Importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks

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This is a research-oriented type of thesis which is aiming to look on the importance of having good skills and strategies which will enable a business to be successful when it comes to marketing of its goods or services through social media networks. The goal is to provide information on the skills and strategies required for a business to implement its marketing activities in order for it to be successful as well as giving suggestions and recommendations on marketing a business in social media networks. The thesis research focuses mainly on Business to Consumer type of businesses (B2C) to be more precisely.

Currently most businesses from small, medium or large companies are using social media networks in order to market their brands, goods and services through different social media platforms to grow their brands, to increase customer relationship and interaction, to increase customer awareness, to grow traffic, to retain and gain new customers which all these will lead to increasing their sales of goods or services. Achieving all these its important good skills and strategies are implemented in their marketing activities.

The thesis starts with an overview introduction of the subject,goals and scope,out of scope as well as the structure of the thesis. The goals of the research includes the research problems which provides a general idea of the research project and why it is carried. The theoretical framework part of the thesis provides more information about the main terms of the thesis which are social media networks and marketing a business to consumer type of business.

The empirical part of the thesis discusses the implementation methods and analysis which will be used to analyze the collected valuable and reliable data by using analytical research method.The research questions are used to support the research implementation process by collecting data from different reliable sources and dig deeper to acquire valuable and reliable information which can be analysed, by using critical thinking skills to provide new ideas and information or to support the existing ideas.

The discussion part of the thesis discusses the conclusion of the thesis, development ideas, the suggestions for further research of the thesis which can provide more and new information about the research as well as the thesis evaluation which evaluates the thesis and own learning experience which give a researcher's implementation experience.

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Terminologies

ADs	Advertisements
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Augmented Reality
APPs	Applications
ARPANET	Advanced Research Projects Agency Network
BBS	Bulletin Board System
B2B	Business to Business
B2C	Business to Consumer
iOS	iPhone Operating System
ROI	Return on Investment
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SMS	Short Message Service
SNS	Social Networks Sites
TCP/IP	Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol
WWW	World Wide Web

1 Introduction

This section introduces the thesis project topic by giving general overview of the topic and discussing what is the research about followed by the methodology part which discuss in brief the research method which will be used on this project, thesis goals and objectives, scope and out of scope, structure of the thesis section will conclude the introduction part of the thesis project.

Social media networks have recently changed the way people communicate and share their information either for communication, entertainment, educational, or business purposes. The internet and its rapidly growing technologies have made possible for social media networks to continue growing and it will not end or slow down anytime soon due to the fact that more people continue to join online communities and network. (The Balance SMB, 2019).

Social media are online activities which allow different applications to share content efficiently, quickly and in real-time. The contents can include images, videos, writings, events and opinions either through computers, tablets or smartphones. (The Balance SMB, 2019).

Social media has changed the way we live as well as the way business is done. In this thesis the research is based on the skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media platforms or networks. Marketing is crucial when it comes to grow and expand a business which leads to a business making profit and value, this can be achieved by implementing the right skills and strategies in their marketing campaigns. (The Balance SMB, 2019).

Nowadays most of the businesses including small, medium or large businesses are using social media to market their brands, goods and services through different social media platforms according to their business needs so as to gain new potential customers, to retain the old customers, to increase customer relationship and interaction, to increase customer awareness, to be able to achieve these good skills and strategies must be implemented in their market campaigns and activities. (The Balance SMB, 2019).

1.1 Methodology

This section will be discussed in deep in the empirical part of the thesis in which the main focus is the research methodology of the thesis. The method which will be used to collect and analyse the data so as to give valuable and reliable results for this research-oriented thesis. This section will also explain in detail as to why the analytical research method was chosen to conduct this research and how it was done, in order for a reader to understand the research objectives and the method which was used to conduct the research. Analytical research involves using the facts, data and available information to analyse and make a critical evaluation and understanding about a topic. (Kothari, 2004 p.3).

1.2 Thesis Goals and Objectives

The thesis main objective is for educational purposes to research and provide valuable information concerning the importance of skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks.

The thesis results and findings will provide valuable information which will benefit businesses, companies, organizations or people who are seeking to know about importance of skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media platforms either to grow their knowledge or their businesses and brands.

The other objective of this thesis is for personal learning and interest on the subject matter this project will increase personal knowledge about the importance of skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks as well as knowing deeper social media networks which will be beneficial for my future plans of starting a digital marketing agency business either as a consultant or/and as a social media marketing service provider.

The objectives of this thesis will be accomplished by providing a well written research paper with valuable and reliable information which a reader will find clear to understand and follow so the information can be used and beneficial to a reader.

The thesis project leads to the following research questions:

- Why should businesses consider investing in marketing their products and services through social media networks?

- What useful skills and strategies are needed for businesses to consider when using social media networks for their marketing purposes?

- What issues to consider before deciding to market a business through social media networks?

The above research questions provide a direction and objectives as to why this research is carried in the first place and what intended results are expected. The questions will be researched and data collected will be analysed to provide valuable, reliable information about the research objectives which will be beneficial and useful to a reader.

The results of the findings from different references and sources will be analysed by using analytical research method, the valuable and reliable data will be evaluated in order to provide useful results, this will be achieved by deep thinking and brainstorming of ideas to provide answers to the research questions. This will lead to new ideas and addition of recommendations as well as suggestions for further research on the topic.

1.3   Scope and Out of Scope

This is a crucial section of the thesis because it defines the boundaries and limits of the thesis research which is very important for the success of this research. Since the topic is very broad, the scope specifies the topic areas the project needs to focus to be able to yield great results for the research questions as well as findings which with a quality information for a reader which meets the objectives of the thesis project.

Scope of this thesis-oriented paper mentions, describes and specifies what is needed to be included in this project in order to provide quality outcomes of research results while

out of scope describes areas which this project will not discuss or consider at all in this research project.

The main scope of this research paper is to focus only on Business to Consumer (B2C) business models. The thesis will look briefly on the history and evolution of social media platforms when it all started, the current situation and future of social media networks as well as when it was first applied to market businesses.

The thesis will also discuss the terms marketing, social media networks, social media marketing, zones of social media, features of social media, benefits of social media, challenges of social media marketing as well as advantages and disadvantages of social media networks. Furthermore, the thesis paper will discuss the future of social media marketing.

This project will briefly discuss the main and most popular social media platforms which a business can consider for their marketing purposes, these includes Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Twitter and TikTok.

The out of scope of this research paper describes and specifies areas which will not be included in this paper or even discussed, Business to Business (B2B) business model will not be a part of this paper.

The fast-growing technology innovations and usage of social media platforms has led to fast growing number of social media platforms as well as the number of users has grown, and it will keep on growing. Currently there are many social media platforms which exist and more to be invented as well as the number of users and businesses using them will be increasing significantly. This paper will briefly be discussing only the above-mentioned social platforms on the scope section and even though LinkedIn is one of the popular social media platforms, it will not be considered cause its targeting mainly businesses which follow B2B model and consumers by job titles.

Other areas which will not be discussed in this thesis paper includes social media security issues, social media implementations, there will not be any discussion about the comparisons or similarities of the social media platforms functionalities.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This is the research-oriented type of thesis which follows Haaga-Helia thesis documentation template as required by the degree regulations of writing a thesis. First page with the school logo up on the left corner, the thesis begins with the main cover page which includes the title of the thesis, author's name of the thesis paper, name of degree programme and the year of implementation.

The next page is the abstract section which include the date of thesis implementation, the name of the degree programme, again the name of the thesis topic and the name of the author of the thesis paper, number of pages and appendix pages of the thesis paper.

The abstract part gives a brief introduction of the thesis topic which is the importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks. This helps a reader to have an idea and understanding of what the project is about and subject areas of the thesis as well as methodology which the author uses to conduct the research for the project, this is followed by the table of contents with their commencing page numbers, list of figures and tables, list of appendices and list of terminologies.

The thesis begins with the introduction of the thesis topic, this section introduces to a reader the topic main idea in which there is in depth explanations about the project. The introduction part will also include sub-chapters in order to give a reader a clear understanding about the project. The first sub-chapter tells about the methodology in brief which will be used to conduct the research of this thesis paper, followed with the thesis objectives part which tells a reader about the objectives and goals of the thesis paper and why it is carried in the first place leading to research questions of this project. The third sub-chapter will describe the scope and out of scope of the thesis paper, this specifies the boundaries and limits of the thesis paper, as to what will be discussed and what will not be discussed in this paper. The structure of the thesis part will finalize the introduction section of the thesis paper by explain the structure and the flow of the thesis project paper.

The theoretical framework part will discuss the concepts of marketing, social media, social media networks, social media marketing. This part will also discuss in brief the history and evolution of social media, zones of social media, types of social media networks, benefits of social media networks, advantages and disadvantages of social media networks and the future of social media networks.

The empirical part of the thesis discusses the implementation method which will be used to analyse the valuable and reliable data in order to provide quality results of the findings to answer the research questions which are the main objectives of the thesis project. The analytical research method will be used to analyse the collected data from different reliable sources and the results of the findings will be presented. Brainstorming method will be conducted and new ideas, recommendations will be presented as well as the summary of the results.

The discussion part of the thesis will conclude the thesis paper, this section will include the conclusion of the thesis paper, Development ideas, suggestions for further research and Thesis evaluation as well as reflection on own learning. The references which were used to support this research study will be included at the end of the thesis paper to help a reader have access to the sources and materials which were used to provide information which made this project a success.

2 Theoretical framework

This section of the thesis will discuss the concepts of marketing, social media, social media networks, social media marketing, the section will define the terms and discuss the meaning behind each term, but the main focus will be marketing in social media networks. This section will also look and discuss in brief some popular and most commonly social media platforms which are used by most businesses for their marketing purposes. Furthermore, this section will discuss the benefits of social media marketing, advantages and disadvantages of social media to business, challenges of social media marketing and the future of social media networks will conclude discussions on this section.

2.1 Marketing

Based on the book Marketing: Strategic Direction there is a journal which was written by Richard C. Leventhal, which states that the term marketing is information which can be used to develop business strategies and approaches in order to increase Return-on-Investment (ROI) which will allow for more creative and success innovation, customer awareness and better customer relationship, better brand awareness as well as increasing promotional efforts, activities and a strong web marketing activities. (Fojt, 2005 p.3).

The literature also states that Marketing is not a short-term solution, both strategies and culture for marketing takes a lot of efforts over time to build and establish including measuring the values the market efforts bring in terms of financial. In a business or a company achieve a real market orientation is important that a business focus on customers, knowing their target group by studying their customers and understand what they need which means providing the products and services which solve their needs. (Fojt 2005, p.4).

Studying and researching the competitor's weaknesses and strengths, is one of important marketing strategies but also coordinate all the marketing activities and efforts with other functions of a business or organization such as sales, customer services, manufacturing and share the information, marketing should not be an isolated component or function of a business. (Fojt 2005, p.4).

To be successful and effective marketer in today's business world, marketers must be able to collect and maintain potential customers data and utilize it in order to segment cus-

tomers attributes as in regular customers and potential customers so as to be able to de-velop personalization concepts to support the market campaign as well as making sure marketing communications have both constant and persistent "feel" with the customers, how a customer feels about the business or company plays significant role their marketing activities and efforts. (Fojt 2005, p.4).

Other literature states that marketing includes processes, activities which creates commu-nication and delivers information about the products and services which bring values to the customers, clients, partners and everyone who is involved in the society. These goals are accomplished through a marketing mix which includes the four Ps namely Product, Price, Promotion and Place. (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 17-18).

Top Marketing Priorities for 2019

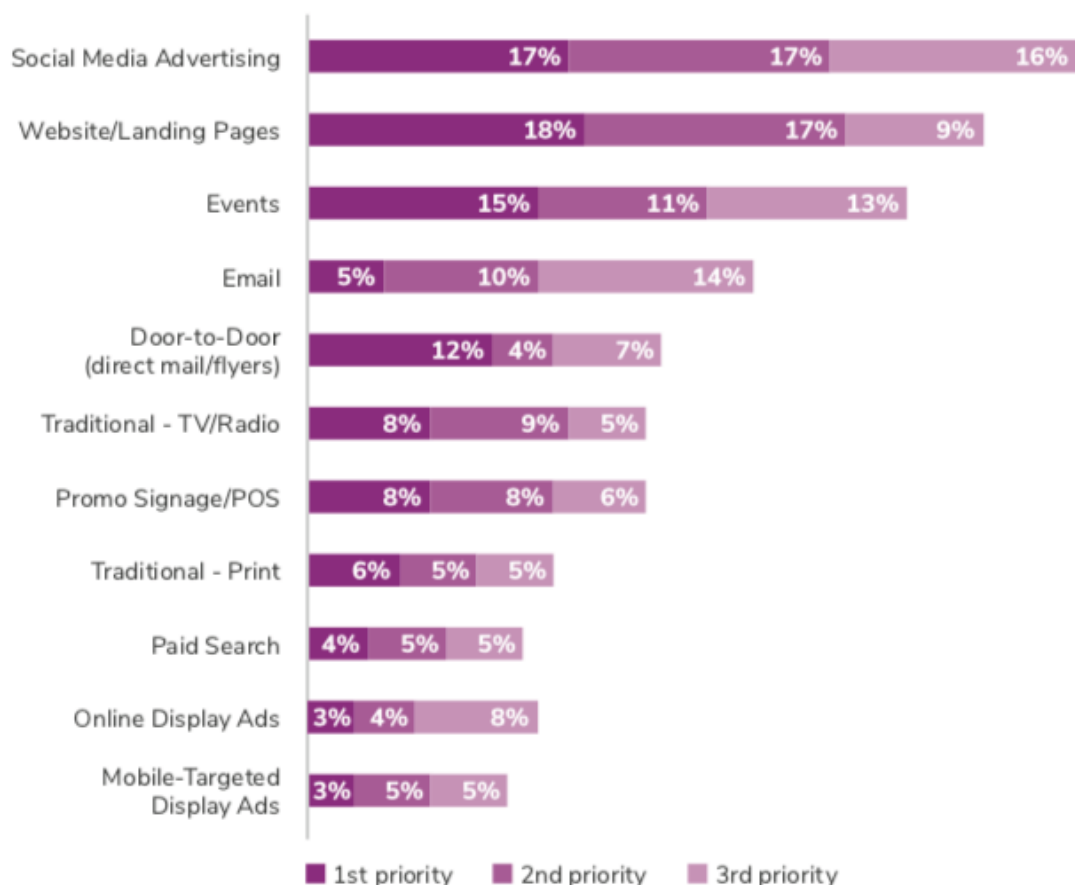|	1st priority	2nd priority	3rd priority
Social Media Advertising	17%	17%	16%
Website/Landing Pages	18%	17%	9%
Events	15%	11%	13%
Email	5%	10%	14%
Door-to-Door (direct mail/flyers)	12%	4%	7%
Traditional - TV/Radio	8%	9%	5%
Promo Signage/POS	8%	8%	6%
Traditional - Print	6%	5%	5%
Paid Search	4%	5%	5%
Online Display Ads	3%	4%	8%
Mobile-Targeted Display Ads	3%	5%	5%

Figure1. Top Marketing Priorities for 2019. (Source: Brand Muscle State of Local Market-ing 2019)

The figure above showing top marketing priorities for 2019, clearly indicates that social media advertising has the most priority and ranks at the top as a main marketing practice for most businesses in today's business world.

2.2 Social Media

According to a literature book, Auditing Social Media: A Governance and Risk Guide which states that there is no single known definition of social media. But through different descriptions which exist, social media is a set of web-based broadcast technologies that makes the content accessible to people, which allows them to emerge from consumers of content to publishers. The possibility to achieve massive scalability in real time empower people to be able to connect with each other and create value through online conversation. (Scott, Jacka 2011, p.5).

Applying the needed technologies to help encourage the relationships with people either by helping friends, families to stay connected which is considered as a simple connection or then deeper connection which helps businesses, vendors, investors, consumers, companies, organizations to stay connected globally its impressive and amazing as well as evolving rapidly. Social Media is not only bundled within IT framework but there have been new technologies that helped to make these interactions possible which do not represent a change in the risks of the IT functions. (Scott, Jacka 2011, p.5).

Based on the literature book, Stories and Social Media: Identities and Interaction which states that social media refer to Internet-based applications that promote social between people examples include video sharing, podcasting, social network sites, wikis but social media is not only limited to these. Social media delivers content via a network of people in which content can be published by anyone who is participating and distributed across a large-scale audience. Social media refers to all technologies that began to be developed in early years of 1990s and became mainstream Internet activities in the first years of twenty-first century. (Page 2011, p.6).

Social media are series of practices in which the author creates personal information, interpersonal networks which develop to coordinated activities which are based on sharing information and never ending or changing visibility this can be achieved by participants regularly submitting or sharing information. (Trottier 2016, p.13).

2.2.1 History and Evolution of Social Media

According to the literature book Social Media: Pedagogy and Practice which discuss a brief history of social media, it states that social media also known as social network site is not a new innovation which has been developed in the last few years. Most technologies can be traced decades or centuries before their available for use by a widespread public, this is due to long development and research time in the making of new communication technology but also due to remediation which refers to one technology being used or visible in a different technology. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 10).

Remediation is important when evaluating new digital media, many aspects of digital media are from the previous media such as radio, photography, television, magazines, Newspapers and print journalism. Components of old media do not look identical when they are used by the new media, but they save the same purpose just in a different new form, these new forms rely on the earlier forms to help create the cultural significance of the new media technology form. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 11).

Social media history can go way far back as 550 B.C, this is when the first postal service was created since written communication also represents a part of social media. Going back to the history of social media helps to provide a clear insight for what will come next since each step seems more revolutionary than the previous one. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 11).

In 1792 when the first telegraph was sent, this was important milestone for social media since the speed and reliable communication technology. The wires of the telegraph work in so many ways as the electronic connections in the world wide web (WWW). The invention of telephone in 1890, showed how communication technologies can link communities in their businesses or homes. The telephone helped to remove obstacles which were existing in telegraph of delaying messages which were supposed to be decoded and then delivered even though the early days telephone required operator to connect the call the communication speed was way faster compare to telegraph. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 11).

In 1891 Radio signals took the concept of point-to-point communication and message was able to be delivered to mass communication. Radio and Television was one-way communication. All these technologies improved over time, but they were limited, these technology limitations always give a possibility for development of a new technology without the same limitations. Mass media and interpersonal communication would require a different mechanism which those analog models could not perform, this is when the computer comes into the picture. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 11).

The early forms of communication technologies were analog rather than digital, which did not have the key characteristics of social media, such as public profile which can be shared electronically or using the multimedia elements such as pictures, videos and text this could be achieved by using the platform in Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) a packet switching network which was first deployed in 1969, it utilized TCP/IP which became the basic prototype for the internet. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 12).

In 1978 occurred a crucial development toward social media when the first Bulletin Board System (BBS) was created by two hobbyists in Chicago who wanted to inform friends about post announcements, meetings as well as sharing other useful information, this was the electronic version of a community bulletin board in many living complexes in the United States. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 12).

The revolution of computer in the 1980s as well as the increasing usage of the internet resulted to chats, socially, and technologically which is currently known as social media. In 1984 prodigy started offering online services that included banking, weather, games, news and travel services, all in one portal and in 1994 prodigy offered access to the WWW by 1997 it became the Internet Banking Provider (ISP). Most important development is when Tim Berners-Lee's work with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Switzerland lead to the creation of the WWW. CERN allowed the access of the WWW technology to the universe; same year Mosaic created the first graphical browser which allowed the creation of web pages. By late 1993 there were more than 200 web servers and by 1994 the number grew to 1500 web servers online. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 12).

In 1997 the first social network site called SixDegrees.com was launched which offered users a possibility to create a profile, search other user's profile, organize groups and even invite and make friends, the site could not find enough success to continue operation, it went offline after 2000 By late 1990s, the Internet was huge, the business side of the Internet was about to undergo a major change. By 2000 there were 70 million computers connected to the internet enough to support the next big thing which would be the social media sites leading to the movement toward smartphones. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 13).

In 2003 Myspace was launched, also same year iTunes was started by Apple, LinkedIn became social media network for business professionals, 3 billion web pages existed by that time. In 2004, saw the creation of Facebook which started has a social media network for Harvard students only it was until 2006 when it expanded to general public, its quick success was due to easy to use features, smart advertising and the ability of third parties, in addition the development of the "Like" button became a feature which appeared across the WWW. Twitter was Launched the same year which allowed users to be able to "follow" other users, Both Facebook and Twitter allow instantly communication to large numbers of followers or friends without losing the feeling of direct person-to-person communication. This is one of the major reasons that they are the most popular and dominate social media platforms. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 14).

By 2005 YouTube was created which uses a different concept of social connectivity, people were able to create contents and share it with anyone who wanted to watch by using video format, Users can create channels and post comments on other videos. By linking YouTube videos with Twitter feeds or Facebook feeds, enables the delivery of information in them which provide support for an individual or group who are connected on those social media networks. By 2007 the social media changed from being locked to being remotely accessed anywhere at any time by using tablets and smartphones. (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, Sturgis 2013, p. 14).

Below the figure showing the evolution and history of social media networks, and other related technologies and inventions development which has changed the way people live and communicate.

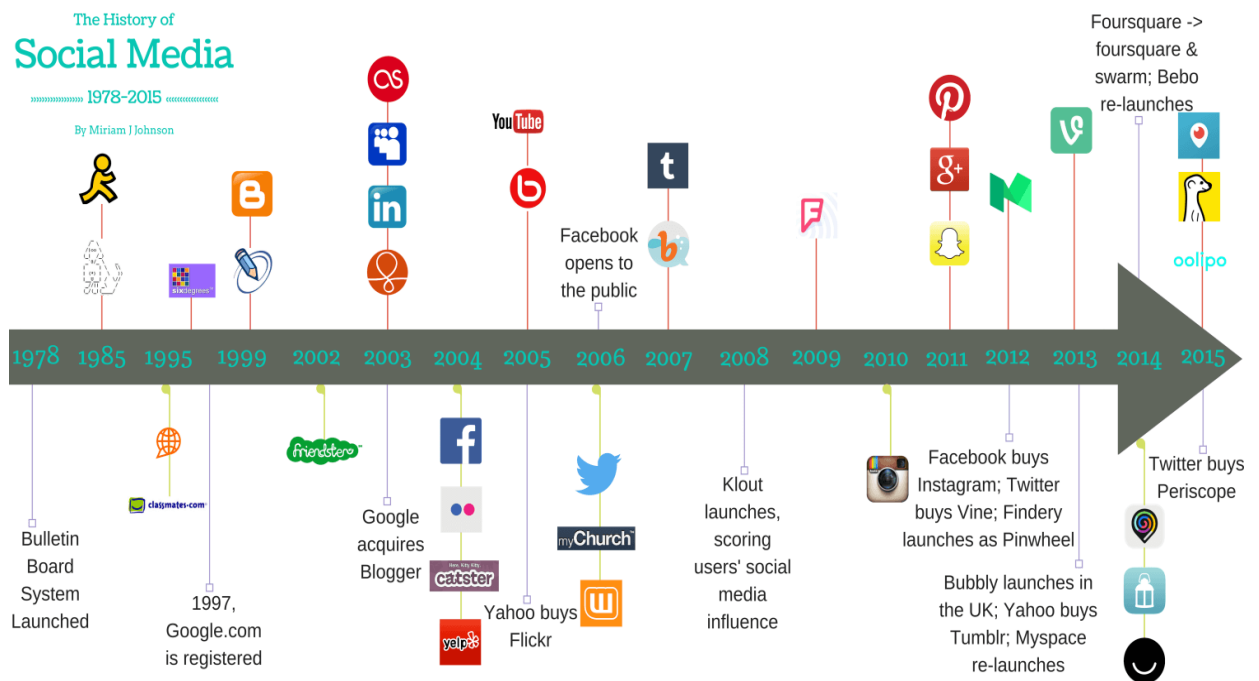**Figure 2**. The History of Social Media (Source: Future Marketing)

According to figure 1, the rapidly development of technologies and innovations has led to different inventions over the years, social media networks being one of them, social media will keep on growing and more new inventions will come in the near future since the number of users is growing as well as technology is developing significantly.

2.2.2 Zones of Social Media

Based on the literature book Social Media Marketing, there are four zones of social media channels which can conveniently organize the social media space into a compact space. These social media channels can be grouped into four zones: (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 12).

- Zone 1 is Social Community.
- Zone 2 is Social Publishing.
- Zone 3 is Social Entertainment.
- Zone 4 is Social Commerce.

The figure below illustrates the four zones of social media channels (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 12).

Figure 3. The Zones of Social Media (Source: Social Media Marketing 2018)

According to the literature book, Social Media Marketing: the figure above illustrates the four zones of social media channels, below there is in depth discussions of the zones.

Zone 1. Social Community

These channels focus on relationships and interactions of the common activities between people and groups who share same interests. Social community feature two or more ways of communicating, sharing of resources and experiences. All social media networks involve networking relationships in which interaction and collaboration are the main reason people engage in these activities. There are many social network sites (SNS) which exist but by the dominance of Facebook and other major sites, it's always assumed that only a few numbers of social networks exist while there are hundreds of SNS currently operating. Some social media channels in this zone include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest but also there are not so popular SNS like Whisper, Houzz, Drive Tribe, Steemit, which meet the needs of their users and provide niche communities. (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 13).

Zone 2. Social Publishing

Social publishing deals with spreading and distributing content or information via social publishing sites to an audience by hosting content while also it enables the audience to participate and share. Social publishing made it possible for people to share their content, user-generated content (UGC), without any limitations of broadcast models and traditional publishing. Social publishing can be categorized into four user groups namely independent professionals, professional contributors, individual users and brands which use social publishing as distributors or promotors in their campaigns. Some of the social publishing channels include Blogging sites (WordPress, Tumblr), Photo sharing (Flickr, Instagram), Video sharing (Vimeo, YouTube, Vsnap), Music and audio sharing (Soundcloud, Audio farm) as well as Presentations and documents (SlideShare, Scribd) (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 14-15).

Zone 3. Social Entertainment

This zone includes social media channels which are used for performances, events, play and other activities which are designed to provide the audience with enjoyment, experiences which are shared by using social media. The social media channels which supports this zone includes Spotify, Myspace as well multi-zone SNS like Twitter and YouTube. (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 15).

Zone 4. Social Commerce

This zone refers to the use of social media in the online activities of buying, selling and shopping of products and services. This enables people both the buyers and sellers, to actively participate in the marketing and selling of products and services in online communities and marketplace. Social channels in this zone include Yelp, TripAdvisor, Trivago, Momondo (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 15).

2.2.3   Social Media Marketing

With the rapid advance of technologies and inventions, social media marketing has been changing how businesses do their marketing activities this has led to expansion in goals businesses can achieve from using these social media platforms for their marketing efforts.

Based on the literature book Social Media Marketing which states that Social media marketing is the utilization of social media technologies, inventions, channels, and software to create, deliver, communicate, share information and exchange offering that have value for a customer, business and everyone who is involved. (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 18).

Social media marketing is the use of social media channels to enable exchange of information between consumers and organizations. This is valuable to marketers because it provides various ways to interact with the consumers at different points in the purchase cycle process. (Tuten. L, Solomon. R, 2018, p. 31).

Other source states that social media marketing is a powerful way business of all sizes from large businesses to small businesses to interact with their prospects customers through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter which can bring successful results to a business by driving leads and sales. (Word Stream, 2019).

Furthermore, social media marketing is internet marketing which includes creating and sharing contents in social media networks through activities like posting videos, images which will drive audience engagement. (Word Stream, 2019).

Social media marketing refers to a technique that employs social media generated contents by people using accessible and scalable technologies and inventions such as social media networks, wikis, blogs, podcasts and forms of social media platforms. (Shiv.S, Diamond. S, 2012)

From the above discussions about social media marketing from different sources, they all have a common meaning that social media marketing involves creation of contents which can be used for engagement with the customers through social media platforms.

In business world B2C and B2B business models have some similarities when it comes to market their products and services to the customers, a business to business (B2B), approach has a much longer sales cycle compare to a B2C approach. (Kelsey, Lyon, 2017, p. 4-8)

The term engagement in social media marketing refers to interacting with the customers through contents which can include images, videos, articles, contests, promotions by posting and having response from the customers leading to the conversation, relationship between the two parties. The engagement side of the social media has one main goal which is to get attention, the attention should impact the business and bring value to the business. (Kelsey, Lyon, 2017, p. 4-8)

2.3   Types of Social Media Platforms

With the rapidly increase of social media platforms users as well as development of great technologies and innovations the world as seen and it will continue to see the increase in number of social media platforms or networks in order to connect users to communicate and share different information online. This thesis briefly looks at few selected social media platforms which were mentioned on the scope of the thesis, the platforms are popular for business activities especially for marketing purposes and are commonly used otherwise there are more than hundreds social media networks to date and the number will keep on rising.

Facebook

Founded in February 4,2004 by Mark Zuckerberg along fellow students Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes with a limited purpose of membership only to Harvard students and subsequently Yale, Stanford and Columbia students but since 2006 it has been open to public for anyone to join. Facebook is one of the world's most valuable companies and the largest social media network with over 2.45 billion monthly active users as of September 2019. (Facebook Wikipedia, 2019).

Facebook offers other products and services since it acquired other popular social media networks including Instagram, WhatsApp, Oculus and Grok style and also it has independently developed Facebook Messenger, Facebook Watch and Facebook Portal. (Facebook Wikipedia, 2019).

Facebook is a great social media channel for marketing purposes since it has more users around which it creates more possibilities for business to market their products and services. Businesses are able to see the results as well as interacting and engaging with their customers by getting real-time feedback, both bad and good. It is recommended that every business to have a Facebook business page for their marketing activities. (Coles 2014, p.30)

Facebook Messenger

Facebook Messenger was launched in August 2011; this instant messaging service can do more than just send texts even though its own by Facebook, the app and website are separate from Facebook in such a way that no need to have an account or to be in Facebook site to access the app although they are partially connected with Facebook account. (Lifewire, 2019).

Facebook Messenger is a texting app for both two individuals to group messaging but also with the possibilities of sending images and videos. Facebook messenger had 600 million users in April 2015, which the number grew to 900 million in June 2016 and 1.2 billion in April 2017 and the number of users keeps on growing this happens after it separated from the main Facebook app. From these figures its quite clear the app can benefit businesses for their marketing efforts. (Facebook Messenger Wikipedia, 2019).

YouTube

Founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim in February 14, 2005 as a video-sharing platform. YouTube now operates as one of Google's subsidiaries since Google bought the site in November 2006. (YouTube Wikipedia, 2019).

YouTube site allows users to view, share, upload, search, comment on videos, subscribe to other users. The video service can be accessed on the PCs, or mobile devices and other media devices which can access the internet. Unregistered users are only limited to watch the videos on the site while registered users can upload unlimited number of videos as well as adding comments to videos. (YouTube Wikipedia, 2019).

YouTube is one of the major players when it comes to marketing a business. Social media marketing is moving towards video marketing, with over 30 million daily visitors, nearly 500 hours of video are uploaded every minute, with over 2400 channels that reach over 1 million subscribers, YouTube is a great tool for marketing purposes and at the moment is ranked at no. 2 for domestic and global web traffic this is according to the Alexa report. (Business News Daily, 2019)

WhatsApp

Launched in 2009 by Jan Koum and Brian Acton then Facebook acquired the App in 2014 yet it continues operating as a separate App with a main focus to build a reliable and more faster messaging service tool anywhere and anytime in the world. (About WhatsApp, 2019)

WhatsApp was created as an alternative to SMS which supports receiving and sending different forms of media including voice, videos, text, images, documents, links as well as making voice and video calls. Messages and calls are secured with end-to-end encryption which means no third part including WhatsApp can read or listen to them. The app is free. (About WhatsApp, 2019)

As of February 2018, WhatsApp has over 1.5 billion users worldwide which placed it as the world's most popular messaging application already by 2015. WhatsApp can be accessible on mobile devices and also desktop computers as long as the user is connected to the internet while using the app. (WhatsApp Wikipedia, 2019).

WhatsApp released a standalone business app which targeted small business owners namely WhatsApp Business. This app allows companies to communicate with their customers who use the standard WhatsApp client this way facilitates and increase business and customer relationships through interaction with each other which is one of the social media marketing strategies. The main advantage of the WhatsApp for Business for small companies is free. (WhatsApp Wikipedia, 2019).

Large companies with a huge global customer base also can benefit from WhatsApp services through an enterprise solution, this solution can be able to offer customer services and e-commerce via WhatsApp chat by using chatbots or live agents. Big companies which can benefit from this solution includes banks, airlines and e-commerce retailers. (WhatsApp Wikipedia, 2019).

Instagram

Instagram was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and it was launched in October 2010. Initially it was created on iOS, in April 2012 a version of Android was released followed by a website interface in November 2012. Instagram released the apps for windows 10 mobile and windows 10 in April 2016 and October 2016 respectively. (Instagram Wikipedia, 2019)

Instagram allow users to upload images and videos which can be edited with filter options and organized by location information and tags this allow users to browse contents by tags and locations. Users can like photos, comment, share and follow other users to add their content to a feed. (Instagram Wikipedia, 2019)

There are over 1 billion active users and as of May 2019, as of 2015 over 40 billion photos had been uploaded in the service. Instagram has been very popular, and users love it due to the fact that it's very simple and easy to use, this makes it easy for businesses to engage with the users hence making it a powerful tool for marketing a business. (Coles, p. 134)

Snapchat

Snapchat was created by Evan Spiegel, Bobby Murphy and Reggie Brown and it was released in September 2011 and by November 2012, users had sent over one billion photos, making it powerful as other social media platforms. As of October 2019, Snapchat has 210 million daily active users. (Snapchat Wikipedia, 2019)

Snapchat represents a new mobile first direction for social media which users interact with virtual stickers and augmented reality objects. Main principal features of snapchat is that pictures, videos and messages are usually available for a short while before they are not accessible to the recipients.

Snapchat app is more than selfie and entertainment app for millennials. Businesses especial B2B business models, have discovered ways to reach their audiences and are using snapchat in their marketing mix for their marketing efforts. (Coles, p.154)

Twitter

Founded in March 12, 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone and Evan Williams as a microblogging and social networking service provider for users to be able to post and interact via messages called tweets. Registered users can tweet up to 280 characters as well as liking and retweeting tweets while unregistered users can only read them. Users are able to access Twitter through Short Message Service (SMS), mobile device app and Twitter website interface. (Twitter Wikipedia, 2019).

By year 2012, more than 100 million users posted 340 million tweets a day, as of February 2019, Twitter had more than 321 million active monthly users and the number will keep on growing. (Twitter Wikipedia, 2019).

Twitter is a great and powerful social media network for marketers to market goods and services. Starting a twitter account is easy but growing the account is not that easy because it takes more efforts than just posting, liking and retweet tweets. (Sprout Social, 2019).

Engaging with the target audience and interacting with them is the way to grow a twitter presence. Most of the activities in twitter have to do with engagement and interactions, these activities include networking, sharing content, interacting with consumers, engaging for promotional activities and building brand awareness. (Sprout Social, 2019).

Pinterest

Pinterest was founded on December 2009 by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra and Evan Sharp. As of August 2019, Pinterest has 300 million monthly active users and is available in more than 27 languages allowing users to upload, sort, save and manage images and videos as well as other media contents which are known as pins through a collection known as pinboards. (Pinterest Wikipedia, 2019).

Pinterest has rapidly grown over the years which led to businesses especially B2C businesses have interest to have their presence on the site, Pinterest is available as social media website as well as a mobile device application where businesses can create pages with a purpose of promoting their businesses online. (Pinterest Wikipedia, 2019).

Pinterest is a free website which require a user to register to be able to upload, sort and save images, videos or other forms of media content which are known as "pins" through collections which are known as pinboards. (Pinterest Wikipedia, 2019).

Pinterest also known as Pinning is a fun and amazing social media tool for businesses especially in industries of fashion and food, by posting great images and other media contents makes it possible and easier for a business to promote itself. (Coles, p.142)

TikTok

Tik Tok app was launched in 2017 by Chinese Develop ByteDance, primarily for markets outside of China, ByteDance was founded by Zhang Yiming. Tik Tok is an iOS and Android social media video app which is used for creating and sharing short lip-sync videos of 3 to 15 seconds, talent videos and comedy. As of 2018 the app gained popularity globally, available in over 150 markets and in 75 different languages. (Tik Tok Wikipedia, 2019)

Tik Tok can be used to introduce a product or a business to a big audience because according to Influencer Marketing Hub, Tik Tok has over 500 million users globally and it was the most downloaded app for Apple during the full first half 2018. The best way to know if this tool is great for a business is by studying the platform and know what it is about. (Entrepreneur, 2019)

One important tip to know is that, Tik Tok is all about fun and creativity, a business should create a fun video content of course should be in line with the business, one of the advantages of Tik Tok is that videos do not have to be very well polished. Other way to market a business using Tik Tok is by launching hash tag challenge, by encouraging users to create or to recreate content and add the hashtag. (Entrepreneur, 2019)

The figure below illustrates the commonly used social media platforms for marketing purposes.
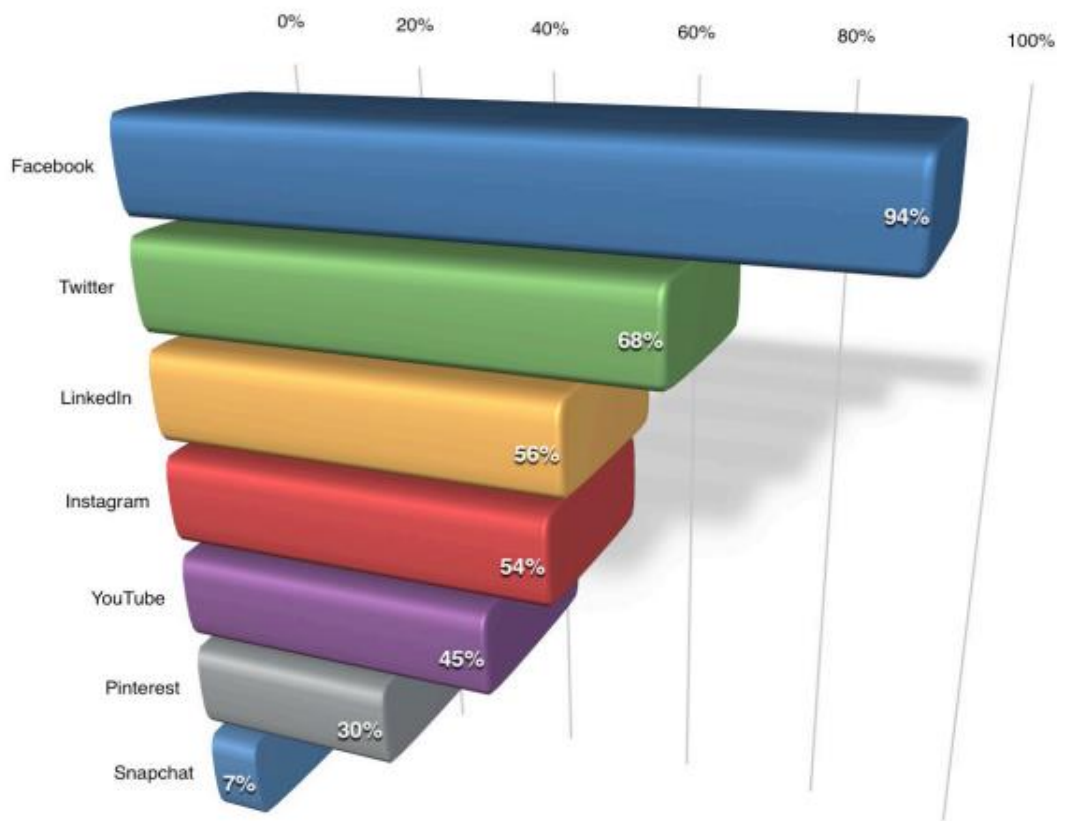

Figure 4. Commonly used social media platforms for marketing (Source: Social Media Examiner Report)

The above figure is based on the report by social media examiner's social media marketing industry report it shows clearly that Facebook is the most commonly and important social media platform which is used by the most marketers followed by Twitter by 68% and LinkedIn by 56%. Since this report is from 2017, Instagram at 54% and YouTube at 45% have been going up due to the fact that they both can share images and videos which are driving audiences. (Marketing 2017).

The figure below shows the commonly used social media networks for B2B business model comparing to B2C business model.
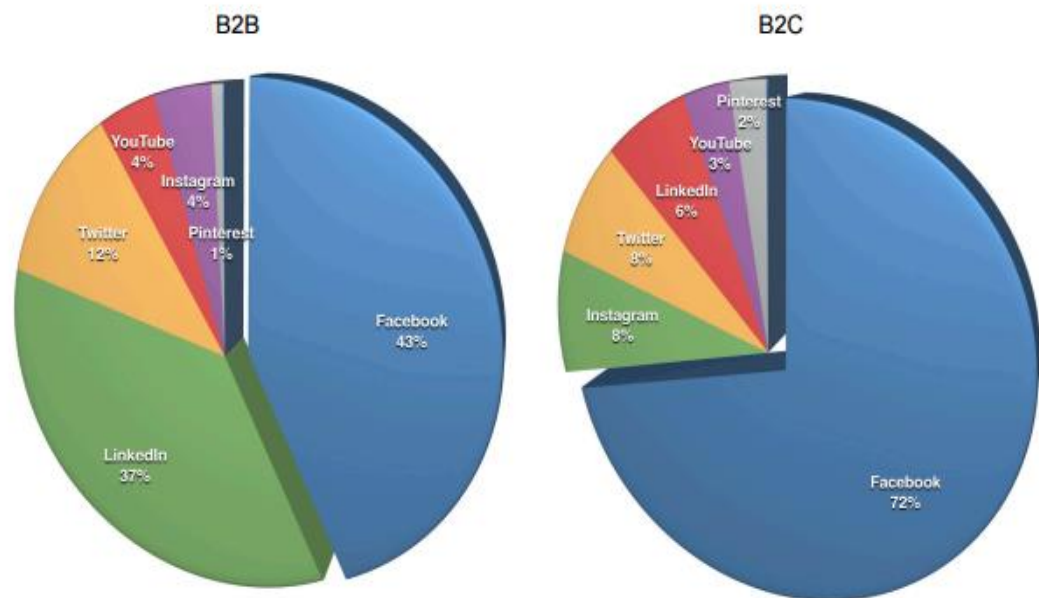
Figure 5. B2B vs B2C commonly used social media platforms for marketing (Source: Social Media Examiner Report)

The figure above clearly shows that B2C business model marketers use Facebook more than other social media platforms for their marketing activities with 72% comparing to B2B business models which use Facebook only by 43%.

B2B business model marketers use LinkedIn with 37% for marketing purposes comparing to only 6% uses LinkedIn for B2C business model instead marketers use Instagram more for B2C businesses with 8% while B2B uses Instagram only by 4%.

2.4   Benefits of Social Media Marketing

The use of social media for businesses to market their products and goods have brought tremendous benefits to many businesses using them. This section will look at the benefits of social media marketing to a business.

Based on the article about social media industry report by social media examiner, the figure below illustrates the benefits of social media marketing by percentages:
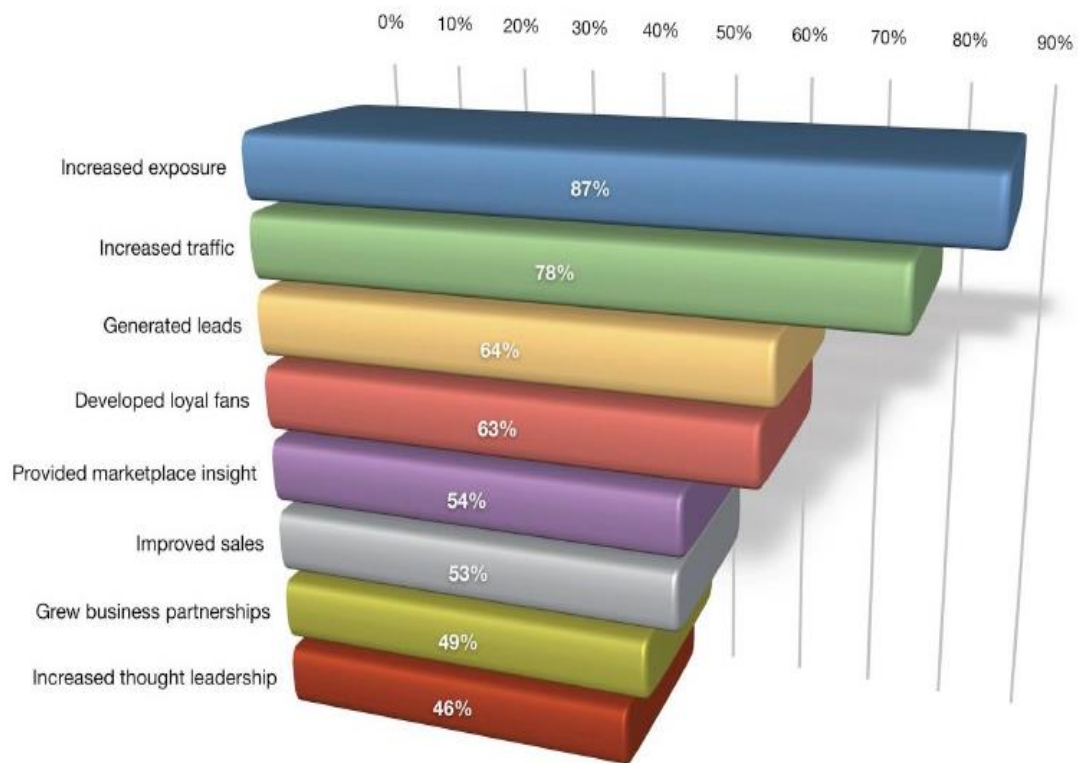
Figure 6. Social Media Industry Report (Source: Social Media Examiner Report)

According to the above figure by social media examiner report of 2018, it clearly shows that 87% of marketers agreed that social media helped the businesses to grow their exposure, while 78% increased their traffic, 64% helped to generate leads for their business as well as 53% of their sales improved through social media marketing activities and efforts. (Stelzner. A, 2018).

2.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media to a business

The introduction and usage of social media networks to a business especially for their marketing efforts has lots of advantages to a business since these networks have a capability of sharing information which can be used for marketing purposes. Most businesses large or small have been using social media networks to market their products and services with great success stories however there are also disadvantages of using these platforms which a business should not overlook them.

According to the article on the website business blogs, below is a section which discusses the advantages and disadvantages of social media to a business, especially when it comes to market a business through social media networks.

2.5.1 Advantages of social Media to a business

Cost Effective, social media marketing is one of the effective and cheaper way a business can use to market their products and services. If a business uses the right strategies and networks the Return on Investment will be high comparing to the cost of advertising by using traditional marketing. (Business blogs, 2018)

Increasing Customer Awareness, social media makes it easy for businesses to learn and understand their customers and building interactions. This helps businesses to know their customers interests, needs and opinions which will help a business to improve especially in their negative feedback areas. (Business blogs, 2018)

Brand Awareness, with the everyday rapidly growing number of users in the social media platforms, businesses which utilizes the social media platforms for the marketing purposes can be easily visible through majority of users, this will easily increase their brand awareness by many people knowing their product or service. (Business blogs, 2018)

Increasing traffic, social media marketing tends to increase traffic which makes it easy for people who have no idea about the product or service to easily find it when they search

online for other products or services, this will increase online leads and sales. (Business blogs, 2018)

Easy to Measure, by using social media for marketing with paid advertising it's easy to track the sales and leads which will be generated by the invested money for paid advertisements. (Business blogs, 2018)

2.5.2 Disadvantages of social Media to a business

Time consumption, social media marketing efforts can be time consuming in order to have a great marketing content, funds and time have to be allocated for marketing purposes. The resources in this case time and money and the right skills and strategies have to be available so to be able to frequently publish great content for marketing purposes.

Skills and Strategies, Businesses mainly B2C business models have to concentrate on doing their main business, they will need to outsource or employ the right and skilful personnel who can be doing and update their social media networks for marketing purposes, the right and skilful personnel will create and update great marketing contents but they cost money and time. (Business blogs, 2018)

Competitors, Social media marketing will expose a business to the competitors, who will be able to study a business marketing strategies and techniques. This puts a business at risk as one business study and research other business will be doing the same also.

Keeping up with new trends, the rapid changing and development of new technology, inventions results to changes of social media networks as well as new social media platforms being invented. Businesses have to be able to be fast and apply the new social trends for their marketing efforts so as not be left behind by their competitors.

Slow returns, when a business invests in social media networks, they should not expect to see their return on investments immediately, social media needs a long-term investment for a business to start see the value on their investment. (Business blogs, 2018)

2.6   Challenges of Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing brings great benefits and value to a business when applied well with great strategies and resources. With a number of social media active users growing daily, social media networks are the fastest channels to reach out to a huge audience when it comes for businesses to market their products and services. Great benefits always come with challenges which need to be overcome, this chapter will discuss those challenges and how to overcome them.

Social Media Marketing Strategy

In order to create successful marketing efforts, a clear and well-planned social media strategy must be in place which states the goals to be achieved. The plan should state the reasons why the business is in social media and what a business is looking to accomplish, how the business is going to achieve this can specify which social networks should a business use and how the business will measure the marketing efforts. (Buffer, 2019).

Creating good content

Social media marketers have to be able to create good and engaging contents which can draw customers attention. The social media marketers have to constantly update the content, monitor, create new contents, respond to feedbacks as well as reuse the content to other social media channels. (Buffer, 2019).

Time consuming

Social media marketing activities consume a lot of time, one has to have time to create and follow up the market efforts in order to see if the intended goals are met or then change the strategy to the one which works. This process consumes time and money, so the resources have to be available for the marketing efforts to be successful. (Buffer, 2019).

Connection with the audience

This is one of the biggest challenges because marketers have to be able to create the personal and individual relationship with the audience. This helps to build the business

brand and better relationships with the customers. It can be achieved by engaging and re-
sponding to customers comments and feedbacks in a genuine way as possible. (Buffer,
2019).

Declining organic reach

This is challenging since what works years ago it's not working in today's business world;
marketers have to constantly find ways to grow their organic reach. Looking for the posts
with high engagement but with low reach, use them to create targeted advertisements
with a deep connection with the users, putting money and pay for the content to boost it
so it can be seen by more potential customers, will always return value to a business.
(Buffer, 2019).

Choosing the right price social Ads

The rising costs of ads makes marketers to struggle to make decisions on how much to
spend on the ads so as to make sure the marketing efforts bring value. Every marketer
fight for visibility on the social feeds which is overcrowded and the only ways to sold this is
by making a better-quality organic content, monitoring the marketing efforts in real-time
and take right measures, using interactive contents and measuring social ad spend with
the investment made. (MartechAdvisor, 2019)

Trust and Transparency

Currently marketers rely on the social media networks to engage and connect with their
potential customers at the moment the situation is at risk. According to Edelman's 2018
Trust Barometer Report which reveal that most consumers around the world want brands
to pressure social media networks to do more on keeping safe personal data 71%, re-
strain the spread of fake news 70% and protecting them from offensive content 68%.
(Edelman, 2018).

The main challenge for marketers today is to have customer trust by having honest and
transparency strategies for collecting data and usage this can be possible only by obtain-
ing customer's consent, for paid social media marketing by delivering consistent and high-
quality content with each interaction as well as for sponsored content by using customer
advocacy to strengthen brand image to be able to attract over potential customers. (Mar-
techAdvisor, 2019)

2.7 Future of Social Media Networks

Based on the article on the website Thrive Global, the rapid advance of technologies and innovations has accelerated the social media inventions. social media has become one important part of our daily life in how we communicate with family, friends or for entertainment and other purposes. Social media has also affected businesses especially their marketing efforts. Social media networks have given opportunities for businesses to market their products and services, it has enabled business to reach a wide customer range by using different social media networks. (Thrive Global, 2019)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Augmented Reality (AR), these technologies will be incorporated in social media which will create a better performance and features, making social media more efficient. AI services will replace customer services while AR services will allow customers to try out the products and services by using graphical interfaces. (Thrive Global, 2019)

There will be more video and image contents rather than text contents. Better quality video contents will provide more visual information which will help customers to see the product or service, this will increase the trust of customers. (Thrive Global, 2019)

In the near future businesses will turn to social media for their business growth, social media will play a major role in marketing of products and services. With the rise of social media users, most business will rely to social media for their marketing efforts in order to reach out a wide customer range. (Thrive Global, 2019)

In the coming years social media will taking over other conventional styles of marketing and business as whole, with the fast-growing technology innovations, social media will be able to provide more opportunities which will be valuable for both the business and the customers. (Thrive Global, 2019)

3   Research Methodology

This is the empirical section of the thesis which discusses the research methodology of the thesis project. This section discusses how the valuable and reliable data was collected and analysed in order to yield the results which supports the objectives and goals of the thesis project.

The research methodology part is divided into three main sections namely research process, research results and summary of results. The research process is divided into two sub-sections which are research method and research questions, research results are divided into two sub-sections as well namely research results from the sources and research results from brainstorming.

Created block diagram below for the research methodology section in order to give a clear understanding on the steps and actions to be taken on this research part.

Figure 7: Research Methodology process

3.1 Research Process

This thesis research project was conducted between October 2019 and December 2019. The thesis area covers the general profession area of my study which are digital services and business ICT (Information and Communication Technology). The research topic proposal came from the interest of the subjects about digital marketing which includes social media, social media marketing, the technologies, the inventions and the trends behind it.

Research process refers to step by step of identifying, assessing, locating, analysing valuable and reliable data by using the chosen research method in order to give valuable results to the research questions which fulfil the objectives of the research project.
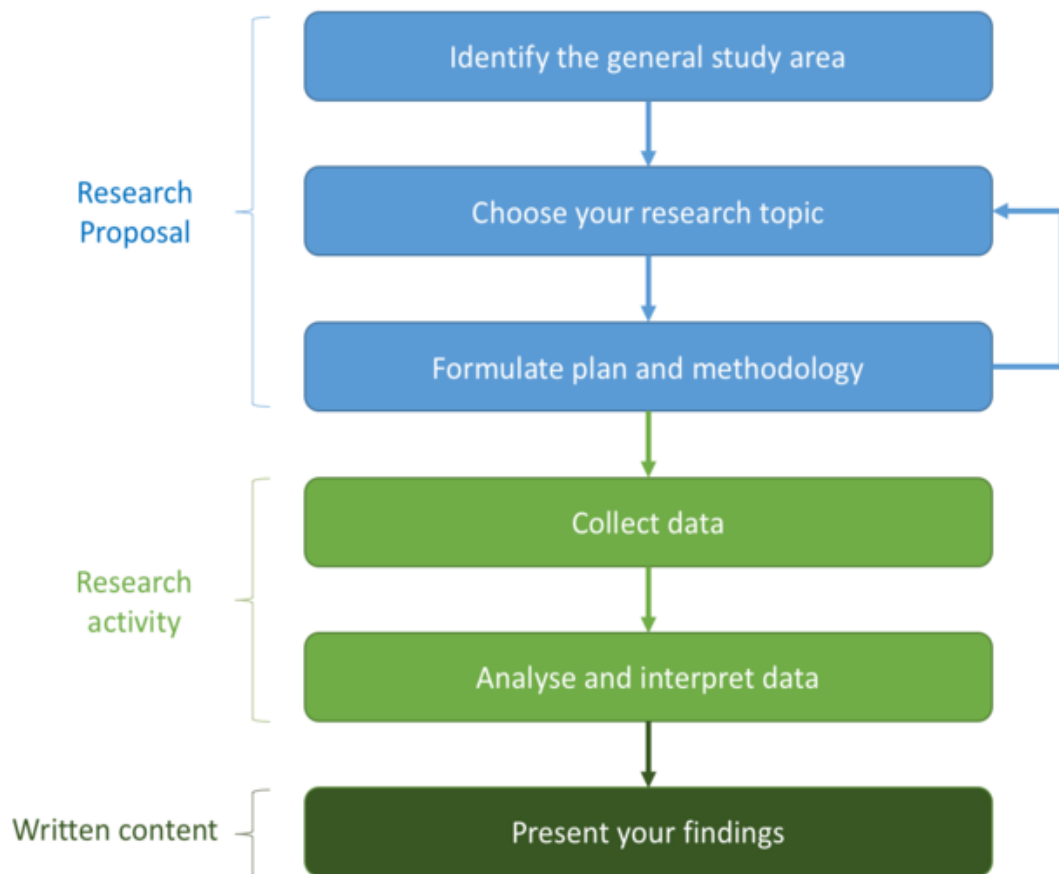

Figure 8: The six steps involved in a research process (Source: Adapted from Rummel 1963)

The above research process fits well the research project, the six steps helps to follow and understand the process from the research proposal to the presentation of the results.

3.1.1 Research Method

The research method which I decided to implement for this thesis project is analytical research method. The analytical research method was chosen for number of reasons, first reason was for learning and practice purposes. Previously in my studies here in Haaga-Helia, I have conducted both the Qualitative and Quantitative research methods in a number of courses, I am familiar with the both research methods practice and principles, from collecting the data, analysing the data and presenting the results. For this reason, choosing a different research approach for this project was a great idea in order to get familiar with other research methods in this case analytical research method.

Second reason as to why analytical research method was chosen for this thesis project is that, the method fits well this research topic especially if considering the objectives and goals for this research study, the research method fulfil the needs of the project's research questions by allowing the analyzation of valuable and reliable data from the existing sources and developing them with new ideas through critical thinking, this way makes the researcher to dig deeper in the subject matter in order to come up with new ideas or supporting the existing ideas. The researcher benefits from acquiring more knowledge about the subject matter from collecting a vast amount of valuable and data then analysing the data to yield results from the sources, then brainstorming and interpret data to produce new ideas. This will help the researcher to develop "critical thinking skills".

According to the article from a website called Reference, which discusses that analytical research "involves critical thinking to evaluate the facts and information relatively to the research topic being conducted with a goal of adding new ideas from the information being produced, this type of research method can be used by students, doctors and other people during their research studies in order to find valuable and reliable information". (What is Analytical Research, 2019).

Furthermore, the article from the website called Reference, discusses that analytical research "involves compiling together the data from articles, books and other valuable sources which after collected and evaluated, the results can be used to support the hypothesis or the new idea, by using critical thinking skills, which is a method of finding out claim or assumption and deciding if it is true or false, a researcher is able to form greater assumptions about the material". (What is Analytical Research, 2019).

3.1.2 Research Questions

The research questions were formed so as to meet the objectives of the research topic which is to find out the importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks. The questions focus on finding more valuable information about the subject matter by using analytical research method as mentioned in a previous section.

The table below show the research questions and their corresponding objectives of what the research questions are aiming to achieve in order to yield intended and successful research results.

Research Questions	Objectives
1. **Why should businesses consider investing in marketing their products and services through social media networks?**	To find out if businesses should invest, in social media networks to market their products and services or they should not consider investing at all.
2. **What useful skills and strategies are needed for businesses to consider when using social media networks for their marketing purposes?**	To look on the skills and strategies which are needed for a business to implement successful marketing efforts through social media networks.
3. **What issues to consider before deciding to market a business through social media networks?**	To dig deep on all important details before a business gets into marketing activities through social media networks.

Table 1. Research Questions and their Objectives.

3.2 Research Results

The research idea and main objective was to look and research on the importance of good skills and strategies for marketing a business through social media networks which were discussed in the later chapters in table 3 of research results for research question 2. The research questions are used to support the research implementation process by collecting data from different reliable sources and dig deeper to acquire valuable and reliable information which can be analysed, by using critical thinking skills to provide new ideas and information which can be useful to a reader hence a successful research-oriented thesis project.

This section will present the results of the research questions into three parts, the first subsection will present the research results from various reliable sources, the second subsection will present results from brainstorming and then both research results will be summarized.

The research results will be valuable to any individual, business or company who are looking to gain more information and knowledge about the importance of good skills and strategies when it comes to marketing a business through social media platforms also the research paper provides other valuable information relating to social media which a reader can find useful.

3.2.1 Research Results from Sources

This subsection is crucial to this research paper because it involves collecting the meaningful data from different reliable sources. The collected data play a key role in supporting and finding answers to the research questions which are main research objectives so as to provide valuable findings.

The success of this research-oriented project depends on the reliability of the collected information which will be analysed to provide valuable and useful information for each research question, results are presented in a table format.

Research Question 1:

- ❖ Why should businesses consider investing in marketing their products and services through social media networks?

The table below provide research results from various reliable sources as to why should businesses consider to invest in social media marketing as well as what if businesses do not invest in social media marketing.

Sources	Investing in Social Media Marketing (Benefits)	Not Investing in Social Media Marketing
1)A book: Social Media for Business by Linda Coles.2018 p. 1- 7.	1)Takes effort but there are tools which can be used to facilitate the marketing process. 2)Having a huge potential audience. 3)Having a visible presence on the web. 4)It's easy to engage with the customers and receiving real-time feedbacks. 5) Marketing process can work under any budget.	1)No time to marketing a business and building relationships with customers. 2)Less or no potential audience. 3)Business is barely visible on the web. 4) Less or no engagement with the customers. 5)No budget for social media marketing but less profit.
2)A book: Social Media Marketing-An hour A day by Dave Evans,2012 p. 37-48	1)Gather valuable information about how the product, service and brand are perceived in the marketplace.	1)Less or no information about how the product, service and brand are perceived in the marketplace. 2)Missing post purchase experiences with potential customers.

	2)Connects post purchase experiences with potential customers. 3)Giving the audience experience positively and then improving the relationship.	3) Less or no positive experience in order to improve relationship with the customers.
3) A book: **Social Media Marketing by Tracy L. Tuten & Michael R. Solomon,2018 p.17-23**	1)Social media platforms change how marketers do business. 2)Improve customer service and maintain customer relationships. 3)Developing a new product and service awareness. 4)Cementing brand loyalty, by engaging activities that ensures customers spends more time with the brand. 5)Can support sampling and loyalty by offering a free trial of a product. .	1)No Social media platforms presence, missing out marketing opportunities. 2)Less customer interactions. 3). Less or no awareness of a new product and service. 4)Difficulties in cementing brand loyalty. 5)Challenges in supporting sampling and loyalty.
4) Website: **https://www.lyfemarket-ing.com/blog/marketing-through-social-media/ by Keran Smith, 2019**	1)Customers are in social media, according to Statista by 2021, number of social media users is expected to reach 3.1 billion people. 2)Social media marketing increases inbound traffic, this is a good opportunity to bring new visitors to a site.	1)Missing out opportunity to reach online audience. 2)Less or no inbound traffic. 3)Difficulties in targeting the specific audiences in which the brand is targeting on. 4) No recommendations or consumers on social media.

Sources	Skills and Strategies
3)Social media networks help to strategically target specific audiences based on the channels the brand is active on. 4)Consumers are looking for recommendations on social media, social media has become the new outlet for word-of-mouth marketing.	

Table 2: Research Results for Research Question 1.

Research Question 2:

❖ What useful skills and strategies are needed for businesses to consider when using social media networks for their marketing purposes?

The table below provides the research results from different reliable sources, which looks on the useful skills and strategies which businesses need to consider when using social media marketing.

Sources	Skills and Strategies
1)A book: Social Media Marketing by Tracy L. Tuten & Michael R. Solomon,2018 p. 29-30 and p.105-110	Skills: 1)Passionate about social media, deep knowledge about social media networks. 2)Great writing skills, must be able to write great catch contents. 3)Great presentation skills especially about the marketing efforts and activities. 4)Creativity, able to create new ideas and solutions for marketing efforts. 5) Deep knowledge about digital marketing. 6)Learning quick new tools and trends, able to adapt them immediately. 7)Strategies, planning and deadlines driven of projects.

Strategies:

1)Identifying the goals to accomplish, by stating clear the goals for the marketing efforts, conduct situation and identify key op-portunities.

- ✓ Internal Environment
  -Finding out existing activities in the overall marketing plan which can be leveraged for social media marketing.
  -Available resources which can be directed for marketing purposes.
  -Finding out the business culture if it's supportive of transparency of social media.

- ✓ External Environment
  -Finding out about the targeted customers, if they are ac-tive users of social media.
  -The key trends of social media networks.
  -Knowing what the competitors are doing with their mar-keting efforts, what social media networks are they using and how are they using them and take advantage of the information.

- ✓ Performing SWOT analysis in order to identify the key Strengths, Threats, Weaknesses and Opportunities.

2) Research and collect all needed information about the target-ing audience. Identify the segments the social media market-ing efforts is targeting, social media habits of the segments, psychographic and demographic of the segments.

3)Selecting social media zones and social media networks in which the marketing efforts should directed.

4)Creating an experience strategy around the selected zones, finding out what message and content to share, creating mar-keting efforts that support existing campaigns and promotions or extend the marketing efforts.

5)Establish an activation of the marketing plan, identify how to make the plan happen, the responsible people for implement-ing the plan, Scheduling of executing the plan as well as the resources needed to for accomplishing the plan.

6) Managing and measure the marketing efforts, this involves using the analytical tools to measure the marketing perfor-mance of the efforts in order to find out if the marketing efforts

	are working and bring value to a business or then change the marketing efforts.
2) A book: **Secrets of social media marketing by Paul Gillin 2009 p.21-35**	**Skills:** 1)Conversation skills, it's important to understand that markets are conversations. In the past, many businesses ignore their customers, feedbacks and responses are important for social media marketing. 2)Listening skills, when customers take it to the social media, they just want to be heard, listening and responding shows that the business hears the message even if it cannot act at the time. **Strategies:** 1)Identify the business goals and have the marketing plan in place. 2) Embracing niche markets, small is still beautiful, targeting the small but potential customers is a huge advantage for a business. 3)Establishing credibility, social media net can be used as set of tools to recommend products and services to others. 4)Consistent participation in social media and building it takes time, it is about building a community, this will not be happening overnight.

3) Websites: **https://sprout-** **social.com/insights/so-** **cial-media-skills/ 2019**	**Skills:** 1)Strong communication skills, social media is a communication platform being able to communicate either to the audience or a team is vital skill. 2)Writing skills, there are many skills which can help to get the message across, but written words always play a key role. Effective writers know how to create great content for different platforms and audience. 3)Creativity is one important skill, being able to create content that is different and exciting it takes creativity.to figure out ideas that are great and different. 4)Customer care is a very crucial skill which combines customer service with people skills. 5)Being able to make connections is an important skill, establishing and building digital relationships. 6)Ability to react to a new trend, opportunity or crisis is one of the key social media skills. 7) Analytical skills are vital for managing and measuring the social media performances. Being able to look at the data and identify trends, develop recommendations and make a pan for action.
https://sprout- **social.com/insights/so-** **cial-media-marketing-** **strategy/ 2019**	**Strategies:** 1)Setting goals for it needs to be achieved, the goals will affect everything from the budget to which social networks will be deal with. 2)Researching the audience, finding out about the target audience by using social media analytics tools. 3)Find out and dig deep about what the competitors are doing, before creating any content, this will inform what social media promotion strategy. 4)The social media marketing is centred around content, being able to create great content and identify which networks to publish based on the goals. 5) Making timeliness a top priority not on the customers expect speedier responses but also meaningful conversations.

	6) Identify and post contents at the best time to engage and interact with the customers. It's smart to learn best times to post on social media networks but also important to engage after posting.

Table 3: Research Results for Research Question 2.

Research Question 3:

❖ What issues to consider before deciding to market a business through social media networks?

The table below provide the research results from different reliable sources on issues to consider before using social media networks for marketing purposes.

Sources	Before using Social media Networks for marketing purposes
1) A book: **Secrets of social media marketing by Paul Gillin 2009 p.20-25**	1)Having a plan in place is very crucial, large number of companies launch social media campaigns without a strategic plan. Experimenting is better than no action, but it is better to have clear plan in place. 2)Starting with the business goals and not the tools, identify clearly the business goals is very important. 3)The best tools it does not mean they work for all type of businesses, identify the tools which work for your own business is vital. Tools are secondary,

	when marketers talk about applications of social media they typically start thinking of the tools, start with the business goal, not the tools.
2) A book: **Social media marketing by Alan Charlesworth 2015 p.18-19**	1)Identifying what customers expect from the organization, if customers expect the product, the service, the brand or the organization to be in active in social media then there must be an active social media presence. 2)Identifying if social media marketing efforts will be worth for the organization, is there direct return on investment, is social media marketing or SMM an essential aspect. 3)Identifying if the SMM is right for the organization, if the nature of the product, organization does not generate passion, then the culture of the organization disqualifies from SMM. Passion for business is a prerequisite for social media engagement. 4)Finding out if SMM fits with other organization's marketing efforts. No marketing efforts exist in the vacuum, to be effective SMM must be part of a larger marketing and integrated communications strategy.

Table 4: Research Results for Research Question 3.

3.2.2   Research Results from Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a very crucial subsection of this research-oriented thesis, brainstorming provides new ideas and perspectives but also it has other benefits, one of them is that it allows for creativity and deep understanding of the research but also to support the exiting ideas assumptions.

Research question 1 results from the used valuable sources on table 2 to provide data suggests that social media marketing allows businesses to market their products and services effectively by reaching the targeted audience easy and fast by using different social media platforms and tools, since most of the customers are in social media, this way increase the brand awareness, increase customer interaction and also the traffic. Using critical thinking skills, the results supports that the presence of business in social media marketing has benefit and most businesses should consider to invest in social media marketing.

Research question 2 results from the used valuable sources on the table 3 suggested that Social media marketers should develop and improve communication ways, most customers prefer the visual contents, better quality videos which can be distributed across all the social media platforms will be more useful with good written contents.

Furthermore, social media marketing has to provide more engagement and interaction possibilities between the business and the customers. Easy and fast way of communication will bring value to the business as well as customer satisfaction. By using critical thinking skills, the results suggest from the used valuable data suggest that strong communication and written skills are important when it comes to marketing a business through social media networks.

Research question 3 results from the used valuable sources on the table 4 suggested that businesses should focus on their business goals and make sure they have a plan in place, instead of just rushing to use and invest in social media networks. Businesses should do research before consider using the social media networks and find out if SMM supports their marketing efforts.

3.3 Summary of Results

This section summarizes the results from both research results from sources and research results from brainstorming. The summarization puts together the important findings of the research.

One of the crucial finding was that a business goal should be clear and known before conducting any social media marketing process, creating a clear social media marketing plan will lead to a successful social media marketing effort.

Communication and writing skills are vital components when it comes to social media marketing. Social media marketing involves engagement and interaction, being able to communicate with customers is a key to social media marketing efforts.

Creativity and ability to learn new trends quickly, applying new trends and techniques in marketing efforts, stay ahead of the competitors this will bring about successful marketing efforts.

Managing and measure the marketing efforts by using social media analytical tools, it's important to know and keep track of the marketing activities. This will help to identify what works and what areas do not work so changes or corrections can be done immediately.

4 Discussion

This chapter of the thesis discusses the thesis study results, it is divided into four sections which are conclusion, development ideas, suggestion for further research and thesis evaluation and own learning. Conclusion section will conclude the thesis based on the study results; development ideas section will provide recommendations of ideas. Suggestion for further research provides different methods which can be used to conduct the study in order to achieve the objects with equally or better results. Thesis evaluation and own learning provides the thesis with personal evaluation of the thesis project and own implementation experiences.

According to the research results from sources and brainstorming the thesis provides a link between the results and the theoretical framework which was important in supporting the research implementation process of this thesis. The benefits of social media marketing and the advantages of social media to a business which were discussed in theoretical framework part form a close link with the research question 1 results from different valuable sources, which suggested that social media marketing increase the exposure of the business, increase the traffic, increase brand awareness and customer awareness.

4.1   Conclusion

The research project has been successful, and the intended objectives have been met. The research study provides valuable and reliable information about the importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks. The information can be used for educational or business working life purposes.

The selected research method which was used to conduct the study, was very well executed and the research results provides answers to research questions which were set as part of objectives of the thesis study. The analytical research method digs deep into selected reliable sources in order to find answers to the research questions.

The introduction of social media networks has changed the way people live and communicate; business also have been affected in how they do their marketing efforts. Social media marketing has been able to reach a wide audience this has created more opportunities for businesses to market their products and services.

Social media networks provide great business benefits if the right skills, strategies and techniques are used, marketers have to have right skills and strategies to conduct market efforts, since social media changes daily with rapidly development of technologies and innovations, marketers have to constantly learn new trends and be able to apply them immediately.

The research study discusses communication and writing skills has being one of the important skills any marketer should have, social media is all about communicating, but the writing skill still play a major role in marketing efforts.

The research project has been useful in providing deep and own learning experience, the project has been challenging especially on the time management aspect but the researcher managed to successful finish the project and provide a clear and reliable thesis paper which a reader can find it as a useful source of information.

4.2 Development Ideas

Despite the benefits of social media networks when it comes to marketing a business, there are also challenges which need to be developed further in order to create a better social media marketing experience, one area which can be developed further is the area of security and privacy. This area can be looked at deeper, because at the end the trustworthy from customers is of big concern in order for social media marketing efforts to be successful.

Development of analytical tools which can be able to give tangible results especially when to measure the performances of marketing efforts. Most business needs to see more proof on the ROI to be able to locate enough resources for marketing activities otherwise businesses especially small ones are reluctant to pay so much for social media marketing activities because they are not sure of how much value does social media marketing brings.

4.3 Suggestions for Future Research

This section of the thesis report discusses the suggestions for further research on the subject matter which is very crucial to include in the report so as to provide the subject with further research, and more findings. The initial intended objectives of the thesis have been successful met. The subject of social media marketing and social media in general is very broad, there are great opportunities for further researches on the subject matter.

The research can be conducted by using other research methods, qualitative research method will surely provide more insights on the study through interview with the market experts who are using social media networks and tools for marketing activities, Results of the interviews will provide valuable information which will benefit the research study.

The research also can be conducted by using case studies and quantitative research methods. This will provide more information which will be useful to the research findings and the results can benefit the intended individuals either for educational or business purposes.

4.4   Thesis Evaluation and Own Learning

This section of the thesis paper discusses the thesis evaluation as well as my own learning experiences during the implementation process of this research project. Thesis evaluation includes the topic selection, planning and scheduling of the thesis implementation process, setting goals of the thesis research, Information delivering and use of information sources, research methods used for data collection and analyzation of the data, presenting the results, discussion and conclusions, thesis report structure and flow, correct usage of the language and general presentation as well as managing the thesis implementation process.

The topic selection was a great idea, since it is based on the current and the future of the business life needs especially when it comes to marketing through social media networks. The topic is very clear, and the goals of the thesis have been very well defined and elaborated. The scope and out of scope of the thesis provides clear boundaries of the thesis project. The structure of the thesis is very well formed and followed the Haaga-Helia thesis report template according to the thesis writing regulations.

The Information of the thesis research has been very well delivered, the information has been retrieved from plenty of valuable and reliable sources, Information retrieval is based on extensive literature and studies and it is systematic, critical and relevant to a reader. The research method which was used is well justified and relevant to the topic objectives. The method of data collection and analysing the data was very successful and great results were achieved and presented.

The results of the research have been very clearly presented and answer the research questions with reliable and valuable information, the result can be used and applied in real business life when it comes to marketing through social media networks. The discussions

and conclusion of the thesis are deep and are clearly connected to the idea and purpose of the thesis.

The thesis report structure is very logical and clear, language is clear formal English, which is simple, readable and grammatically correct to make a reader follow and understand the thesis report. Thesis Layout and structure follows the guidelines, great usage of figures, tables are flawless and informative. References have been marked and included in the text and the list of references follow the guidelines of thesis report writing.

The thesis process has been challenging but the intended goals have been met. Time management had been challenging during the implementation process, extra resources had to be located in this case resources were time and references, in order to successfully achieve the thesis research goals.

The topic was selected with the main goal of researching and finding out, the importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks, this objective was successfully achieved. The thesis implementation process has provided me with more knowledge and skills about social media marketing and social media in general through the study and research which I carried on this thesis.

Before the thesis implementation process I had knowledge about the subject through my school courses and practices especially digital marketing and social media marketing courses, but during the implementation process of this research thesis with the use of valuable and reliable sources with deep study on the subject, the process increased my knowledge and skills which I can be able to apply in real working life, either by sharing the knowledge or by solving businesses social media marketing problems and digital marketing activities in general.

The thesis information and results will benefit any individual or company or organization looking to find information about the importance of good skills and strategies in marketing a business through social media networks, overall the thesis research has been successful and a good learning experience.

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