchat **daily**. 15,6% of the



respondents said to use Twitter. The least of the respondents 2,6% said to use Pinterest daily. Nevertheless 67,5% used Twitter never and 39% of the answerers said to use Instagram never. 55,8% of the respondents used Snapchat never. In option; "Other, what?" Two of the respondents mentioned Booking and four respondents mentioned WhatsApp. In addition 4chan, Google, LinkedIn, Path, Swarm (check-in app), Viber, Skype, Tumblr and YouTube were mentioned.

In cross tabulation the age groups and How often do you use Facebook were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,057$ ). Figure 2. below shows that 80,6% of under 25 years old used Facebook daily more than other age groups. 52,9% of the aged between 26 and 35 used Facebook daily as much as over the 36 years old people 58,3%.

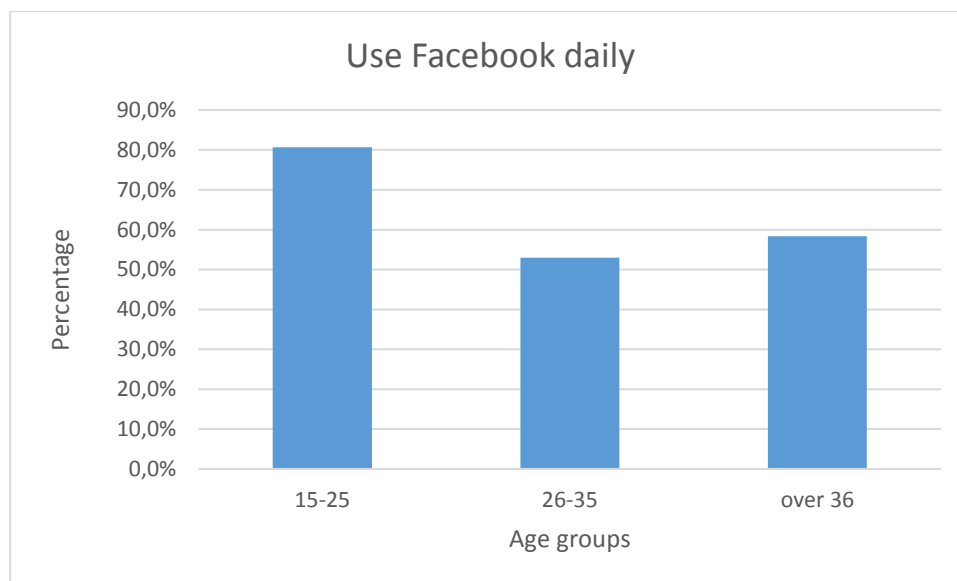


Figure 2. Age groups and Daily Facebook usage

In this sample the age groups and How often do you use Instagram were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,64$ ). Figure 3. below presents 48,4% of under 25 years old using Instagram daily. 41,2% of the respondents aged between 26 and 35 and 33,3% of over 36 years old used Instagram daily.

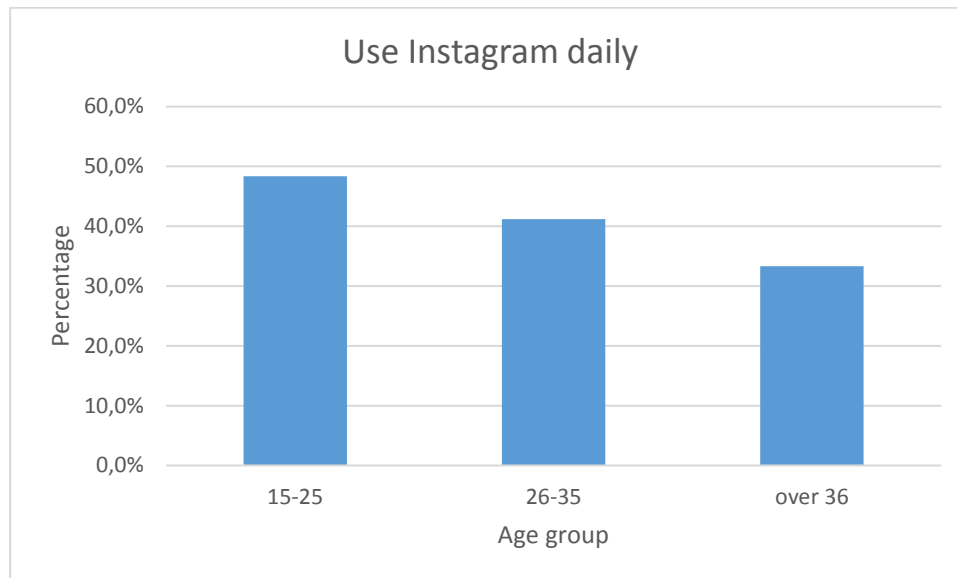


Figure 3. Age groups and Daily Instagram usage

The sixth question asks “In which social media platforms do you already follow Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel?”. The question was multiple choice and options were Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and none of these. Most of the respondents 59,7% did not follow the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel on any of these social media platforms. Although 39% of the respondents already followed Sleep Green on Facebook. 6,5% of the respondents followed them also on Instagram. No one of the respondents followed the hostel on Twitter or Pinterest. A lot of the respondents followed Sleep Green already on Facebook. One reason could be that the guests cannot use Wi-Fi without liking the hostel on Facebook.

Also the seventh question was multiple choice, and the question asked “What do you do in social media?”. The respondents were able to choose from 1 to 11 options. There were 11 options in total; Read content, Like others posts/pics, Share pics, Chat in real time conversation, Search information, Comment others posts/pics, Share links, Create content, Snap, Tweet and Pin. Here are the five most chosen activities on social media. Most of the respondents 80,5% said to **read the content** on social media. The second largest group of the respondents 67,5% said to **like others posts/pics**. The third second largest of the respondents 54,5% **shared pics** on social media and the fourth group 49,4% **chatted in real time conversation** in some applications. The fifth largest group of the respondents 45,5% said to **search information**

**on social media.** Also quite many 42,9% said to comment others posts/pics, 36,4% shared links and 28,6% created content on social media platforms. The least of the respondents 16,9% said to snap, 11,7% tweet and 3,9% pin.

In cross tabulation the age groups and if respondents read content on social media were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,486$ ). As Figure 4. under shows that 87,1% of under 25 years old read content a little more on social media than older age groups. 76,5% of the aged between 26 and 35 read content as much as over 36 years old (75%).

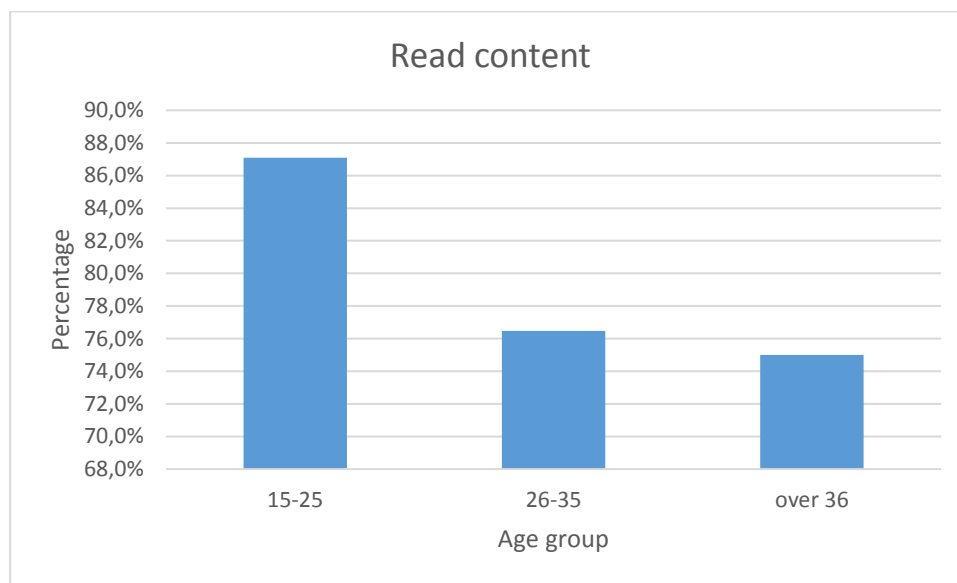


Figure 4. Age groups and Read content on social media

Age groups and if respondents like others' posts and pics on social media were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,203$ ). Figure 5. shows that 77,4% of under 25 years old like others posts and pics on social media more than older age groups. 64,7% of aged between 26 and 35 like others post and pics and 50% of over 36 years old like a bit less.

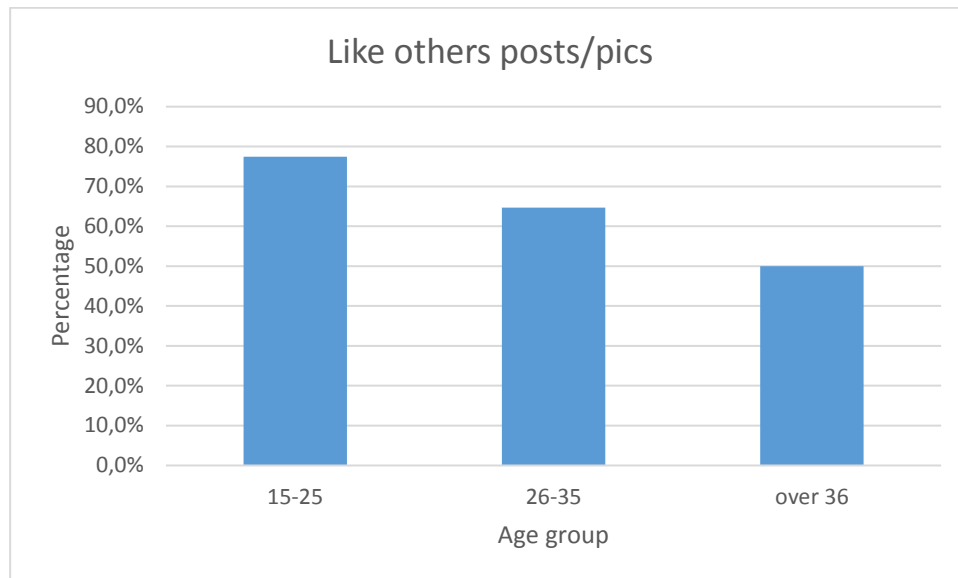


Figure 5. Age groups and Like others posts and pics on social media

The age groups and if the respondents shared pics on social media were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,348$ ). As Figure 6. below presents, 64,5% of under 25 years old shared pics on social media a little more than the older age groups. 47,1% of the aged between 26 and 35 shared pics on social media as much as over 36 years old (50%).

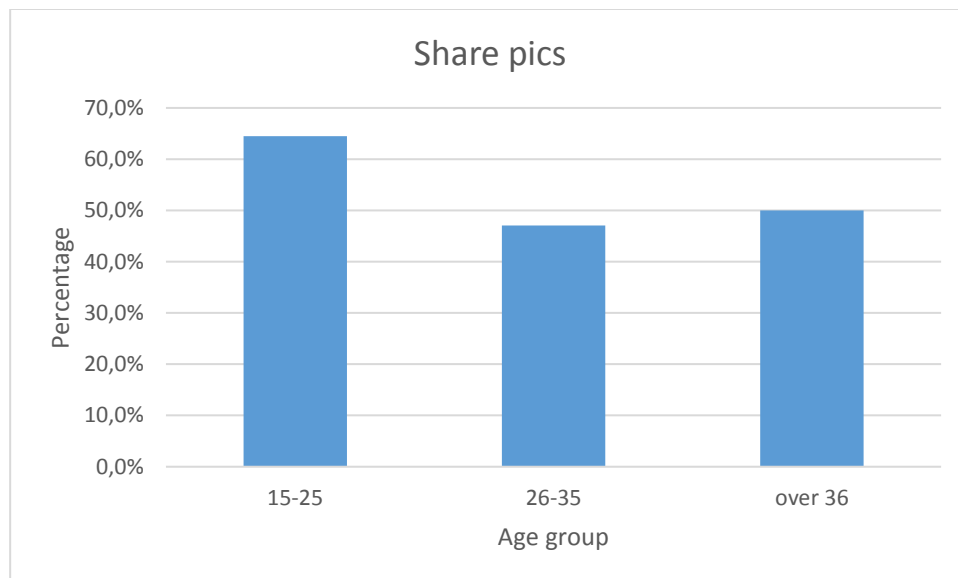


Figure 6. Age groups and Share pics on social media

There were significant differences between the age groups and chat, as well as the age groups and span on social media. The age groups and if the respondents chatted in real time conversation on social media were statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,006$ ). Figure 7. below shows 71% of under 25 years old chat on social media notable more than the older age groups. 38,2% of the aged between 26 and 35 years old and 25% of over 36 years old chatted in real time conversation less on social media.

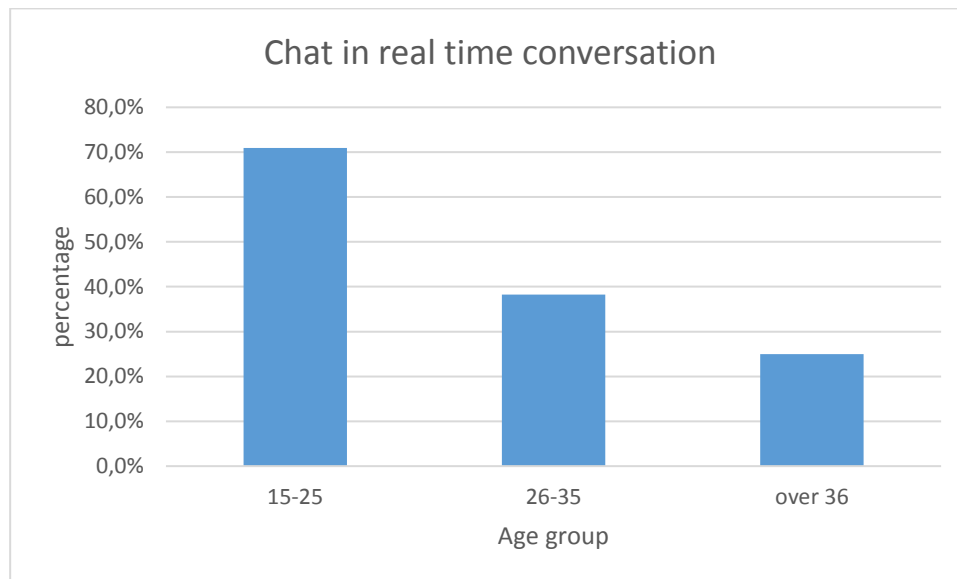


Figure 7. Age groups and Chat in real time conversation on social media

The age groups and if the respondents snap on social media were statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,042$ ). Figure 8. presents that 29,9% of under 25 years old snap considerably more than older age groups. 11,8% of the aged between 26 and 35 snap on social media a little less. No one of over the 36 years old snap on social media.

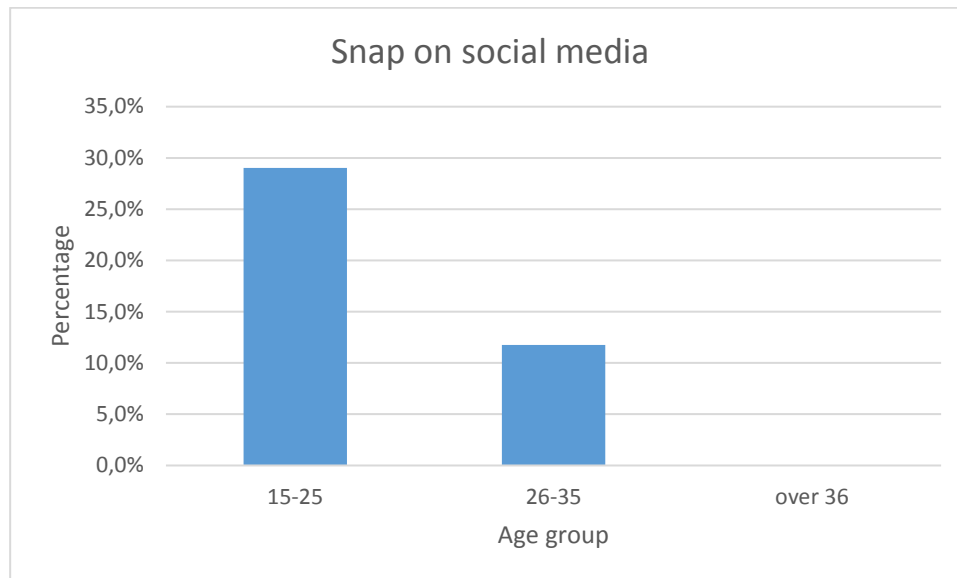


Figure 8. Age groups and Snap on social media

The eight question was about future in social media. The question was “In which social media platforms do you prefer follow Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel in Future?”. It was also multiple choice question and respondent was able to choose one or two options from the list. The options were Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, Other, where? and Nowhere, why?. The most of respondents 74% want to follow Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel on Facebook in future. The second most of respondents 40,3% want to follow hostel on Instagram. 13% doesn't want to follow hostel on any social media platforms in future. 7,8% of respondents want to follow hostel on Twitter. 3,9% of respondents want to follow hostel somewhere else than mentioned platforms. Also 2,6% of respondents would like to follow Sleep Green on Pinterest. One of respondents would like to follow hostel on Snapchat, and another one on Booking.com. In option: Nowhere, why? 2 of respondents answered “No reason why I should follow hostel” and two people answered “I use social media to keep in touch with friends and for work.”

In cross tabulation age groups and if respondents want to follow on Facebook were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,249$ ). As the figure 9. shows 80,6% of under 25 years old want to follow hostel on Facebook. 64,7% of aged between 26 and

35 and 83,3% over 36 years old want to follow on Facebook in future. All age groups want to follow Sleep Green on Facebook in future.

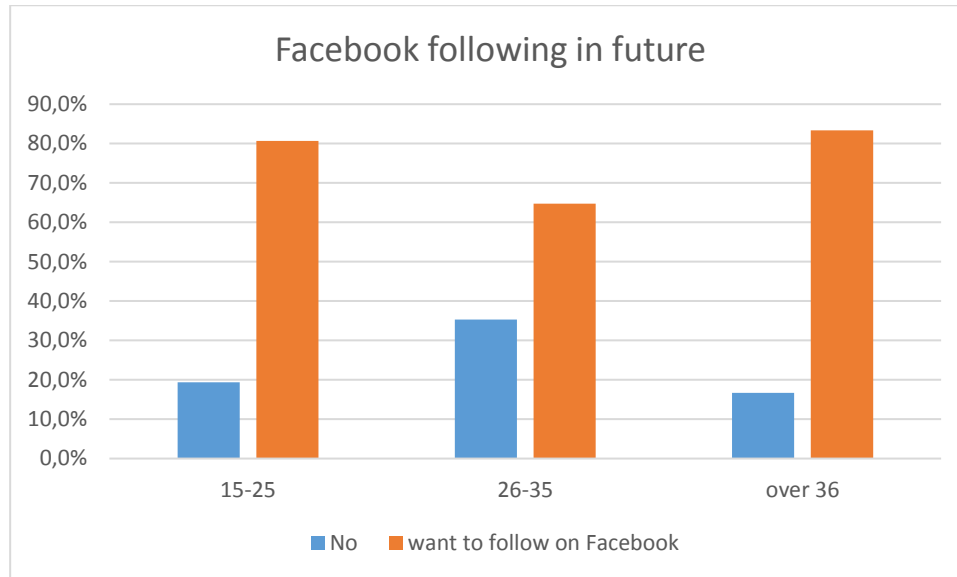


Figure 9. Age groups and Facebook following in future

Age groups and if respondents want follow on Instagram were not statistically significantly associated ( $p=0,755$ ). As the figure 10. presents 50% of over 36 years old want to follow hostel on Instagram in future. 38,7% of under 25 years old and 38,2% of aged between 26 and 35 want to follow as much as Sleep Green on Instagram in future. All age groups want to follow hostel on Instagram in future.

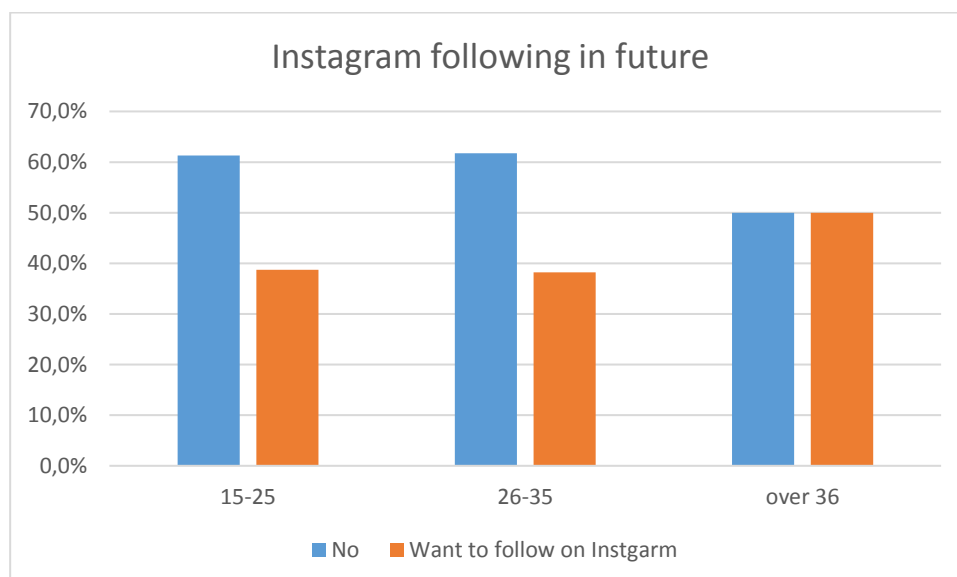


Figure 10. Age groups and Instagram following in future

The ninth question was open question and it was related to previous question. The question was “Why do you want to follow the hostel in previous mentioned platforms?”. The most common responses were updates, information and pictures of guests and city. Also respondents mentioned these things: It is easier to find information, it's important to know offers, news, ask information and tips of city. Some people answered also to get free Wi-Fi. Facebook were mentioned three times in results.

The tenth question concerned the content of social media platforms. The question was “What kind of content would you like to see in Sleep Green’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat?”. The question was multiple choice and it had 8 options. The answerers were able to choose from 1 to 8 options, but at least they had to choose 2 options from the list. The options were Upcoming events in Barcelona, Information of tours in Barcelona, Current news, Pics of Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel, Offers, Ecological tips, Information of attractions in Barcelona and Other, What?. The most of respondents 48,1% would like to see upcoming events in Barcelona. 42,9% of respondents would like to see information of tours in Barcelona. 41,6% of respondents want to see current news. 33,8% of respondents would like to see pics of Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel. 32,5% of respondents want to see offers. The least of respondents 29,9% want to see ecological tips and 28,6% would like to see information of attractions in Barcelona. 8 of respondents answered Other, what?. One of respondents want to know more about activities of hostel and rest seven responded nothing.

The eleventh question was about importance of social media platforms. The question asked for “Rate, how important following social media platforms are for you when you are looking for accommodation?”. It was also multiple choice question and options were Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat. Likert scale were from 1 to 5. 1 meant not important at all, 2 not important, 3 quite important, 4 important and 5 meant very important. The most of respondents 31,2% said that Facebook is very important social media platform to them. The second most important



platform were Instagram, 24,7% of respondents said Instagram is very important to them. 6,5% of respondents said Twitter is very important and 6,5% of respondents said Snapchat is very important to them. The least of important was Pinterest, 3,9% (3) of respondents said it is very important. It is also good to notice that quite many respondent 24,7% said Facebook is not important at all to them and 46,8% of respondents said that Instagram is not important at all.

The twelfth question concerned activities while looking for accommodation. The question was "What do you do in social media while looking for accommodation?". It was also multiple choice question and it had 5 options. The options were Browse pictures, Read reviews, Watch videos, Search information and Other, what? There were Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat in scale. The respondents were able to choose as many options as they wanted in scale. The most of respondents 59,7% said to browse pictures on Facebook while looking for accommodation and 31,2% of respondents browse pictures on Instagram. 70,1% of respondents read reviews on Facebook. 39% of respondents watch videos on Facebook and also (18) of respondents on Instagram and 14,3% of respondents watch videos on Snapchat. 45,5% of respondents said to search information on Facebook while looking for accommodation. In option "Other,what?" three people answered. One of respondents read reviews in Hostel World, another said YouTube, also Booking and TripAdvisor was mentioned.

In the last question it was opportunity to give free opinion about social media in accommodation business. 19 of respondents answered only "No". 14 of respondents wanted to give their opinion. One of the opinions was "Ask during check in for an e-mail, follow these people on social media and wait for them to follow you back. If not, unfollow: D".

Two of respondents mentioned videos. The first opinion was "Maybe some videos inside the hostel" and another was "YouTube; create a small interview video, how explain the Feedback of your hostel, presentation of your hostel; etc...".

One of respondents mentioned "more offers" another said "online discounts". Also one respondents said "Share more pics for events" and another wanted more infor-

mation about activities: “Since I'm first day in the hostel. I don't really know the activities they do here. But would be nice if they have (or can make it a future plan) do some activities so the visitors come closer to each other and share experiences in the city together”.

## 8 Marketing plan for social media

More customers are spending an increasingly bigger part of their lives in the virtual world. Marketers need to analyze demand by consumers for online services and respond to customers' needs in this new connected world. (Chaffey 2013, 9.)

Social media marketing has to be focused on using these media to help achieve the marketing objectives – both protecting and expanding your brand:

Monitoring and facilitating customer-customer interaction, participation and sharing through digital media to encourage positive engagement with a company and its brands leading to commercial value. Interactions may occur on a company site, social networks and other third-party site(CIRP, 2011) (Chaffey 2013, 214.)

The survey succeeded and it gave a good view about the customers' social media usage. The research of the thesis was quite reliable and it answered the research question. The research was targeted only to Sleep Green's customers. It was very important to know the customers' opinions about the social media platforms; where they use their time today and what kind of content they wish to see on social media in the future. This marketing plan for social media has been made according to SOSTAC model and TAC-part will be fulfilled by the company, Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona.

### **Situation**

As the research results proved that younger customers are a little more active on social media than older customers, there were still no significant differences between different age groups and how often they used Facebook or Instagram. The results showed that two of social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram, were more popular than other platforms. The research results proved that there is neither significant difference between different age groups and where they want to follow the hostel in the future. All age groups wanted to follow the hostel on Facebook and Instagram in future. Nevertheless, it can be noticed that younger customers, under 25

years old, use Facebook and Instagram daily a little more than the older age groups. Also under 25 years old customers want to follow Sleep Green on Facebook a little more than the older age groups. Unexpectedly over 36 years old wished to follow Sleep Green on Instagram more than the younger age groups.

There was a significant difference between the age groups and what they do on social media, especially between different age groups and chatted in real time conversation and snap on social media. Under 25 years old chat on social media more than older age groups. Also under 25 years old snapped considerably more than the older age groups. No one over 36 years old snapped on social media.

All age groups read and create content as much when they spent their time on social media. All age groups liked and commented other people's posts and pics as much, still under 25 years old liked and commented other people's posts and pics a little more than older age groups. Also all age groups shared pics on social media as much, **still under 25 years old share pics a little more than the older age groups**. In the results the pictures were highlighted. Customers wanted to like, comment and share pictures on social media. There were not enough responses in options: Tweet and Pin, which means quite a few customer used Twitter and Pinterest. The minor usage of Twitter, Pinterest and Snapchat means that there was no necessary need for having an account on these social media platforms.

Sleep Green's customers preferred to see a certain content on Facebook and Instagram. The most customers would like to see upcoming events and information of tours in Barcelona on Facebook or Instagram. Customers also wanted to see current news, offers and pics of the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel.

While looking for accommodation on social media the most customers browse pictures and read reviews on Facebook. They also browse pictures on Instagram. Watching videos on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat is also very popular. Some customers search information on social media platforms.

At the moment the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona has already four social media platforms in use. The hostel has created an account on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest.

## **Objectives**

There are five benefits why to be on social media, on Facebook and Instagram.

Through social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram, the following benefits can be achieved:

- 1 Activation of content on Facebook and Instagram
- 2 Add value (Give customers extra benefits through Facebook and Instagram)
- 3 Get closer to customers (Provide an opportunity to community by asking them questions, creating a dialogue with them)

Based on the theory, research and company the objectives are activation of content on Facebook and Instagram, add value online, provide community for customers, save costs and develop brand awareness on social media.

## **Strategy**

The company's marketing strategy outlines which customers the company will serve and how it creates value for these customers. It must communicate with the target customers about the offer and persuade them of its merits (promotion). (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2014; Kotler 2014, 19.)

According to this sample the author encourage to focus on and market on the Facebook and Instagram accounts, because most of Sleep Green's customers spend their time on Facebook and Instagram. All age groups want to follow Sleep Green on Facebook and Instagram in future, and some customers already follow the hostel on Facebook.

According to the results, it was recommended to focus on and market to customers who are under 25 years old and aged between 26 and 35. Even though there was no significant difference between the age groups and the activity on social media, younger customers are a little more active on social media. As two different scientific research indicates that Y generation (people born between 1981-1991), Millennials, and Z generation (born between 1991-2001), the cohort after Millennials, are the most active users of social media today. According to Haddouche (2018) scientific research:

We know that Generation Y has been exposed to social networks, often without a filter, and marketing practitioners have understood the importance of using these channels to capture their attention. Our results show that Generation Z is much more suspicious and vigilant with regard to social networks and their use. Often presented as a narcissistic generation, seeking to put forward their “selves”, for example by posting selfies, Generation Z seems to show a great modesty during tourist experiences. Lived as an extraordinary moment (Carù and Cova, 2006), the tourist experience requires to break with the daily routine, and therefore also with the use of social networks. Policy makers should take this element into account and demonstrate their commitment to their future business strategies. (Haddouche, 2018.)

That study has fostered a more precise understanding of the tourist experiences of Generation Zers, tomorrow’s travellers. Emotions, pleasure, enchantment are at the heart of their tourism experience and needs (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1999). It is, therefore, essential for tourism professionals to identify the emotional levels to activate. Creating an emotional connection will help reinforce the loyalty and empowerment of this young generation. Tourism professionals could also adopt a more pragmatic approach using a strategy “co-design” (Clergeau and Spindler, 2016). This dynamic of “doing together” will add value to the tourist supply chain. (Haddouche, 2018.)

Generation Y is a unique cohort that many firms have invested in heavily to understand their attitudes and behaviors. In the hospitality industry, Generation Y represents a priority market segment that cannot be ignored by businesses. (Zhang 2018, 733.) Furthermore, in most developed countries, Generation Y are natural or active users of social media (AUSM) and mobile devices and apps that enable them to stay connected with their friends/families (Lazarevic, 2012). Because of their facility with technology, Generation Y holds positive views about its influence on their lifestyles and accepts it as a key partner in nearly all of their activities, whether at home, in the workplace or at leisure (Apresley, 2010). (Zhang 2018, 733.) Nevertheless, this marketing plan and suggestions concern all Sleep Green’s customers regardless of age.

According to this sample, the author recommend to create content on Facebook and Instagram by sharing posts and pics about the hostel and Barcelona, because customers like to read content, and like and comment other people’s posts/pics on social media. According to Bordeleon (2012) in the scientific research: “Tourists tend to visit places other tourists have photographed and shared via social media or through

analog means (Bednar, 2012).” (Bordeleon 2017, 318.) With the rise of social media, contemporary tourists are able to access online photograph-sharing websites that provide countless visual archives of unfiltered (or modified induced) destination images. (Bordeleon 2017, 318.)

Customers also want to converse on social media, and it is important to think if was possible to have a chat for customers’ feedback and questions on Facebook. The marketing communicator should participate customers more to chat on social media. According to theory, Tuten (2015, 6.) said about social media: it is all about a culture participation; a belief in democracy: the ability to freely interact with other people, companies, and organizations; open access to venues that allow users to share content from simple comments to reviews, ratings, photos, stories, and more; and the power to build on the content of others from your own unique point of view. (Tuten 2015, 6.)

Marketers should participate customers to comment and like pictures which increase visibility on the social media market, that new potential customers discover the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel. Participating customers to share their picture or having a small competition on social media shows that the hostel cares about the customers’ opinions and can improve their services to be more customer oriented. Some kind of competition on Instagram or Facebook would participate customers more to comment and share ideas on social media, thus acquire new customers using social media. Here is one of social media marketing activities that the marketing communicator could try: *Engage*- Which marketing activities will encourage our existing customers to act as advocates for our business? This will involve defining a content strategy to seed content that existing customers can share. Likewise, campaigns to encourage social sharing such as those run by MCKay Flooring can help here. It is a great example of how smaller business can be creative in using social media marketing to expand their reach. The competition mechanic is straightforward on Instagram:

- *Offer*: a prize draw to win a £100 Amazon voucher
- *Entry*: take a picture of the floor on Instagram ( the iPhone and iPad app for easily sharing to Facebook or Twitter)
- *Campaign name*: a hash tag of #mckayflooring and #mywoodfloor has to be added to the post, which helps with branding.(Chaffey D 2013, 227.)

According to the research results, the author recommends to share content about upcoming events and tours in Barcelona. Also customers want to see current news, offers and pictures of the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel. A little less customers want to see ecological tips and information on attractions in Barcelona. Nevertheless it is important to share content about ecological tips, because Sleep Green is an environmentally friendly hostel, and by sharing ecological tips it will promote brand awareness.

The most customers browse pictures on Facebook and Instagram, also read reviews while looking for accommodation. Pictures are very important for likers and followers on Facebook and Instagram. Also videos on Facebook, Instagram and snapchat are much liked in today's connected world, customers want to see more authentic material regularly, almost every day. Customers also search information about the company on Facebook, therefore it is important to keep Facebook and Instagram accounts updated. Customers also want to know more about offers, discounts and activities in the hostel.

## 9 Discussion

Managers and marketers should follow the social media marketing plan to keep their customers satisfied, increase visibility and acquire new customers. As Weinberg said about Twitter, it can generate sales, act as a customer service tool, promote the brand awareness, and even capture new prospects as clients. (Weinberg 2009, 129.) This lending can be exploited to other platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

Marketers could use social media platforms as a customer service tool, to get closer to their customers. Marketing on social media can also increase sales and develop the brand awareness. When the marketing plan's instructions on social media are clear, and customers find the hostel on Facebook and Instagram, and the Facebook and Instagram accounts are updated, it gives the customers a better appearance of the hostel. If some of social media accounts are not updated, it will give a poor appearance about the hostel, and the customers do not want to follow or like it anymore. In addition, new potential customers might think about the existence of the

hostel, if hostel's Facebook page is not updated. Furthermore, all the hostels employees and management should know the social media marketing plan so that anyone of them could maintain and update their platforms.

The user-privacy crisis has decreased the reputation of Facebook and other social media platforms, but its' effects can be seen later. Facebook will restrict developers' data access, Several Wall Street analysts believe Facebook will weather the storm, and they expect a minimal long-term impact on the internet powerhouse's overall ad business. (Spangler 2018)

In the thesis process, it was quite difficult to find right and new material to make a relevant theory part. In the beginning there was not much literature about marketing on social media, but during the process the author found also quite new material. The data collection was managed without any problems, because it was high season at the hostel in May, and there were customers every day. Using the Webropol survey tool and SPSS- software first time was quite challenging in the beginning, because the author had not used those tools before. The data analyzing caused some problems, and the author had to combine age groups before the cross tabulation. The research succeeded well, and having 77 responses indicates that most of Sleep Green's customers wanted to share their viewpoints about social media. In the research the most used platforms and customers' activity on social media were discovered. The research results can be applied for further development of marketing on social media of the Sleep Green Eco Youth Hostel Barcelona.



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# Appendices

## Appendix 1.



### Questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to improve social media marketing in Sleep Green Eco Home Hostel Barcelona. Also we would like to get your opinion about Sleep Green's social media applications.

We would like you to participate in this questionnaire. Filling the questionnaire takes only 10 minutes.

Thank you for your participation.

#### 1. Gender \*

- Female  
 Male

#### 2. Age \*

- 15-25  
 26-35  
 36-45  
 46-55  
 56-65  
 above 65

#### 3. Nationality

AD - Andorra ▼

#### 4. If you can't find your country on the list, please write it below

#### 5. How often do you use these social media platforms? \*

	Never	Occasionally	Weekly	Daily
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, What?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 6. In which social media platforms do you already follow Sleep Green Eco Hostel? \*

- Facebook  
 Twitter  
 Instagram  
 Pinterest  
 None of these

**7. What do you do in social media? (In Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat) \***

Please choose one or more options.

- Read content
- Create content
- Like others posts/pics
- Share pics
- Share links
- Comment others post/pics
- Chat in real time conversation
- Search information
- Tweet
- Pin
- Snap

**8. In which social media platforms do you prefer follow Sleep Green Eco Hostel in future? \***

Please choose 2 options.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Snapchat
- Other, where?
- Nowhere, why?

**9. Why do you want to follow the hostel in previous mentioned platforms?**

**10. What kind of content would you like to see in Sleep Green 's Facebook , Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat? \***

Please choose one or more options.

- Current news
- Upcoming events in Barcelona
- Ecological tips
- Offers
- Information of tours in Barcelona
- Information of attractions in Barcelona
- Pics of Sleep Green Eco Home Hostel
- Other, what?

**11. Rate, how important following social media platforms are for you when you are looking for accommodation? \***

Use likert scale from 1 to 5. 1 means not important at all, 5 means very important.

	1	2	3	4	5
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**12. What do you do in social media while looking for accommodation?**

	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Pinterest	Snapchat
Browse pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Read reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch videos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Search information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, what? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13. Would you like to share new ideas of Social Media use in Accommodation business?**

This research is a part of Bachelor thesis in Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences. Thank you for your opinion!