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Instagram Reels as an Effective Marketing Tool

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Instagram Reels as an effective marketing tool for brands. Instagram Reels is a feature for creating and watching short videos that was released in 2020.

Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. The data for the quantitative study were obtained through a survey that was published on the Prolific platform, whose users are from 38 countries. Qualitative research was conducted in the form of interviews and data obtained from the Finnish brand Smuuti Skin, which uses Instagram Reels for its marketing.

Interview and survey data show that short videos are very popular currently. Moreover, it is more interesting for users to watch content that is entertaining in nature. The results of the survey showed that in order to attract the attention of users or customers, brands need to do this within 1-4 seconds. This was confirmed by a brand representative in an interview about the need to attract the attention of customers from the first few seconds.

However, the author recommends that before starting marketing efforts and creating content on any platform, brands need to know their audience and their preferences well.

Keywords:	Instagram Reels, Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Instagram, Short videos.

Contents

Glossary

AIDA   Awareness. Interest. Desire. Action.

AIDAR   Awareness. Interest. Desire. Action. Retention.

CTA   Call To Action.

SMM   Social Media Marketing.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Modern businesses employ a diverse array of contemporary marketing and advertising strategies to engage potential customers, taking advantage of the increasing popularity and importance of technology in our time.

In the 20th century, technology started to advance quickly, and social media development followed. Scientists and engineers started building networks between the first supercomputers in the 1940s, which subsequently resulted in the development of the World Wide Web and the Internet (Lile 2023).

Nowadays, for billions of people worldwide, social media, the Internet, mobile phones, and other digital communications technologies have ingrained themselves into daily life. According to DataReportal, there were 5.44 billion users worldwide, or equivalent to 68% of the global populace, using mobile phones in 2023 (Kemp 2023). Moreover, statistics from January 2023 further reveal that 5.16 billion people, or 64.4 percent of the global population, actively used the Internet, and out of these, 4.76 billion individuals, or 59.4 percent of the global population, embraced social media (Petrosyan 2023). A total of 4.65 billion active social media users and 4.95 billion active Internet users worldwide in 2022 (Kemp 2022). As Ceci L (2023) puts it "as mobile technology becomes more accessible and affordable than ever, it is predicted that cell ownership and Internet usage will continue to rise".

Marketing has always striven to connect with the consumer at their most receptive moment. As consumers spend increasing amounts of time online, it is only natural that businesses would choose to sell, interact, and engage consumers online. Adam Barone (2023) writes that "despite the fact that radio, newspapers, pamphlets, and television advertisements remain available, the Internet has changed how businesses interact with their customers". The rapid evolution of the Internet and technology has introduced new systems and

applications, giving birth to fresh social media platforms and channels. This has made it possible for brands to swiftly create and share material with customers, such as photographs, videos, texts, and social media ads.

The advent of social media has empowered brands with the means to connect with their clientele, reach broader audiences, and stay abreast of market trends (Butler 2022). Currently, modern businesses use a range of marketing and advertising strategies to connect with potential customers as social networks develop and become more significant. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Snapchat are a few well-known examples of social media platforms. According to statistical reports as of April 2023, Facebook had 2,963 billion global monthly active users, while Instagram ranks fourth after YouTube and WhatsApp with 2 billion monthly active users (DataReportal 2023). As mentioned above, as social networks evolve, brands are using all possible ways to connect with potential customers and attract their attention. For instance, in 2020, TikTok claimed the top spot as the most downloaded app, which increased the appeal of short videos (Geyser 2023). Instagram has also updated its video features by creating Instagram Reels, a feature for shooting and watching short videos. Users may combine 15-second videos with personalised music, visual effects, text and scene-stitching technologies using Reels' creative toolset, as well as a dedicated way for discovering and sharing these videos (Bruner 2020).

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The author chose Instagram as the preferred social network for analysis in this thesis since it is one of the popular social networks that has adapted to people's preferences and created a feature called Instagram Reels.

The objective of this thesis is to study and determine the effectiveness of Instagram Reels as a marketing tool for brands.

The main key objectives of this work are to investigate and analyse relevant data, as well as scrutinise the findings derived from surveys and conducted interviews.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Marketing

To explain the effectiveness of Instagram Reels as a marketing tool, it is imperative to delve into marketing theory. Marketing theory provides those strategies and principles for businesses for promoting their services or products. Reels, as a feature of the Instagram platform, offer a dynamic and visually appealing way to deliver a brand message. Furthermore, short videos help businesses reach a wider audience and customers (Sambuno 2023).

Many individuals tend to associate marketing exclusively with selling and advertising (Kotler & Armstrong 2017). However, the scope of marketing extends far beyond these aspects, encompassing a diverse range of strategies and practises that drive business success.

According to the American Marketing Association, marketing can be defined as "the process of developing, communicating, delivering, and exchanging products and services that are valuable to partners, clients, customers, and people in general" (Lamb, Hair, and McDaniel 2011). Marketing comprises procedures that are concerned with providing clients with value and advantages rather than only promoting the sale of products, services, or concepts (Lamb et al. 2011).

The primary concept of marketing is to satisfy the consumer expectations. (Kotler & Armstrong 2017; Pride & Ferrell 2020). Moreover, to enhance comprehension of the processes involved in generating value for customers and reciprocating value in return, Kotler introduced a five-step model. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. A Basic Marketing Process Model (Kotler & Armstrong 2017:30)

Figure 1 illustrates a five-step marketing process used by marketers to provide satisfaction to clients while establishing long-term relationships with them. Finding out what customers want, and need is the initial step in the market research process. Consumer demands and preferences influence the market's demand, which drives the exchange of products and services between consumers and enterprises. The market, primarily market products, then meets demand. The next step is to develop a customer-focused marketing strategy. At this stage, businesses must decide which customers and markets to serve. After choosing a target consumer segment, marketers must position and differentiate their products. Kotler and Armstrong (2017) state that: "positioning and differentiation help a product or service stand out from rival offerings by emphasising the benefits it offers consumers, thereby meeting their demands". The next step is to develop a marketing programme. The 4Ps of marketing (or marketing mix) — product, promotion, pricing, and place — were traditionally associated with the marketing programme due to their representation of controllable facets of marketing strategy. However, contemporary perspectives have evolved, recognising that this framework is no longer strictly confined to these elements (Twin 2023). Through the many components of the marketing mix, the brand can offer value to its target clients. Once marketers have developed a marketing programme, they should focus on building customer relationships. If the first four phases are correctly completed, businesses can benefit from customers in the last step in the form of sales, long-term customer equity, and earnings.

2.1.1 Marketing Strategy and Marketing Mix

Through the implementation of the marketing strategy, the marketing programme develops relationships with customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2017). The main procedures involved in managing a customer-focused advertising approach and the marketing mix are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Marketing Strategies and Marketing Mix (Kotler & Armstrong 2017:74)

The focal point is the consumer. Building lucrative customer connections and providing customers with value are the objectives. Next comes the marketing strategy of the business, the goal of which is to create consumer value and build beneficial partner relationships. Two crucial questions are involved in marketing strategy: Which clients will we serve (targeting and segmentation)? What differentiation and positioning strategies will we use to create value for customers? The business first defines the overall market, breaks it into more manageable groups, chooses the most promising segments, and then focuses on providing for and satisfying the needs of the customers in these segments. The corporation creates an integrated marketing mix based on the 4Ps as directed by its marketing strategy. The business uses analysis of marketing, implementation, planning, and control to establish the most effective marketing

strategy. As a result of these activities, the organisation keeps track of and responds to the forces and participants in the marketing environment.

Due to intense competition, small differences might make a big difference in the market. As Camelia Mihart (2012) writes: "the brand must research and comprehend customer wants, consumer buying behaviour (both emotionally and physically), and have a background of their target customers (e.g. attitude, interests, behaviours) to survive and flourish". As mentioned on page 3, the marketing objective is to meet the demands of its customers. To achieve this goal, brands must adeptly harmonise their offerings with consumer needs and engage in targeted communication with each specific market segment (Mihart 2012).

In general, all the aforementioned information indicates that consumer behaviour influences marketing methods, which in turn drive consumer behaviour. The symbiotic relationship between marketing and customer behaviour enables businesses to develop experiences and goods that truly match their target market. Instagram Reels is a useful tool in social media marketing, seamlessly integrating with promotional strategies. It enables businesses to connect and effectively communicate with consumers, utilising visually engaging content to align with their preferences and behaviours (Tharsikin n.d.).

2.2 Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour can be described as the acts that customers conduct when looking for acquiring, using, assessing, and discarding the goods they anticipate will meet their requirements (Schiffman, O'Cass, Paladino, Carlson 2014: 4). The study of consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals, families, or households decide how to allocate their available resources—time, money, and effort—to consumption-related goods. This covers what people acquire, where they purchase it, when they purchase it, why they purchase it, how frequently they purchase and use it, how they evaluate it after purchase

and use, how these evaluations affect subsequent purchases, and how they dispose of it. In Kotler's and Armstrong's (2017: 158) view, customers usually remain unaware of the specific factors influencing their purchasing decisions.

Consumer behaviour is influenced by a wide range of factors. These are categorised by Kotler and Armstrong (2017) as:

- Cultural (culture, social class system, and subculture).

- Social (family, small groups, status, and roles).

- Personal (personality, age, economic situation, stage of life, lifestyle, occupation, and self-concept).

- Psychological (beliefs, motivation, learning, perception, and attitudes).

2.2.1 Consumer Behaviour Process

In the realm of consumer behaviour as a process, a diverse array of perspectives and models have evolved over the years.

Figure 3 shows the five-step buyer decision process developed by John Dewey in 1910. This model is selected for studying the consumers' decision process due to its simplicity and versatility, effectively encompassing the complexities that arise when customers face novel and intricate purchasing scenarios. As Kotler and Keller put it: "the five stages are not always followed by consumers; some may be skipped or even reversed" (2012: 166). However, the model in Figure 3 serves as a useful frame of reference since it encompasses the entire spectrum of issues that emerge when a consumer makes a new purchase (Kotler & Keller 2012).
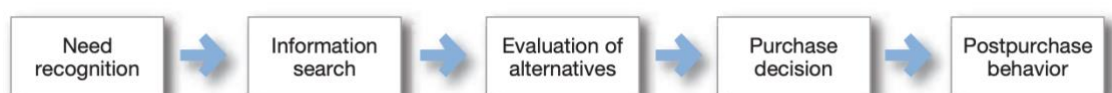
Figure 3. The Buyer Decision Process (Kotler & Armstrong 2017:175)

The first stage of the buying process is "need recognition", in which consumers identify a difference between their desired state and current situation and their because of internal impulses (like hunger) or external stimuli (like commercials) (Kotler & Armstrong 2014). After recognising a need, a consumer starts to "search" their memories to see if they have enough knowledge of the options at hand to make a choice. When internal knowledge is insufficient, an outside search is necessary to deepen the understanding. Personal sources, like friends and relatives; business sources, such as advertisements and salespeople, and public media outlets, like newspapers, magazines, and social media, are typically used in this external investigation. As Ioanăs and Stoica (2014) write: "Social media provides a conduit for peer-to-peer product information exchange, which in turn can influence the purchase decision". Customers can influence other shoppers on social media by posting reviews of the goods or services they have used. According to a PowerReviews survey of 6538 consumers across the United States, 99,9 percent of them say they read reviews at least sometimes when shopping online (Clark 2023). Once the data has been gathered, the consumer uses it to evaluate and compare the available product options before making a choice. This stage results in the development of beliefs, attitudes, and intentions, which then lead to the purchase stage. Purchase decisions, in turn, encompass the determination of what to buy, where to acquire it, and how to pay, culminating in the ultimate selection of which product to purchase. In the post-purchase phase, customers assess the product's performance considering their demands and determine whether they are satisfied or not.

Another model depicted in Figure 4 is characterised as a funnel. Initially, consumers start with a list of brands in mind, and then this list is subsequently shaped by marketing influences, gradually narrowing down until they ultimately settle on a single brand they intend to purchase (Court, Elzinga, Mulder, and Vetvik 2009).

At various stages of this decision-making process, marketing strategies are crucial in determining how consumers will choose certain products. To ensure that their brand is mentioned in the list of businesses that consumers have in mind early on, they need to increase brand visibility and awareness. This can be achieved through various means, including targeted advertising, relationships with people who have a significant following and influence in specific industries or crafting and sharing valuable, relevant, and consistent content. Gradually, as brand choices narrow, businesses can use data-driven approzaches to tailor their offerings to individual consumer preferences to differentiate themselves from competitors. This could include personalised email marketing, retargeting ads, or delivering dynamic and engaging content on platforms like Instagram with short-videos feature. By creating compelling and informative content, brands can influence consumer perceptions and preferences, potentially leading them towards making a purchase.
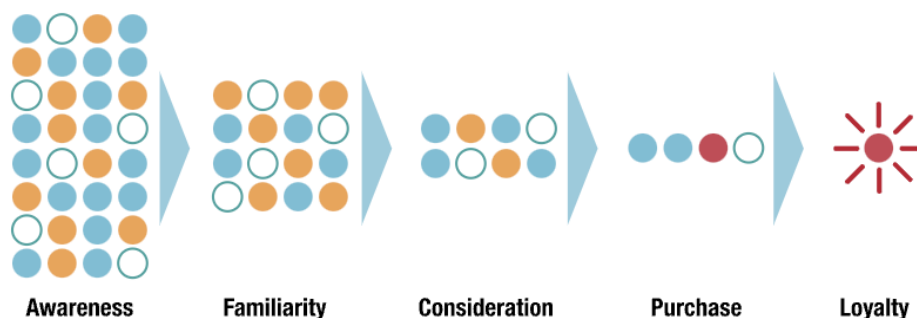
Figure 4. Traditional Funnel Model (Court et al. 2009)

It is Mulder's, Vetvik's, Court's, and Elzinga's (2009) contention that "the growth of digital platforms and product possibilities, as well as the emergence of a more focused, knowledgeable consumer, have resulted in several touch points and important buying considerations that the funnel model is unable to account for in the modern marketplace. According to their research, marketers need to implement a more methodical approach to satisfy customer requests and control word-of-mouth due to the move away from one-way communication— from marketers to customers —to two-way interaction. Two-way communication involves a dialogue that goes back and forth, as opposed to one-way

communication, in which information solely travels from marketers to customers. Customers engage in this interactive process by offering feedback, raising enquiries, sharing opinions, and conversing with marketers, fostering a dynamic exchange of information. Instagram Reels, in turn, allows brands to share engaging content that can be easily shared and discussed among consumers. Additionally, it provides a two-way communication channel where consumers can provide feedback, ask questions, and engage in conversations with the brand.

In addition, Court, Vetvik, Mulder and Elzinga (2009) state that the decision-making process is a more circular journey, with four key stages serving as potential fronts where marketers might succeed or fail. (See Figure 5).
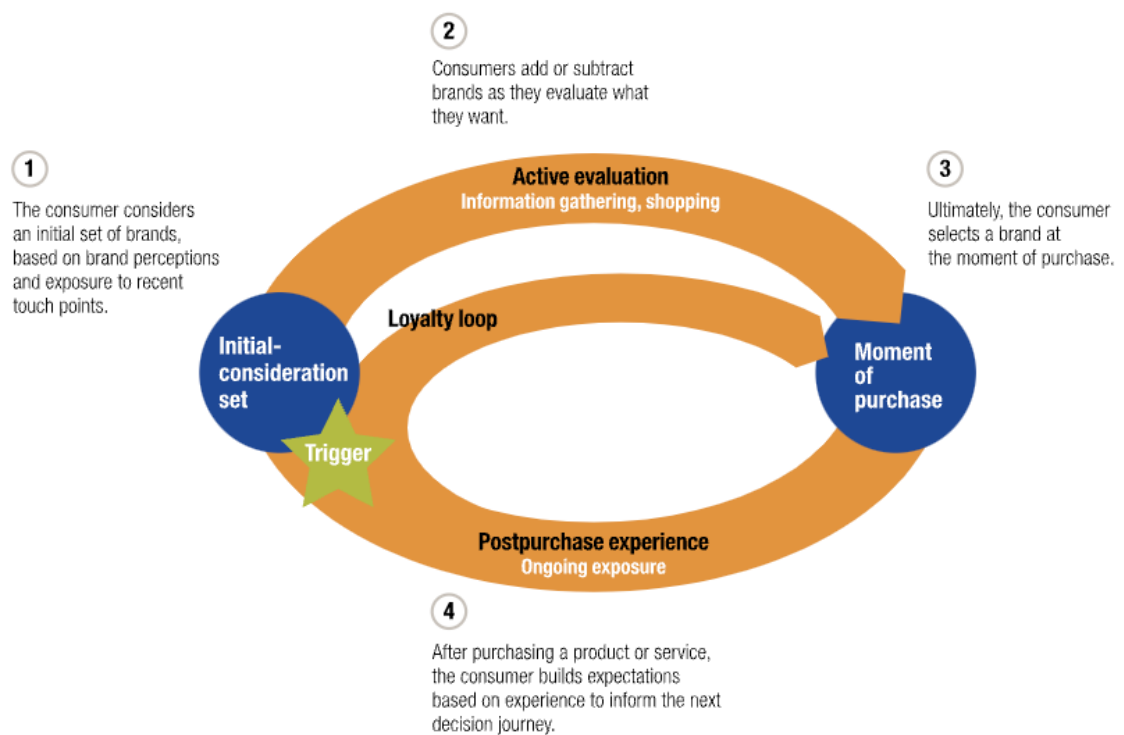

Figure 5. Circular Journey Model (Court et al. 2009)

However, despite the diversity of consumer behaviour, all models are useful for studying and understanding customers since they aim to shed light on the rationales behind which people, especially consumers, make purchasing decisions (Malik, Ghafor, Iqbal, and Au 2013).

In addition to the models previously mentioned, the AIDA model holds a significant place. Given the foregoing, it is noteworthy that the traditional funnel notion, which was noted earlier, has its conceptual foundations in the AIDA model, which is frequently referred to as the original funnel.

2.3 AIDA Model

In 1898, E. St. Elmo Lewis developed the AIDA model to evaluate the impact of advertising on customer behaviour. The complete form of the AIDA acronym is attention, interest, desire, and action.

AIDA has faced criticism for its simplicity, as it falls short in going after the first stages of action to support reinforcement or facilitate retention (McGoldrick & Fortenberry 2019). McGoldrick and Fortenberry (2019) claim that the suggestion to include "retention" to AIDA keep and closes a critical hole in the model. The AIDAR model is appears in Figure 6.
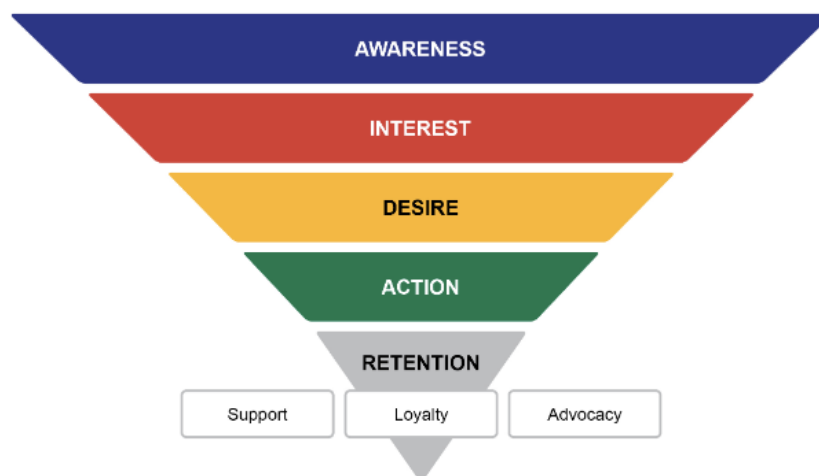

Figure 6. The AIDAR Model (Carrapichano, n.d.)

The AIDA hierarchy is extended to AIDAR with a focus on post-purchase reinforcement. This means recognising the continued interest in the journeys of consumers while also providing chances for feedback, follow-up, support, and loyalty-building.

Nevertheless, consumer marketers need to comprehend all the complexity and be sensitive to the fact that many choices are unconscious (Carrapichano n.d.). In his book Malcolm Gladwell (2007) defines "thin slicing", or the capacity to make quick conclusions based on a few characteristics of observed reality and shows how intuition is engaged in human decision-making. The several models put forth in chapter 2.2 are useful tools for comprehending this intricate process, but as Ana Carrapichano (n.d.) states: "these models can never fully account for why consumers choose the options that they do". Our environment, which comprises multiple factors (psychological, cultural, personal values, and so on) with changing degrees of significance across a consumer's lifespan, has an impact on this perceived reality (Carrapichano n.d.).

However, the model called as Aida is frequently used in a range of advertising venues, including digital ones like social media, websites, and email marketing, as well as more conventional ones like print, radio, and television (Idris & Rahman 2017). An example of advertising based on the AIDA model on the Instagram social network can be seen in Appendix 1.

As mentioned in paragraph 1.1, the number of people spent on social networks is continuously increasing. Numerous studies have demonstrated the viability and applicability of the AIDA model for developing marketing on social media business strategies (Idris & Rahman 2017).

The findings of a study by Shahizan, Zaleha, and Norshuhada (2015) demonstrate that the model can be used to develop marketing strategies for the use of social media. Similar to the previous argument, Lagrosen (2005) asserts that the AIDA model is applicable to social media usage, particularly for the "IDA" components. Research by Hoek and Gendall (2003) and Ashcroft and Hoey (2001), further showed that the AIDA model's use in computer-mediated tools has the potential to help commercial enterprises promote themselves more successfully.

Consequently, the model can be used by companies to affect customer behaviour and decision-making since it helps in focusing on the key elements that can have an impact on consumer behaviour online. The initial phase of AIDA works to increase consumer awareness of the brand. In his study, Adrian Durow (2014) claims that "viewers paid more attention to domain names, notable keywords, award-winning, numbers, and word classes" (Prathapan, Sahadevan & Zakkariya 2018). For the next step, it is crucial to establish the target audience, particular details, and original material for generating interest. In addition, case studies, forum discussions, and user-generated ratings can be turend to increase desire, which will increase understanding and ultimately lead to a purchasing choice (Bourne 2015). In Hemann's and Burbary's (2013) view, the number of visits, pages viewed, impressions, and typical duration visit time can be used as an example to measure awareness; re-shares, comments, as well as novel brand-related discussions may be used to measure interest; new followers on owned and third-party platforms, new email list subscribers, and repeat website visitors can be used to measure desire; sales value, sales, and positive user-generated comments and reviews serve as indicators of action.

The AIDA model essentially aids marketers in organising their tactics and content to successfully take customers from first awareness to taking a desired action online. However, users are free to interact with content in whatever sequence they desire and, as mentioned above, they might skip steps in the AIDA model. For instance, a person may move directly from attention to action without necessarily going through all the stages in between.

2.4 Digital and Social Media Marketing

Internet marketing, web marketing, digital marketing, and online marketing is the umbrella term for any technology and Internet-based marketing operations designed to promote goods, services, or brands via various digital platforms. This type of marketing uses search engines, social media, websites, mobile devices, and other channels that serve a similar purpose (Barone 2023).

The growth of digital marketing since the 1990s and 2000s has fundamentally changed the way that brands use technology for marketing (Desai 2019).

As mentioned in this article, the number of Internet, social media, and mobile phone users is large. In Philip Kotler's and Gary Armstrong's (2017:47) opinion, for marketers looking to engage clients, the consumer love affair with digital and mobile technology provides fertile ground, and therefore it comes as no surprise that the Internet and the quick development of digital and social media have taken over the marketing industry. Furthermore, as Artur Sawicki (2016:84) writes "this electronic channel's benefit is that it allows for global communication and enhances marketing to consumers on a personal level".

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein (2010) define social media as" a group of web-based programmes that create the conceptual and technical underpinnings of Web 2.0, which permits the production and dissemination of user-generated content". Web 2.0 is a term applied to describe the post-dotcom bubble World Wide Web, which places a strong emphasis on social networking, cloud computing and user-generated content (Hosch 2017; Jamil, Dunnan, Gul, Shehzad, Gillani, and Awan 2022). Appendix 2 presents a comparison between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0.

The term "social media marketing (SMM), "which is used in a number of industries, refers to the use of social media platforms, tools, and technology to develop, produce, communicate, and exchange products and services that are valuable to the stakeholders of a company (Tuten & Solomon 2017:18). As mentioned on page 1, the number of people using social media expanded between 2022 and 2023, and therefore Noveria and Karjo (2023) contend that "digital marketing employed on social media is more influential than ever thanks to the constantly growing social media user base".

Aydin, Uray, and Silahtaroglu (2021) write that "for a variety of purposes, including customer relationship management, research, advertising, sales

promotions and after-sales services, marketers have embraced social media marketing".

Users are drawn to social media for a variety of reasons, and it also presents opportunities for them. (See Appendix 3).

To engage with customers, marketers must swiftly adapt to the social networking environment (Lim & Yazdanifard 2014). For example, one of the social platforms, TikTok, was introduced in 2018 and quickly rose to become one of the popular social media platforms that provided video content (D'Souza 2023). This novelty provided competition for other social platforms. Instagram (a photo and video-sharing social networking service) has several features, the newest of which, Instagram Reels, was introduced in 2020 to provide users with a fresh, engaging experience and video content (Noveria & Karjo 2023).

2.5 Instagram

In 2010, Instagram was established (Bergstrom & Backman 2013). Based on DataReportal (2023) data, Figure 7 shows "The Most Popular Social Platforms Worldwide", where Instagram takes 4th place. As mentioned above, marketing goes where consumers gather. This means that Instagram's popularity among consumers has made it an attractive destination for businesses looking to interact with their audience and promote products or services.
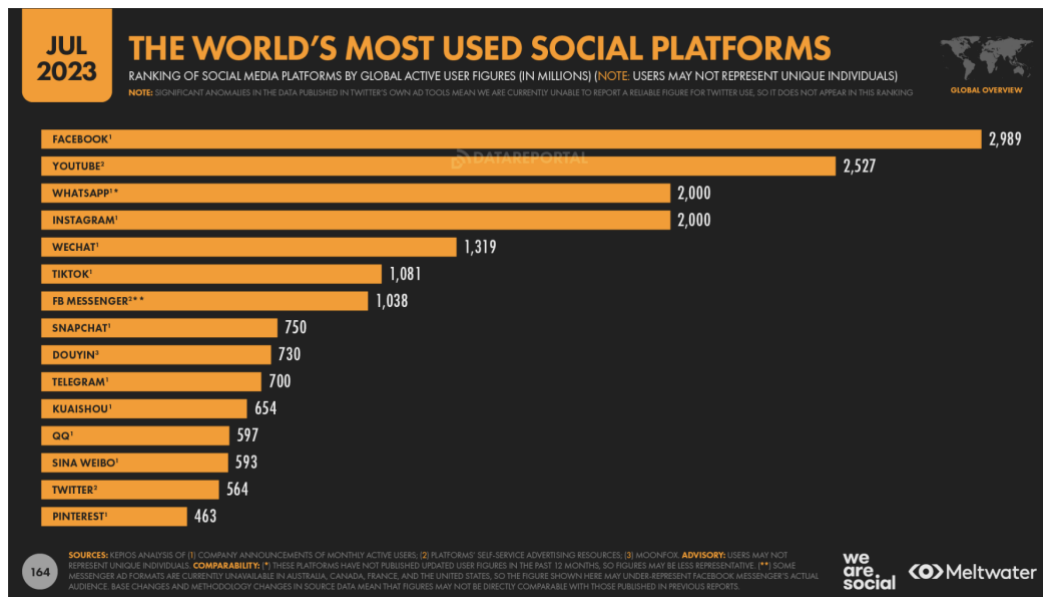
Figure 7. The Most Popular Social Platforms Worldwide (DataReportal, 2023)

Nearly 31 percent of all Instagram users around the world as of January 2023 were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 30.3 percent were between the ages of 25 and 34 (Statista 2023). Which in turn shows the interest of younger audience in this platform.

Furthermore, based on GWI data, Figure 8 illustrates a comparison of activities on leading social platforms. According to GWI, 62.2 percent of Instagram users say they use the platform to research purchases or watch brand material, compared to 54.6 percent of Facebook users and slightly over 40 percent of TikTok users (Kemp 2023). However, most users prefer Instagram for posting photos and videos (70.1 percent), as well as for looking for funny or entertaining content (62.9 percent). As Manthiou, Chiang, and Tang (2013) state: " even though people's motivations for using social media vary, they underline that the information that catches their attention is entertaining and aesthetically beautiful".

Each platform should be treated differently. It is important to consider people's motivations for using the platforms and take this into account when developing marketing content (Kemp 2023).

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES BY PLATFORM
PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVE USERS OF EACH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM AGED 16 TO 64 WHO SAY THEY USE THAT PLATFORM FOR EACH KIND OF ACTIVITY
NOTE: GWI HAVE REVISED THEIR METHODOLOGY. PLEASE READ THE IMPORTANT NOTES ON COMPARING DATA AT THE START OF THIS REPORT BEFORE COMPARING DATA ON THIS CHART WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM	LOOK FOR FUNNY OR ENTERTAINING CONTENT	FOLLOW OR RESEARCH BRANDS AND PRODUCTS	KEEP UP TO DATE WITH NEWS AND CURRENT EVENTS	MESSAGE FRIENDS AND FAMILY	POST OR SHARE PHOTOS OR VIDEOS
FACEBOOK[1]	54.8%	54.6%	58.9%	**70.8%**	63.6%
INSTAGRAM	62.9%	62.2%	51.2%	52.2%	**70.1%**
LINKEDIN	9.6%	24.1%	**27.4%**	11.4%	13.8%
PINTEREST	21.2%	**36.8%**	13.2%	5.9%	13.9%
REDDIT	**34.4%**	27.9%	30.9%	8.4%	13.8%
SNAPCHAT	34.5%	21.8%	20.9%	36.6%	**41.5%**
TIKTOK	**79.6%**	40.2%	35.5%	16.1%	36.7%
TWITTER	35.0%	36.3%	**61.2%**	19.8%	27.8%

SOURCE: GWI (Q1 2023). SEE GWI.COM FOR FULL DETAILS. NOTES: DOES NOT INCLUDE DATA FOR USERS IN CHINA. FIGURES REPRESENT THE PERCENTAGE OF INTERNET USERS AGED 16 TO 64 WHO SAY THAT THEY HAVE USED THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM DETAILED IN THE LEFTMOST COLUMN OF EACH ROW AT LEAST ONCE IN THE PAST MONTH, AND WHO ALSO SAY THAT THEY USE THAT PLATFORM FOR THE ACTIVITY DETAILED IN THE ROW AT THE TOP OF EACH COLUMN. TABLE VALUES IN BOLD ORANGE TEXT IDENTIFY THE TOP VALUE IN EACH ROW, AND DENOTE THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITY AMONGST USERS OF EACH PLATFORM. (1) FIGURES FOR FACEBOOK INCLUDE FACEBOOK MESSENGER. COMPARABILITY: REVISED SURVEY METHODOLOGY. VALUES MAY NOT BE DIRECTLY COMPARABLE WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS.
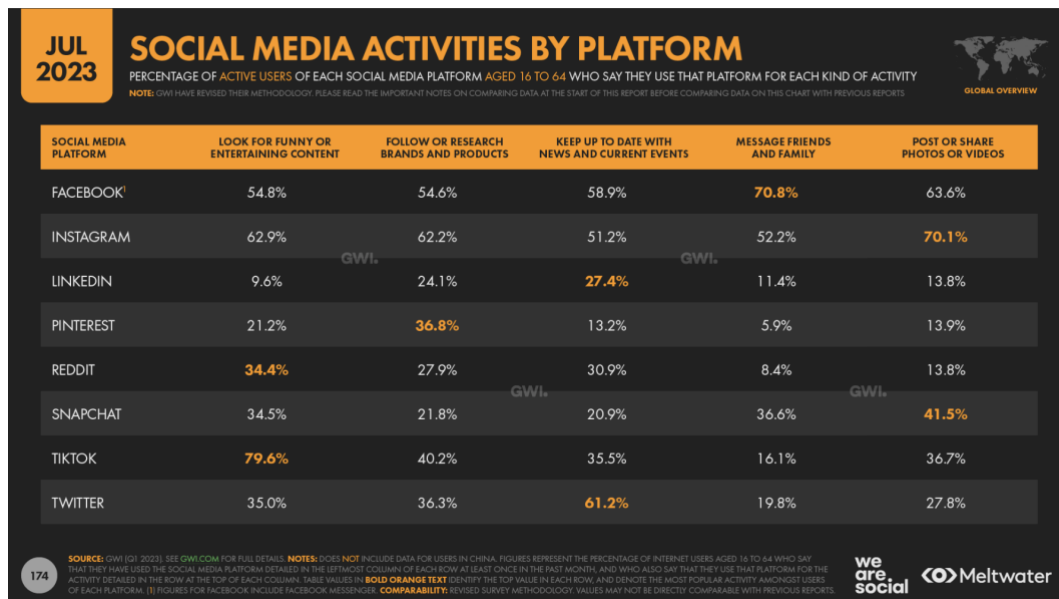
Figure 8. Platform-specific social media activities (Kemp 2023)

Instagram has a visual-based strategy, which is what distinguishes it from other social platforms (Hird 2013). Moreover, Instagram has made changes to implement algorithms on the platform. Prior to using algorithms, Instagram used to present posts to users in chronological order (Daalhuizen 2016). Instagram now gives users what they want to view by using tagging and user interaction on posts (Agung & Darma 2019). Essentially, tags on a post inform Instagram to whom to show the post, and the higher the engagement a post gets, the more it gets promoted. As Bishqemi and Crowley write: "according to the research, the algorithms used by TikTok and Instagram take into account tags that describe the video's subject matter and user involvement in the form of likes and comments" (2022).

Instagram is a rapidly changing social media site in 2023, with features emerging, disappearing, and altering at a sometimes-rapid pace. As mentioned on page 15, in 2020 Instagram introduced a feature of vertical short videos called Instagram Reels, which corresponds to each item shown in Figure 8.

2.6 Instagram Reels

Instagram Reels is a feature for creating engaging short videos of 90 seconds or less, complete with music and effects. These videos can be easily shared with potential clients or fellow Instagram users, fostering a dynamic platform for creative expression and interaction.

2.6.1 Short-form video

According to a Sprout Social survey of more than 1,000 US consumers as part of the 2022 Sprout Social Index, short-form videos are more engaging for viewers. Figure 9 illustrates the latest data for 2022, where people are most attracted to short videos – 66 percent, up from 50 percent in 2020 (Sprout Social Index 2022).

The most engaging types of in-feed social content

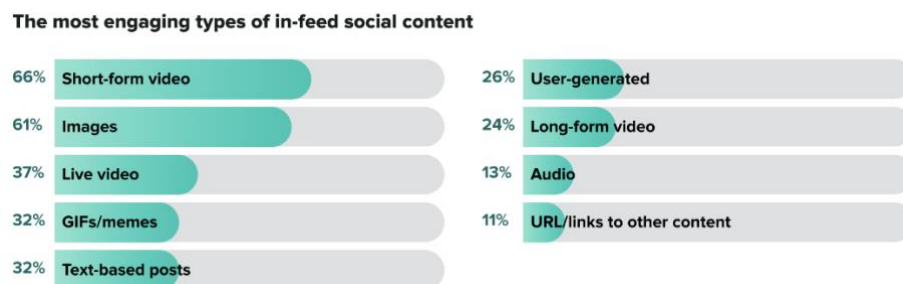|			
66%	Short-form video	26%	User-generated
61%	Images	24%	Long-form video
37%	Live video	13%	Audio
32%	GIFs/memes	11%	URL/links to other content
32%	Text-based posts		

Figure 9. The most interesting social media content to display in feeds (Sprout Social Index 2022)

The short video format allows brands to keep up with current trends. The emergence of short-form video services like Reels demostrated nothing short of transformative as consumer preferences change toward quickly digestible and engaging content (Kestenbaum 2023). People with busy schedules frequently glance through social media during short breaks or on the go. In Insa Tharsikin's (n.d.) view "Reels has emerged as the ideal medium for brands to efficiently interact with their target audience as consumers seek out content that fits into their busy lives". Therefore, thanks to its short and attractive videos, a platform like Instagram with short-videos feature has become a powerful tool for brands to convey their messages, entertain and engage customers in just a few

seconds. And a model like AIDA mentioned above is ideal for this fast-paced setting because it helps brands write succinct but compelling content that immediately piques readers' interest. AIDA principles assist short video marketers in creating tales that connect with their audience, whether it is a hook that grabs the viewer in the first few seconds or a compelling image that piques their interest.

2.6.2 Instagram Reels Marketing

In 2023, brand usage of Instagram Reels increased dramatically by 57.4 percent year over year, according to a study by SocialInsider (Santora 2023). The results of this study were based on an analysis of 7.159.941 Instagram posts from 99.214 business pages that were active between January 2022 and May 2023. This indicator indicates that businesses understand the popularity of short videos in 2023 and are actively operating in this format.

As Insa Tharsikin (n.d.) states "there are several important aspects that contribute to Instagram Reels' marketing success: Visual Storytelling, Discoverability and Reach, Bite-sized Entertainment, Audience Engagement, Creative Freedom, and User-generated Content".

- Visual Storytelling. As mentioned above, people are more attracted to visuals. Instagram Reels makes use of the emotive power of visual storytelling to help brands and services communicate their messages in an engaging and succinct way (Tharsikin n.d.). Furthermore, as mentioned on page 19, the AIDA model can help brands create concise and compelling content for their audience.

- Bite-sized Entertainment and Audience Engagement. As mentioned in paragraph 2.5.1, Reels provide entertainment by simplifying the process for users to share content and view it on the go. Moreover, Reels' interactive and captivating nature invites viewer interaction through likes, comments, and shares. In addition, brands can make a Call To Action (CTA) on Instagram Reels. A CTA is a suggestion that urges users to

carry out a certain action. Usually, an imperative verb is used to convey urgency, such as "Shop Now", "Sign Up", "Don't Miss Out", "See Description" and so on. Through the customer journey, CTA plays an important role in assisting people in making the move from being passive viewers to active participants in the brand's products. Passive users of Instagram Reels are people who can view the video without reacting in any way, but their views will be shown.

- Discoverability and Reach. As Kuncoro (2022) writes "one of the major benefits of sharing Reels on Instagram is that, because of its distinctive algorithm, which distributes content to audiences' newsfeeds regardless of whether a person is a follower, it can expose items to an even wider audience". Based on HypeAuditor data for 2022, Reels maintain an average impression rate of 33.83 percent, marking a significant decrease from the previous year's 50.42 percent (Santora 2023). However, as Jacinda Santora (2023) writes "this rate still translates to double the views compared by other types of content on the platform". This demonstrates that Reels are being shown to viewers considerably more frequently, increasing brand chances of generating visibility and engagement.

- Creative Freedom. There are numerous artistic tools available on Instagram Reels, including music, filters, text overlays, and stickers. Brands are free to experiment with different components to create content that is distinct and compelling.

- User-generated Content. In Insa Tharsikin's opinion, "brand marketing efforts can be amplified by motivating users to build and share Reels associated with their brand" (n.d.). User-generated content erases a potential customer's suspicion that the promoted product or service is ineffective, bad, etc. By showcasing real-life examples through images or Reels associated with the brand, user-generated content visually demonstrates the genuine efficiency of the brand or service.

Moreover, based on research by marketing specialist Claire Beveridge (2022), it was said that majority of the audience participate in Instagram Reels rather that in Instagram shops or Instagram stories (Jain, Kachwala, Sopariwla, Melwani, Sanji, and Agarwal 2022). This information emphasises the broad appeal of brief video material, such as Reels. It seems that Reels' dynamic and captivating qualities are attracting people more and more, making it a popular option for both content producers and consumers. The interactive and entertaining format of Reels resonates with today's digital audiences, confirming that this medium has captured people's interests.

2.7 Instagram Reels Insights

Instagram Reels Insights provides valuable data and analytics to businesses, offering a deeper understanding of the performance of their Reels content. Below are some key metrics of Instagram Reels Insights:

- Engagement and Reach. It provides statistics regarding the number of accounts the brand's Reel reached and the volume of engagements (likes, comments, and shares) it attracted. This makes it easier to determine how engaged their audience is with their material.

- Likes, Comments, Shares, and Saves. Brands may see how many people liked and commented on their Reel, which shows how effectively it connected with the audience. Moreover, the shares metric reveals the number of times viewers have forwarded their Reels to others, thereby broadening its audience. Furthermore, Instagram Reels Insights presents the number of users that saved your Reels, a sign that they thought it was worthwhile or worth revisiting.

- Plays and Average Watch Time. Brands can see how many times their Reel was played, providing insights into how often viewers initiated the video. The number of users who watched at least a portion of the business reel is shown by Plays (Sonnenberg 2022). Moreover, Average

Watch Time provides insights into how long, on average, viewers watched a brand's Reel. It helps in understanding audience engagement and content effectiveness.

- Audience Demographics. Brands can see information about the age, gender, and location of the audience that interacted with the business's Reel. This data is valuable for tailoring content to specific demographics.

- Traffic Source. It shows whether viewers found the brand's Reel through the Instagram feed, profile, hashtags, or other sources. This helps in understanding where brand's content is most discoverable.

- Call-to-Action. When brands introduce a call-to-action (CTA) in their Reel, such as a link or a button to visit a website, they can track the number of clicks it receives.

By leveraging these metrics, brands can refine their content strategies, optimise engagement, and better tailor their Reels to their target audience. Moreover, brands can view valuable data and analytics weekly, monthly, and quarterly. As Sonnenberg writes: "Instagram Reels Insights is a powerful tool for maximising the impact of your short video content on Instagram" (2022).

3 Research Methodology

The deliberate and organised practise of actively seeking information or insights is known as research. In his article, Kothari (2004) writes that it might also be described as a "systematic, scientific search for relevant facts, information, or evidence regarding a certain subject or enquiry".

Moreover, Clifford Woody stated that "research involves defining and redefining issues, generating hypotheses or recommended solutions, gathering, organising, and assessing data, drawing deductions, and coming to

conclusions, and finally, the conclusions are thoroughly tested to see if they agree with the hypotheses that were first proposed" (Kothari 2004).

3.1 Types and Methods of Research

Most studies may be categorised by three groups: descriptive, exploratory, and causal (experiments). Each serves a certain purpose and can only be used in certain ways based on the study problem or question.

The goal of exploratory research is to develop ideas, gather preliminary insights, and go deeper into a topic. A detailed and precise description of a phenomena, group, or circumstance is the goal of descriptive research. While, testing hypotheses and identifying the influence of one or more variables on an outcome are the main goals of causal research.

Moreover, there are two distinct methods for gathering data in research: qualitative research and quantitative research. In general, qualitative research is a method that enables in-depth examination of individuals' experiences through the use of a particular collection of research techniques, including interviews, observation, content analysis, focus group discussions, and so on (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey 2020). Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data, where emphasis is placed on measurement, quantification, and statistical analysis to enable inferences or predictions. These methods can be used together, and then they are called mixed research.

In this work, the author chose the type of exploratory research using mixed methods of research through a survey and an interview. These methods stand out as some of the most reliable, as they rely on the first-hand experiences shared by participants.

The questionnaire is a useful tool for getting information about people's experiences using Instagram Reels. The author can get a thorough knowledge of how they interact with this particular feature by looking at their responses to the questionnaire. Interview with brand that actively use Instagram Reels will

also help better understand their ideas on reaching out to and influencing consumers through social media, as well as their methods for targeted segmentation and content development. This two-pronged strategy, which combines participant input with expert insights, will give a comprehensive picture of Instagram Reels' influence and potency in the field of digital marketing.

The purpose of using surveys to collect quantitative data and interview to collect qualitative data was to gain a more holistic understanding of the research question through comprehensive study. According to Tashakhori and Teddlie (1998): "quantitative and qualitative methodologies complement one another when they are used in a single study, enabling a more thorough understanding of the research problem" (Migiro & Magangi 2011:3757; Williams 2007:70).

3.2 Sampling

A part of the population that has been chosen to be representative of the whole population to establish the characteristics or parameters of the entire population is referred to as a "sample". Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, and Nigam (2013) write: "by selecting a representative sample, researchers may cut down on the expenses incurred, the time required to complete the research, and the number of staff required to carry out the study".

In this study, the author chose the type of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are selected according to their availability and accessibility. Convenience sampling, a non-random method, entails selecting individuals based on practical criteria like accessibility, proximity, availability, or willingness to participate. This approach was chosen to ensure that participants met specific criteria relevant to the study's focus on Instagram Reels.

For the interviews, the sample size was limited to one individual, a representative and content creator from the Finnish cosmetics brand, Smuuti Skin. Smuuti Skin is a brand developed by the Finnish company Beautyko

Import Oy and produced in Korea. Smuuti Skin produces skin care products designed for Nordic skin.

To mitigate potential bias, 49 respondents from diverse global backgrounds, each with experience in using Instagram Reels, were also included in the study. This diverse sample aimed to capture varied perspectives from both content creators and consumers.

3.3 Limitations of Study

The study faced a significant limitation concerning the number of respondents for both interviews and questionnaires. Originally, the plan was to talk to at least 2 people for interviews and get answers from at least 55 people for the questionnaire.

To ensure a comfortable and confident response from the interviewee, the author sent the interview questions to the brand representative in advance. However, it's crucial to note that the interview involved a single content creator from Finland. This limitation means the things they shared might not represent the thoughts as well as experiences of all content creators using Instagram Reels. Moreover, there's a possibility of cultural bias in the responses.

More people took part in the surveys compared to the interviews. There were 49 people who shared their thoughts. It's worth mentioning that most of the people who answered were women. This might mean that the results could be a little tilted towards what women think. Also, even though the participants were from different parts of the world and used Instagram Reels often, most of them were from Europe. This means that the information received may not cover all the different kinds of people who use Instagram Reels around the world.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Validity and reliability are the bedrock of high-quality research. The stability of results is referred by the term reliability, whereas the veracity of findings is

referred to as validity (Altheide & Johnson 1994). It may be challenging to explain the implications of measurement failures on theoretical connections that are being measured without evaluating the research's reliability and validity (Forza 2002). As Haradhan Mohajan (2017) states: "the validity and reliability of the data obtained can be improved by the researcher by using a variety of approaches to gather data for the purpose of acquiring true information".

In this study, the author used two methods to obtain information: a questionnaire and an interview. An interview is a research approach that focuses on gathering data by asking question. An interview often occurs between two people to gather qualitative information related to a specific study question or problem. A questionnaire is a group of questions that are planned and used to gather quantitative data about a particular issue of interest. A questionnaire enables the systematic collecting of quantitative data, producing results that are internally coherent and suitable for study.

The interview exhibits strong content validity as it covers a wide range of pertinent topics directly aligned with the research objectives. The questions are clear and specific, indicating high face validity, making them easily understandable for the interviewee. This clarity minimises potential misinterpretations. However, there is a potential for social desirability bias, given that the interviewee represents Smuuti Skin. Their responses may be influenced to portray the brand in a positive light. Despite this, the perspective provided is still valuable for understanding the brand's strategies.

Moving to the questionnaire, it also has strong content validity, addressing a broad spectrum of relevant topics related to social media usage and interactions. The questions are clear, specific, and directly related to the subject matter, demonstrating high face validity. Respondents are likely to easily comprehend and respond to the questions. Additionally, the questionnaire benefits from a substantial sample size, enhancing the reliability and generalisability of the insights gathered. However, potential underrepresentation

of certain demographics or regions should be considered for generalising the findings.

As mentioned above, combining qualitative insights from the interview with quantitative data from the questionnaire enriches the overall validity and reliability of the study's conclusions.

4 Research Results

This section presents the results and data analysis for this study. The results were obtained in two ways, namely through an interview in which one respondent using Instagram Reels took part and a questionnaire in which 49 participants from different countries participated.

4.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed and uploaded on the Prolific platform, which is an online research platform with more than 120,000 users from 38 countries. Since this platform has many participants from different countries, it was chosen to avoid bias and was also convenient for obtaining information. As mentioned above, the sample size was 49 participants and was published for different countries.

The survey results reveal a notable gender diversity among the respondents. Specifically, 59 percent were female, 37 percent were male, and 4 percent identified as other.
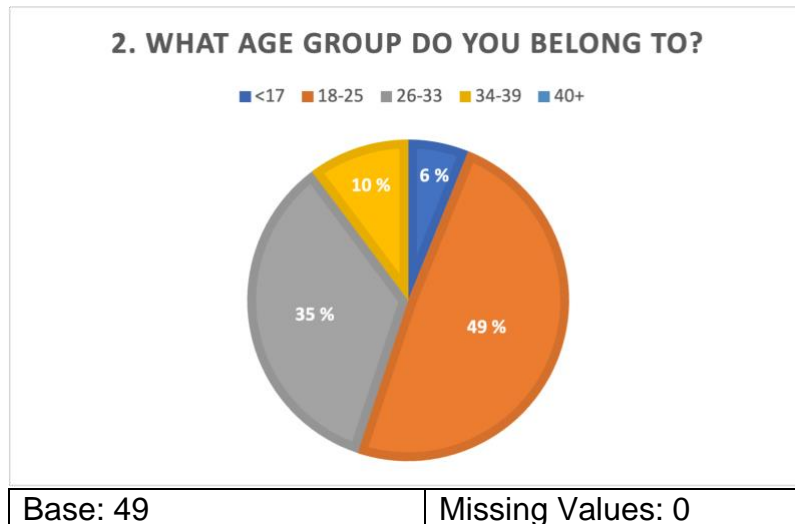
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 10. Age of the respondents

Figure 10 shows that the survey results for the age group question indicate a notable presence of young adults, with 49 percent falling into the 18-25 age group and 35 percent in the 26-33 age group. However, according to the survey results, the absence of respondents aged 40 and above suggests that the platform may be less commonly used by older age groups.
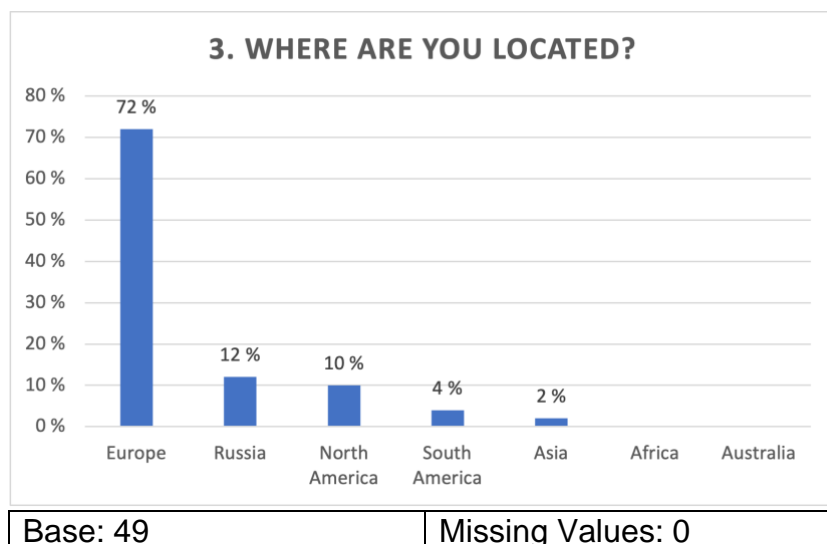

Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 11. Geographic location of respondents

The results shown in Figure 11 illustrate the global distribution of respondents, with the highest representation from Europe at 72 percent.

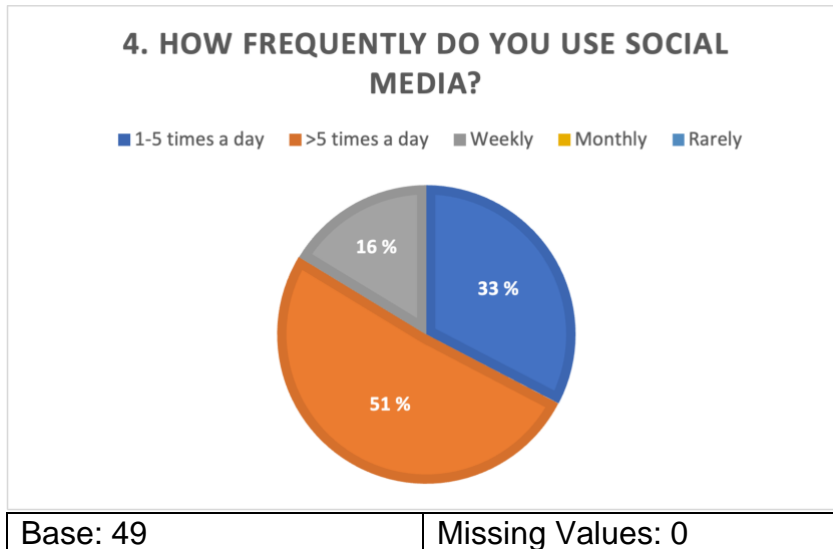| Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 12. Frequency of time spent on social networks

Figure 12 shows that many respondents use social media frequently, with 51 percent indicating they use it more than five times a day. These results highlight the high frequency of social media usage among the surveyed individuals.
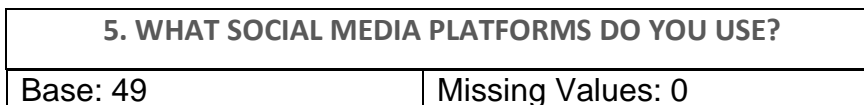
5. WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO YOU USE?	
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 13. Respondents' social media platform preferences

The results of the fifth question reveal that Instagram and TikTok are the two most frequently used social media platforms, with 78 percent and 74 percent of respondents using them. Facebook also remains a popular choice, with 45 percent of respondents using it, while Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, and WeChat have lower usage rates, at 39 percent, 23 percent, 6 percent, and 4 percent.
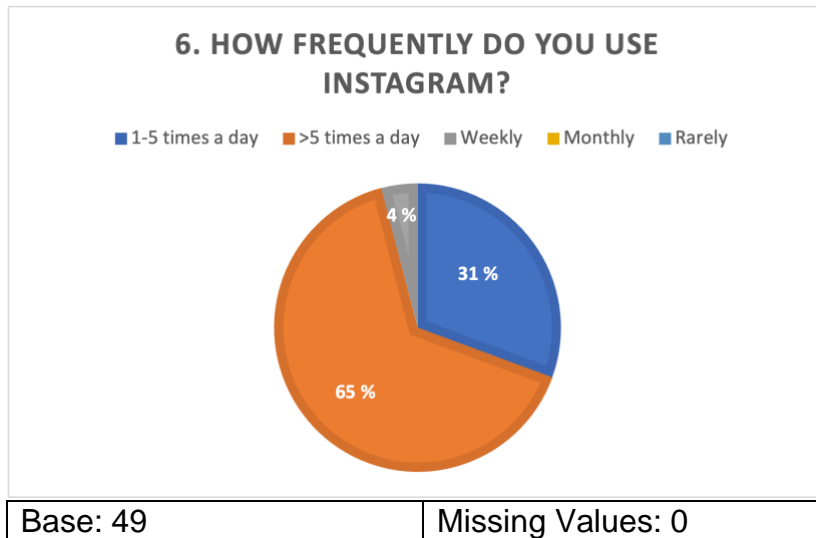
| Base: 49 | Missing Values: 0 |

Figure 14. Frequency of time spent on Instagram

Figure 14 illustrates that the majority of respondents are highly active on the Instagram. A smaller percentage, 4 percent, reported using Instagram on a weekly basis, while no respondents reported using it monthly or rarely. These results mean that Instagram is a frequently accessed platform for the surveyed individuals.

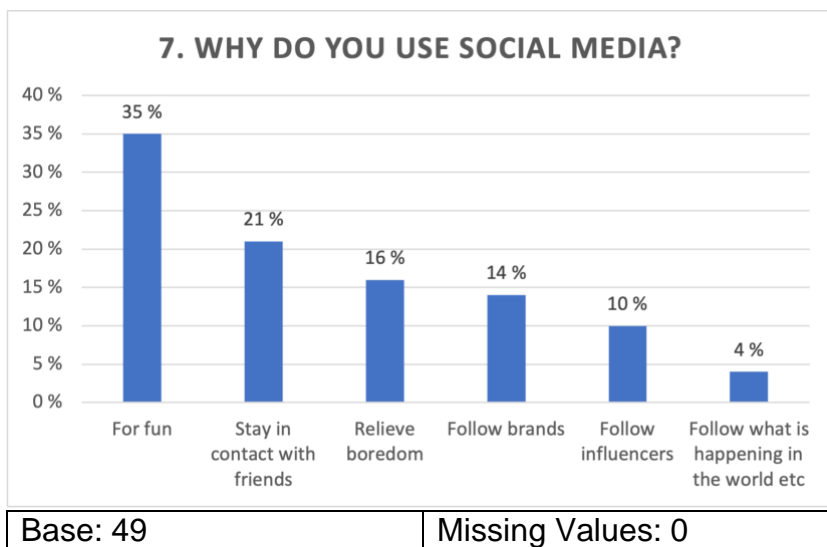| Base: 49 | Missing Values: 0 |

Figure 15. Reasons for using social media

The survey results regarding the reasons for using social media reveal a variety of motivations among respondents. Figure 15 shows that the most common reasons include using social media for fun 35 percent and to stay in contact with

friends 21 percent. In general, results highlight the multifaceted nature of social media usage, with individuals using platforms for both personal enjoyment and practical purposes.
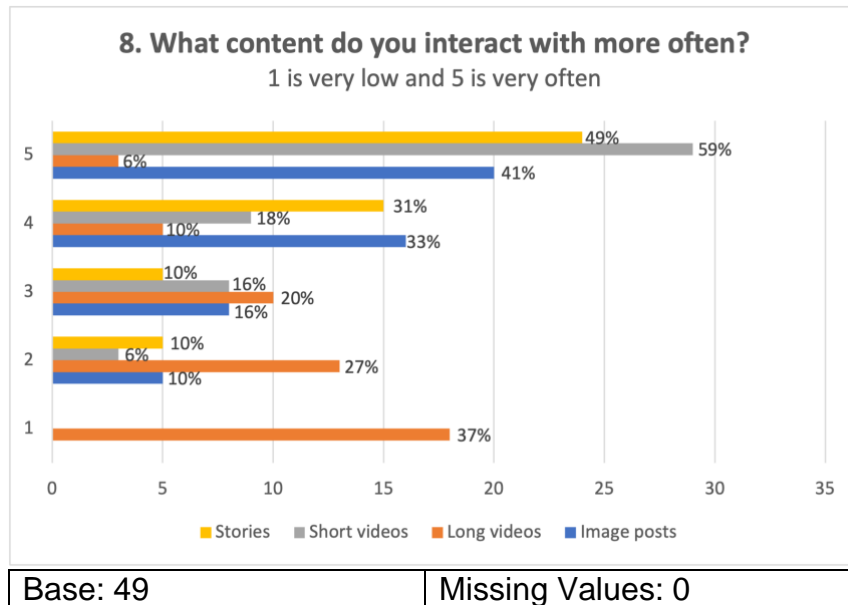

| Base: 49 | Missing Values: 0 |

Figure 16. Frequent interaction with types of content

The results in Figure 16 highlight how respondents engage with different types of content. Stories and short videos stand out as the most interacted-with categories, with 49 percent of respondents rating their interaction with stories as 5 (very often), and 59 percent did the same for short videos.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU WATCH INSTAGRAM REELS VIDEOS?	
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 17. Frequency of video views on Instagram Reels

The results of question 9 about the frequency of watching Instagram Reels videos show that a significant portion of respondents engage with this feature regularly. Specifically, 47 percent watch Instagram Reels more than five times a day, while 29 percent watch it between 1-5 times a day. Additionally, 18 percent reported watching Reels on a weekly basis, and smaller percentages watch them monthly 4 percent or rarely 2 percent. No respondents indicated that they never watch Instagram Reels. These results suggest that Instagram Reels is a

frequently consumed content format among the surveyed individuals, making it valuable for brands to reach and engage with an active audience.

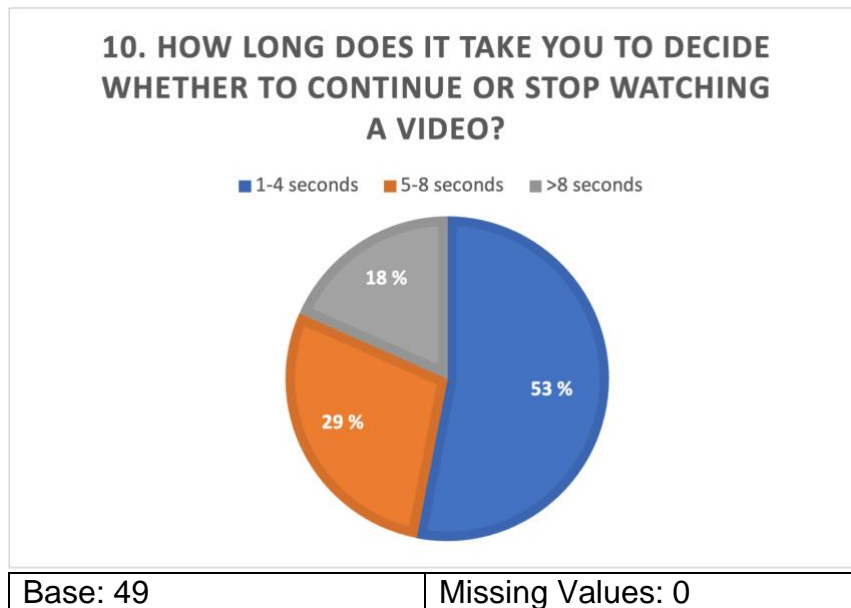| Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 18. Length of time to continue or end video viewing

Figure 18 shows that 53 percent of individuals decide within the first 1-4 seconds of a video. These results emphasise the importance of capturing the audience's attention within the first few seconds of a video on Instagram Reels.

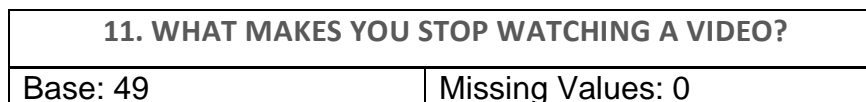| 11. WHAT MAKES YOU STOP WATCHING A VIDEO?	
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 19. Reasons to stop watching videos

In question 11, participants were asked to share factors that deter them from watching a video. The most frequently cited reasons included video duration, content, and poor quality, mentioned by 56 percent of participants; poor sounds and music, cited by 49 percent of participants; and 15 percent of participants also noted the effects.

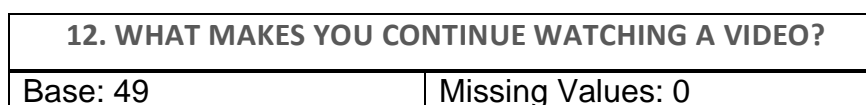| 12. WHAT MAKES YOU CONTINUE WATCHING A VIDEO?	
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 20. Reasons to keep watching videos

Respondents continue watching a video for various reasons, and in the 12th question, the most common factor identified was content quality, with 41 percent of respondents valuing it, followed by humour, considered essential by 26 percent of participants. Good video quality was mentioned by 20 percent of respondents, while 15 percent appreciated good sound, and 12 percent of respondents found videos more engaging when they featured collaborations with popular people.

13. DO YOU ENGAGE WITH VISUAL CONTENT ON INSTAGRAM REELS (E.G., LIKING, SHARING, COMMENTING)?

■ Yes ■ No

22 %

78 %

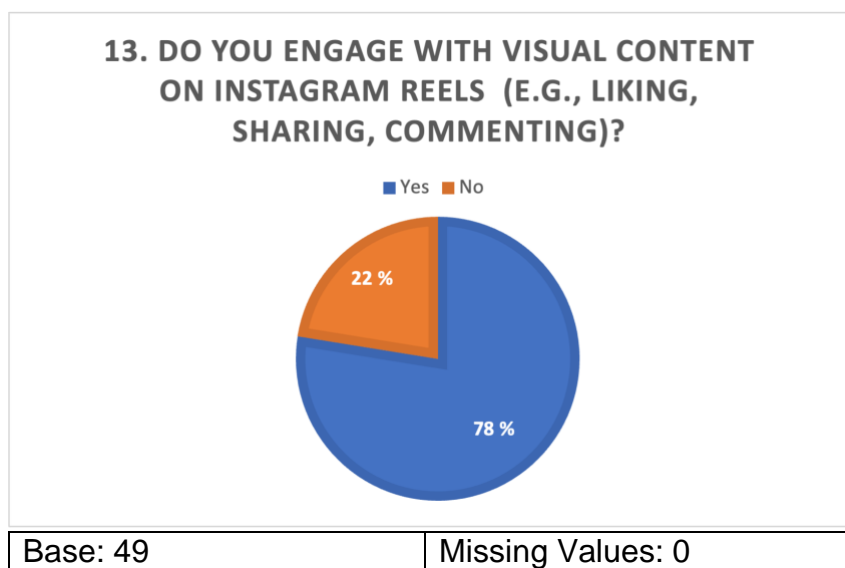| Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 21. Engagement with visual content on Instagram Reels

According to the results shown in Figure 21, 78 percent of respondents reported that they engage with visual content on Instagram Reels, which includes actions like liking, sharing, and commenting. These results show that many users actively participate in interactions with Reels content, indicating the platform's engagement potential for brands and content creators.

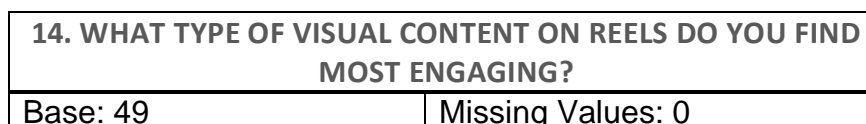| 14. WHAT TYPE OF VISUAL CONTENT ON REELS DO YOU FIND MOST ENGAGING?	
Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 22. The most engaging type of content for respondents

The results of question 14 highlight the diverse preferences for engaging visual content on Instagram Reels. Entertainment content stands out as the most engaging, with 36 percent of respondents finding it captivating, closely followed by news content, which attracted 27 percent of respondents. Beauty content is also a popular choice, engaging 25 percent of respondents, while fashion and travel content were found engaging by 23 percent and 20 percent of respondents, respectively. Additionally, some participants mentioned other engaging categories such as nature, sport, and animals, indicating the potential for varied content strategies on the platform to cater to different interests.

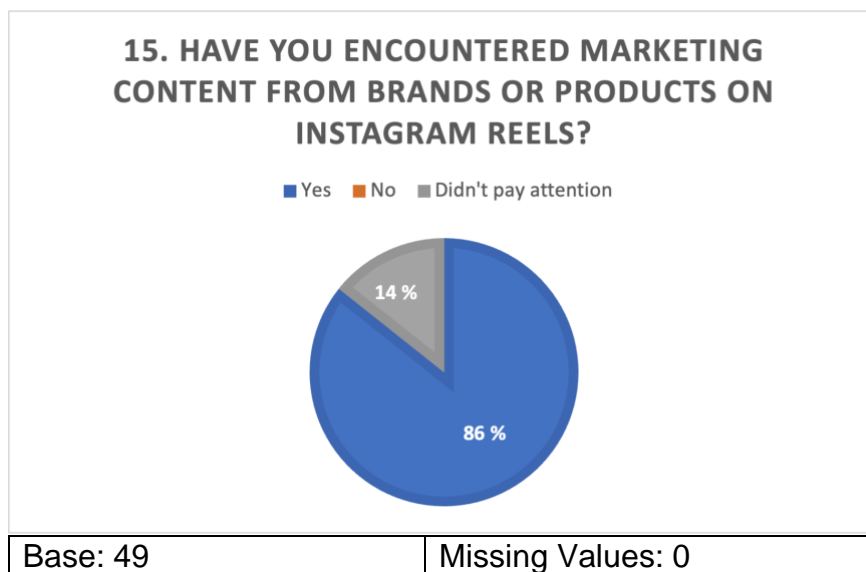| Base: 49	Missing Values: 0

Figure 23. Encounter with marketing content on Instagram Reels

Based on the survey data, Figure 23 shows that 86 percent of respondents have encountered marketing content from brands or products on Instagram Reels, while no respondents indicated that they had not seen marketing content. These findings suggest that marketing on Instagram Reels is widespread and visible to a substantial portion of the user base.

16. HAVE YOU MADE A PURCHASE OR TAKEN ANY ACTION (E.G., VISITED A WEBSITE, SIGNED UP FOR A NEWSLETTER) BASED ON A MARKETING CAMPAIGN YOU SAW ON INSTAGRAM REELS?

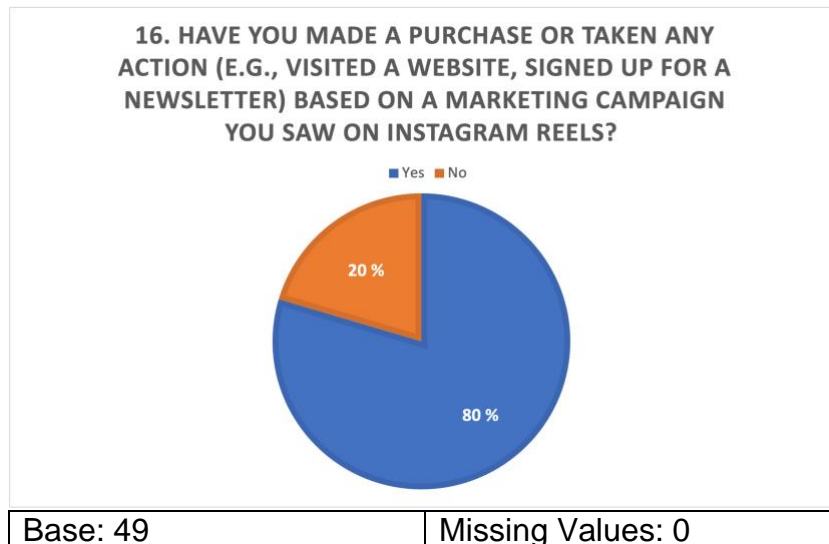■ Yes ■ No

20 %

80 %

| Base: 49 | Missing Values: 0 |

Figure 24. Interaction or purchase based on a marketing campaign

According to Figure 24, a substantial percentage of respondents have taken action as a result of marketing campaigns seen on Instagram Reels, with 80 percent confirming that they have made a purchase or engaged in another action, such as visiting a website or signing up for a newsletter. These results indicate that Instagram Reels can be an effective channel for implementing conversion tactics for brands.

17. BASED ON QUESTION 16, IF YOU CLICKED "YES", WERE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE BRAND OR PRODUCT BEFORE CLICKING ON IT?

■ Yes ■ No
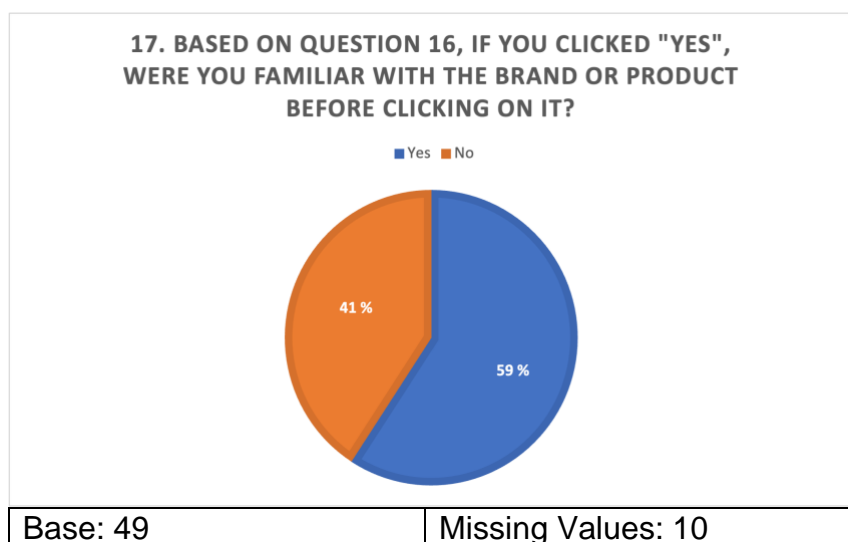
41 %

59 %

| Base: 49 | Missing Values: 10 |

Figure 25. Familiarisation with the brand before a certain action

A substantial 41 percent of respondents mentioned that they were not acquainted with the brand or product before taking action. These findings indicate that a significant portion of users initiate actions even without prior familiarity with the brand or product. See Figure 25.

4.2 Interview and discussion

As mentioned above, Smuuti Skin is a Finnish brand that produces skin care products for young people. It has been harnessing Instagram Reels since the brand's inception in early 2023. See Appendix 4.

Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behaviour:

As mentioned in paragraph 2.2, consumer behaviour is not an easy process. According to the representative of the Smuuti Skin brand, consumer behaviour is constantly changing due to the development of technology, changes in demographics, and social trends. Connecting with consumers through social media platforms can be both an easy and a complex process. According to the representative, the complexity of this process lies in changes in consumer preferences. To solve this problem, they collect a lot of data and effectively use new tools, for example, Instagram Reels Insight, to better know their audience and adapt their content and interaction strategies to them. As mentioned in paragraph 2.7, Instagram has Instagram Reels Insight, which provides businesses with valuable data and daily, monthly, and quarterly audience analytics.

Targeted Segmentation and Audience:

As mentioned above, Smuuti Skin develops its products for young people. This brand strategically targets Generation Z, people from 12 to 26 years old, segmented into teenagers (12-19) and young adults (20-26). The generation definition can be found in Appendix 5. Moreover, there is also a distribution for cosmetics enthusiasts, K-Beauty enthusiasts, and regular skincare users. This

precise segmentation enables tailored marketing efforts, ensuring content resonates with the intended audience.

In addition, brands need to know what platforms their audience is on. According to a representative of Smuuti Skin, they use TikTok and Instagram because they are used by many young people. Based on the latest data that was mentioned in paragraph 2.5, many people using Instagram were 18-24 years old and 25-34 years old.

Customer Journey and AIDA Model:

Smuuti Skin has a customer journey, the model of which is shown in Figure 4, that includes awareness, consideration, purchase, and post-purchase stages. The journey begins with the awareness stage, which is predominantly facilitated through the brand's robust presence on various social media platforms. This initial phase serves as an introduction, allowing potential consumers to become acquainted with Smuuti Skin and its offerings. This aligns with the modern trend of consumers relying heavily on digital platforms for product discovery. Moving forward, the consideration stage comes into play. Here, potential customers might engage in more interactive exchanges. This could involve reaching out to the brand through sales staff or seeking further information via social media channels or email. This demonstrates an active interest in understanding the brand and its products, marking a pivotal step towards potential conversion. The culmination of this journey manifests in the purchase stage, where the consumer makes a conscious decision to invest in Smuuti Skin's products. Moreover, the brand acknowledges the relevance of the AIDA model in understanding and navigating this process. They highlight, however, that the digital landscape has introduced nuances to this model. With the rapidly changing dynamics of consumer behaviour in the digital realm, the customer journey has become more intricate.

Content Strategy and Engagement Metrics:

Product demonstrations and humour serve as the linchpins of Smuuti Skin's strategy to captivate their audience. This answer is consistent with the questionnaire results, which indicate a notable preference for entertainment content among the user audience. Moreover, the preference for relatability is addressed through influencer marketing, employing influencers who mirror the consumer demographic.

According to the representative, to determine the overall engagement rate on Reels, they use the formula: Engagement Rate = [(Likes + Comments + Shares + Clicks) / Total Followers or Total Reach] * 100. Furthermore, it is also important for them to know the average viewing time to keep in mind how long the audience can watch the video. According to the survey results, many respondents noted that only 1-4 seconds are enough for them to decide whether to continue watching the video or not. To continue watching a video, it is important for most to see quality and humour. At the same time, many respondents noted that they were ready to stop watching the video due to its duration, poor quality, and unsuitable content for them.

Advantages, Strategies, and Functions of Instagram:

According to the representative of Smuuti Skin, Instagram's image-centric nature makes it an ideal platform for visually appealing content. Based on the survey results and paragraph 2.5, users value entertaining and aesthetically pleasing content. Moreover, according to the brand representative, Stories and Reels are the best way to increase brand awareness and engagement. According to the survey results, respondents interact more often with short videos and stories. Furthermore, representative noted that the strategic use of hashtags amplifies content discoverability, as Smuuti Skin consumers actively seek content through them.

Content Creation in Reels:

According to a representative of the Smuuti Skin brand, videos are something that consumers often use for relaxation and quick entertainment, so the best

approach is an easy and fun way to understand the content. According to the survey results, the majority of respondents use social networks for fun. See Figure 15. In addition, as mentioned above, many respondents identified entertainment content as the most interesting. According to the representative,

Using AIDA in Reels:

In their Reels, the Smuuti Skin brand also uses the AIDA model, which attracts the attention of their audience, arouses interest and desire, and encourages viewers to take some action, for example, by going to the website. As mentioned above, based on the survey results, it is necessary to interest the audience in the first few seconds, and the AIDA model can be useful for this.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, leveraging Instagram Reels as a marketing instrument is a good feature, given its innate appeal to an audience inclined towards quick and engaging content. The platform's integration of interactive elements and creative tools facilitates meaningful connections with the audience, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and feedback.

Instagram Reels is an effective marketing tool for brands if they use it well knowing their audience and audience preferences. Instagram has a young user audience, most of whom are aged 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 years old. Understanding this demographic is important for brands, as it determines whether Instagram Reels are the right choice for their marketing efforts. For example, for the Smuuti Skin brand, Instagram Reels turned out to be a transformative platform that allows them to communicate with their young target audience in an authentic and engaging manner.

Moreover, Instagram Reels is a good feature that has a useful tool for brands called Instagram Reels Insight, which can help a brand fully analyse its content (views, how many are shared, liked, and so on) and audience data for further

planning strategies, creating the necessary content for the audience, and further prosperity in Instagram Reels. Moreover, the updated Instagram algorithms can help brands promote content, and the higher the user engagement in the form of likes, views, comments, and so on, the more content will be promoted.

However, in general, in an environment where communication and interaction are important, Instagram Reels offers brands attractive means to create meaningful impressions and establish strong relationships with their audience, which makes it an effective marketing tool. Since the advent of Instagram Reels in 2020, it has become more popular, attracting a different age audience. In 2023, the popularity of short videos remains at a high level, brands and users are increasingly beginning to actively use this tool, which makes it possible to conclude about the long-term prospects of short videos on Instagram.

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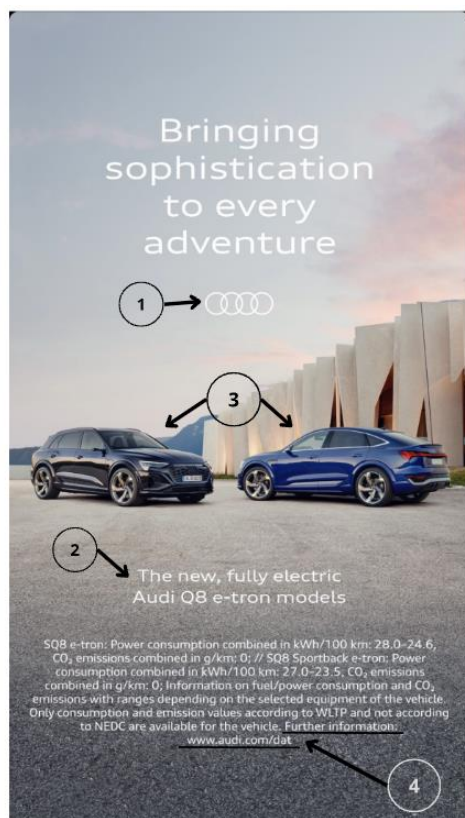
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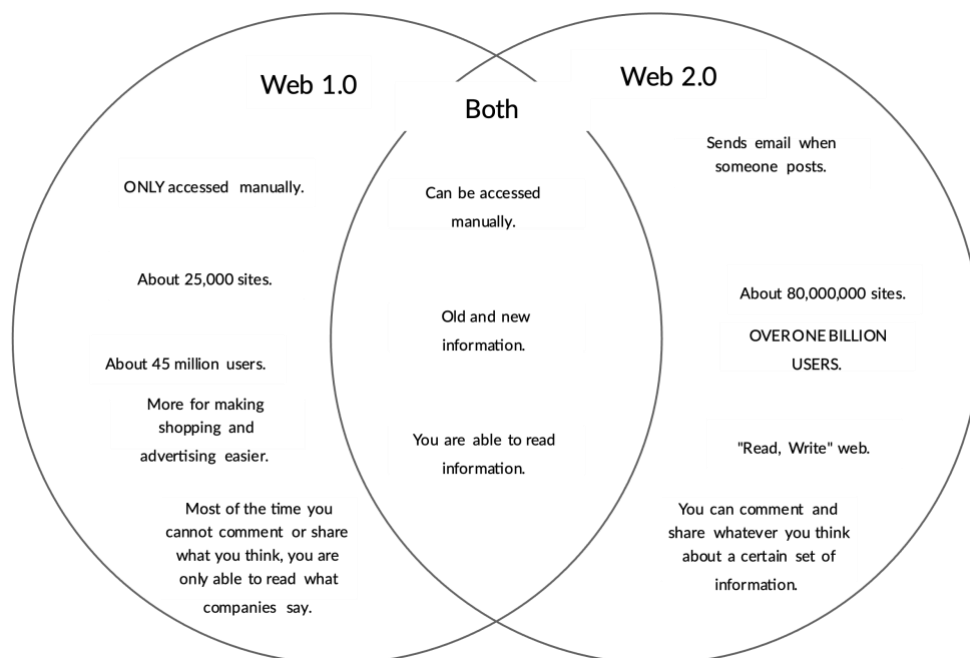Williams, C. 2007. Research Methods. *Journal of Business & Economic Research*, 5 (3).

Appendices

AIDA Model in social network

Audi advertisement using AIDA model (Instagram.com)

Web 1.0 vs Web 2.0

Web 1.0

Both

Web 2.0

ONLY accessed manually.

About 25,000 sites.

About 45 million users.

More for making shopping and advertising easier.

Most of the time you cannot comment or share what you think, you are only able to read what companies say.

Can be accessed manually.

Old and new information.

You are able to read information.

Sends email when someone posts.

About 80,000,000 sites.

OVER ONE BILLION USERS.

"Read, Write" web.

You can comment and share whatever you think about a certain set of information.

The differences and similarities between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 (VanDerMeulen, n.d.)

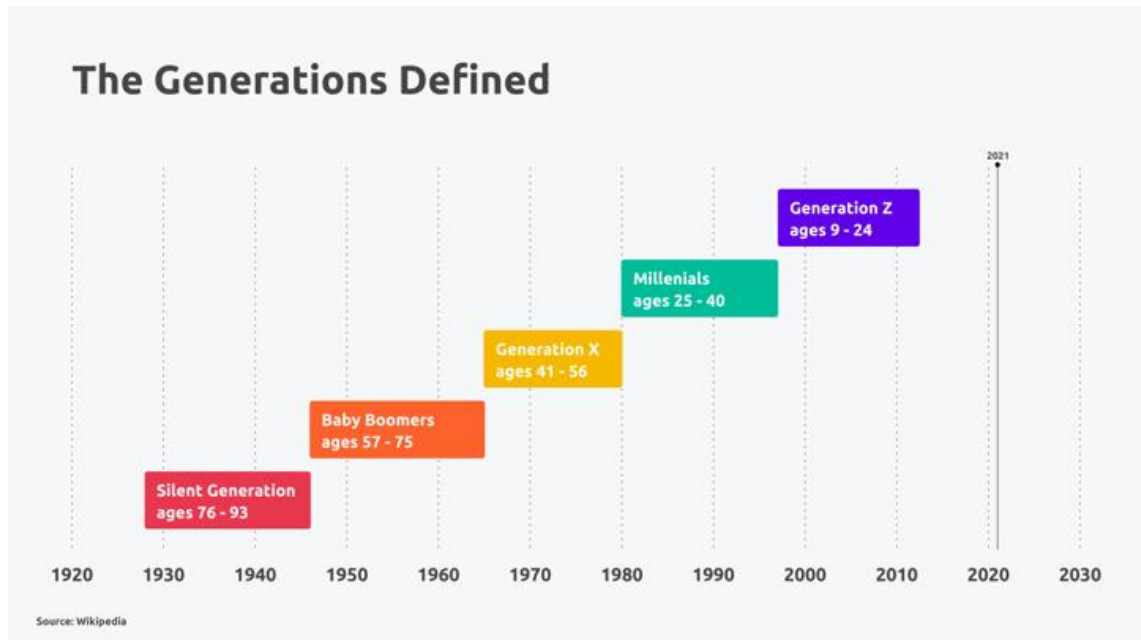**Why Internet users around the world use social networks (2022)**
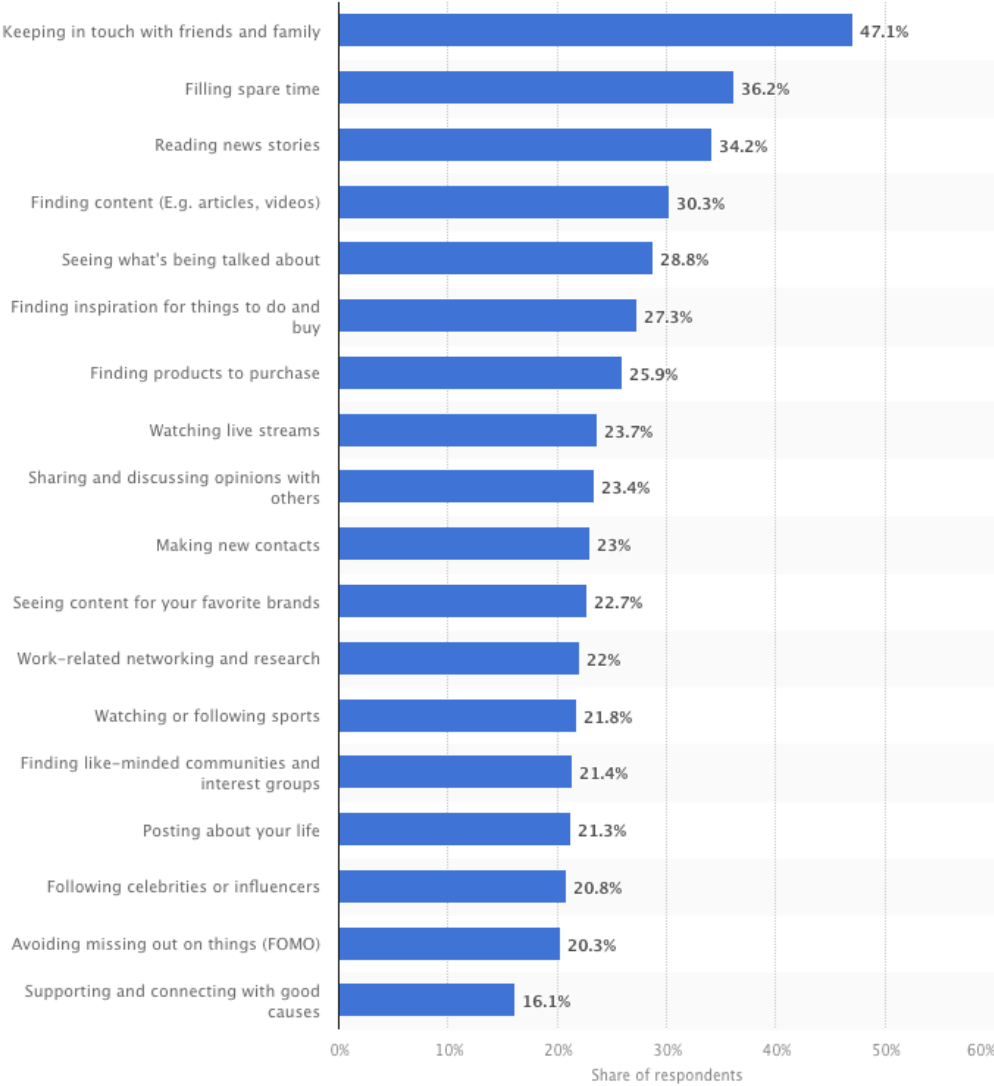
Most popular reasons for 2022, why Internet users around the world use social networks (Dixon, 2023)

Smuuti Skin Reels

First Reels of the Smuuti Skin brand – January 17 (Instagram.com)

The generation definition

The gen definition (Vizzlo n.d)

Sample Questionnaire

1. What is your gender?

2. What age group do you belong to?

3. Where are you located?

4. How frequently do you use social media?

5. What social media platforms do you use?

6. How frequently do you use Instagram?

7. Why do you use social media?

8. What content do you interact with more often?

9. How often do you watch Instagram Reels videos?

10. How long does it take you to decide whether to continue or stop watching a video?

11. What makes you stop watching a video?

12. What makes you continue watching a video?

13. Do you engage with visual content on Instagram Reels (e.g., liking, sharing, commenting)?

14. What type of visual content on Reels do you find most engaging?

15. Have you encountered marketing content from brands or products on Instagram Reels?

16. Have you made a purchase or taken any action (e.g., visited a website, signed up for a newsletter) based on a marketing campaign you saw on Instagram Reels?

17. Based on question 16, if you clicked "Yes", were you familiar with the brand or product before clicking on it?

Interview results

General questions:

1) Brand name	1) Smuuti Skin

Marketing/consumer behaviour:

2) How do you see consumer behaviour evolving, and does this make it easier or more challenging to connect with and influence them through social media platforms?	2) Consumer behaviour is constantly evolving because of technology and changes in demographics and social trends. This can sometimes make it easier but also more challenging to connect with consumers through social media. We can collect more data and use new tools effectively to understand our audience, but platforms, algorithms, and consumer preferences are changing faster than ever, which can be difficult to keep up with.
3) Do you use targeted segmentation? Could you give an example? (For example, distribution by age groups, interests, etc.). What is your target audience?	3) Our target audience is Gen Z, which is roughly 12-26-year-old consumers, which we can also divide into two different segments, which are teens (12–19) and young adults (20–26). We also use categories such as cosmetics enthusiasts, K-Beauty enthusiasts, and regular skincare users.
4) Do you believe that your target consumer/audience has a customer journey? If yes, could you describe it? if not, do you think that a certain action (purchase, like, comment) is an unconscious action or something else?	4) Of course, our audience has a customer journey, which typically includes awareness, consideration, purchase, and post-purchase stages. The awareness stage of our products is most reached through our social media. Consideration may involve questions from sales staff or questions to us on social media or through email, from which the consumer moves on to the purchase stage. The post-purchase stage often involves reviews, comments, or re-

	purchases of the product.
5) Do you believe that model like AIDA is still relevant?	5) Yes, the AIDA model is still relevant, but it has evolved because of the digital changes in modern customer behaviour. It's a good starting point, but the customer journey can be more complex.
6) What is your strategy for attracting consumers/audience? Do you use special content for this? (humour, news, product demonstrations, etc.)	6) Mostly, we attract customers through product demonstrations and humour. Gen Z is strongly attracted to relaxed brands that can use humour in their content, and they also like to see the products in use. Additionally, influencer marketing with relatable ''peer-like'' influencers is important.

Digital marketing/social media:

7) Are there specific metrics or key performance indicators that you pay more attention to?	7) We pay attention to engagement rates, especially to see which content generates more engagement and what platforms work for us the best. Click-through rates, conversion rates, and return on investment are also essential KPIs to pay attention to. Mostly, we use Instagram Insights to follow the metrics on the Reels, such as engagement rates, views, audience reach, and retention. Average watch time is also a metric I like to follow in order to know how long our followers actually view reels. Instagram insights mostly calculate the numbers for us. For the overall engagement rate on a reel, we use a formula where Engagement Rate = [(Likes + Comments + Shares + Clicks) / Total Followers or Total Reach] * 100

Social media platforms/content marketing:

8) How do you determine which social media platforms are most suitable for a particular brand or business?	8) This can be determined based on research about your target audience and their preferences. For example, for us, TikTok works the best as most Gen Z's use it.
9) How do you ensure your content resonates with your target audience?	9) Target audience research. With this you can determine what kind of content your customers like and what kinds of topics interest them.
10) How do you stay updated with the latest trends, features, and best practises in content marketing for social media platforms?	10) Mostly by going through the social media platforms. TikTok and Reels trends change daily, and that is why we need to spend time watching the content on these platforms.

Instagram:

11) What are the advantages of using Instagram compared to other social networks?	11) Instagram is image-centric, so it is good for visually appealing content. Collaborations with influencers through Instagram can also increase brand visibility.
12) What strategies or features on Instagram do you find most effective for increasing brand visibility and audience engagement?	12) Instagram stories and reels are the best way to increase brand visibility and engagement. Using hashtags is also an effective strategy because a lot of consumers go on Instagram and search for content with hashtags.
13) In your opinion, what are some of the challenges or pitfalls that brands commonly encounter when using Instagram for marketing, and how can they be addressed?	13) The Instagram algorithm seems to go through constant change, which can be challenging for reaching your audience. For example, feed posts may no longer be visible to your followers. Competition on Instagram is also high, and trying to keep up with trends can be a challenge.

Instagram Reels:

14) How long are you using Instagram Reels?	14) We have used Reels since the release of our brand, beginning in 2023.
15) Why did you decide to use short videos in Instagram?	15) Reels have a good reach, and the algorithm pushes content to people who are interested in the subject, so skincare content reaches a skincare audience.
16) What kind of content are you making in Reels?	16) All kinds: product demonstrations, influencer videos, reviews, and aesthetic videos.
17) Based on previous question about AIDA. Are you using it in Reels?	17) AIDA is a good basis to use by creating videos that grab the audience's attention, generate interest, create desire, and call viewers to action, and we do use it in Reels.
18) Have you encountered any challenges or limitations when using Instagram Reels for marketing, and how have you addressed them?	18) Generating engaging content within a short timeframe can be challenging, but with careful planning and editing, this can be achieved. Also, Reels are getting more and more competitive, and the algorithm has its challenges, but using trending sounds and effects and responding to comments is helpful in this case.
19) Are there any specific recommendations you have for businesses looking to leverage Instagram Reels for marketing?	19) Before you start making your content, get familiar with Reels and how they work. Research how other similar brands are using Reels, how they are succeeding, and what works for them. Remember that in reels, it is important that your brand is having fun. Reels are something that consumers use often to relax and get quick entertainment, and therefore the best approach is a light and fun way of generating content. Modern consumers are intelligent, and they don't want to see ''ads'' in their free time while watching this content, so instead of selling, make content that engages your audience in a different, more relaxed way.