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Content Marketing Plan

A Case of Glow Limited Company

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2018 Laurea



Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Content Marketing Plan
A Case of Glow Limited Company

Degree Programme In Business Management

Bachelor's Thesis

June 2018

Tuan, Vo Cong

Content Marketing Plan - A Case of Glow Limited Company

Year 2018

Pages 67

The purpose of this thesis project was to create a feasible content marketing plan for Glow Limited Company, a small- to medium-sized enterprise operating in marketing and event management in Viet Nam. The case company was the location of the author's first job placement. Previously, the company has not had an effective plan for content marketing. Specifically, the company's website and Facebook page have not been working well and needed renewal.

The theoretical framework discusses the role of marketing in event management, defines content marketing, and examines the correlation between content, search, and social media in content marketing and the procedure for creating a content marketing plan. The materials for the theoretical framework were collected from literature, published in credible print and online sources.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to collect and analyze data for the purpose of the thesis.

The thesis report also contains a proposal for a content marketing plan to the case company to improve its visibility on the market, specifically on the internet, based on the integration of theory and the research results. They are the company's website and Facebook page. This thesis will be shared with the company management on the agreement before the thesis process happened

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

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1. Introduction

In today's world, marketing is a term that is used in various contexts and a baseline understanding is essential. The term marketing is used to describe activities that create value between parties. The world is constantly changing, and the traditional marketing is becoming less effective. The role of modern marketing in organizations is crucial to be ignored. Large and small firms are today competing for the same market and the ones who are most innovative and proactive will be victors. As a result, successful businesses, therefore, regard marketing as a continuous process, through which actual and perceived customer needs are constantly analyzed and monitored in order to fulfill their needs.

The aim of the thesis is to create a content marketing plan for Glow Limited Company, a small-sized marketing agency located in Viet Nam. I have experienced my first job placement in the year 2016. It was a full-time employment for 3 months and was successfully accomplished according to the employer's analysis. The new content market plan is the writer's study providing a clear vision of current position and support the management to have a property strategy for the future. More specifically, it will focus on the marketing channels, examine previous traditional channels, and integrate them with social media marketing online. With the new plan, the aims are to increase company visibility and possibly and the sale.

The main problem of the company is the lack of a bright plan for marketing, which results to that the marketing activities do not have a clear focus. Digital marketing channels are almost not working well; hence they solely have a non-active Facebook page. To survive in the market, Glow is supposed to alter their old ineffective place by presenting and following new ideas for different social media channels and websites. The content marketing plan is carried out to familiarize the company with digital marketing activities, to increase visibility and thus, to retain and acquire customers.

The idea of the thesis came up in the winter of 2017 and the actual implementation and information gathering commenced at the beginning of the year 2018. The final thesis was ready in May 2018.

1.1 Purpose of thesis

The purpose of the thesis is to develop a functional content marketing plan for Glow Company in social media channels which help the company reach potential customers online increase their visibility on market. The implementation includes renovating the previous website together with opening brand new other social media channels. As I have been employed in the company for several months and we have discussed company strategy, a website is the most important and

easiest channel where clients can first approach the company; therefore, a specific focus will be added into the upgraded website. By integrating different channels, the company messages will be delivered to clients with a customer-friendly image.

The content of the plan is based on theory and research results which provide the company management appropriately practical information.

1.2 Research question

In order to achieve the goals through the content marketing plan, this thesis research was conducted to answer these following questions:

- What kind of content marketing strategies should the company need to build to run marketing effectively?
- What social media channels should the company focus on building a content marketing strategy?

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis consists of six chapters. And, the thesis framework is described as follow:

Chapter 1 presents the introduction of the situation in which the thesis was composed, the purpose of the thesis, research questions and the thesis structure.

Chapter 2 contains a theoretical background which helps the writer to have an overview of content marketing. All relevant knowledge in this part surrounds the definition, importance, and the implementation of creating an effective content marketing strategy.

Chapter 3 studies the methodology used in thesis. 2 types of research method were used: qualitative and quantitative research as well as data collection method and data analysis will be mentioned.

Chapter 4 represents the empirical part which consists of the case company's current situation and the marketing analysis. Also, in this chapter the thesis implementation is expressed, and its results are systematically analyzed. The analysis result gained in this part will be used for thesis conclusion in the last chapter.

In chapter 5, a suggestion of a content marketing for the case company Glow will be presented with examples; while chapter 6 concludes the whole thesis.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Marketing in event management

In traditional marketing, the importance is to focus on the selling process. The company starts the business with production and marketing process is done when promoting and selling products to achieve sale targets. Unfortunately, this method is becoming less effective in the modern business environment. Traditional marketing tools do not have a huge influence on target groups and customer purchase decisions tend to be made in different ways. Customers nowadays are attracted by the increase of information flood on the internet and they seek for more information about a company beforehand. Comments which either good or not are trusted so that clients more often rely on their belief on informative labels and articles found online rather than traditional marketing channels. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2012, 19)

When it comes to the event industry, people believe that planning amazing events is to leave a memorable impression on guests and that should be exceeding their expectations. There is not controversial as visibility and recognizability are the successful keys, mainly because great performances lead to word-of-mouth and referrals. Many referrals might be coming from loyal clients. One of the best ways to encourage this is to periodically reach out to your former and existing clients and ask them about their satisfaction as satisfied customers will automatically return to your company. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2012, 33)

It is possible and essential for companies to frequently refresh existing customers. Not only can we focus on landing new customers but also nurturing existing clients in our contacts. Noticing and providing necessary information about what projects we have been working to position company services in the minds of potential clients at the very moment they discuss hosting an event. Concentrating not only on the short-term need of the customer but focusing on the future value thus creating strong customer relationships is emphasized. (Armstrong & Kotler 2016, 33.)

Referrals and sales leads are the lifeblood of any business generally and every event marketing planner specifically. Reality has proven that marketing activities in event service are tough now and firms need to follow the flow line of technology to catch up with the newest trend and effective channels. By which I mean, the internet network holds the largest network for sales leads and unsurprisingly companies have to have an attractive website and active profiles on social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and so on.

2.1.1 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has become the most important aspect of all industry. Three key factors which create customer satisfaction are expectations, perceived performance, and disconfirmation.

Firstly, customers have expectations of the product or service which they wish to experience. After the buying decision is made, he or she has perceived some kinds of performance. After that, the customer compares the experience with the expectations. After the whole process, there are three different kinds of disconfirmation: negative disconfirmation, zero disconfirmation or positive disconfirmation. The customer satisfaction has been formed. (Kotler et al. 2009, 389)

According to Gerson et al (Gerson 1993,5,6,15), in the event marketing management when aiming for satisfied customers the company should not only try to make high quality or services but also the aim should be in achieving loyal and satisfied clients by fulfilling customers' needs. Knowing your customers and reacting to their feedback can create an ideal customer relationship. Once the company achieves that, they achieve their loyalty despite other competitors in the marketplace. (Robinson, Wale & Dickson 2010, 137)

It is vital to for a company to create a long-lasting customer base, which is more profitable. Szwarc (2005,12) argues that satisfied customers are more willing to buy additional products as well as recommend the company to others. A high satisfied customer will turn into a loyal customer.

2.1.2 Marketing channels in event management business

As stated above, traditional channels of marketing are no longer having huge effects on targets. Modern event planners are trying to reach the potential customer data via digital channels.

One of the core advantages of social media in marketing event management or business is that it enables the planner/management to interact with customers. By going through the Facebook statuses or tweets or Instagram story, we have an insight into what they need. This is helpful for guiding a firm to design a proper marketing strategy that matches customers' wants.

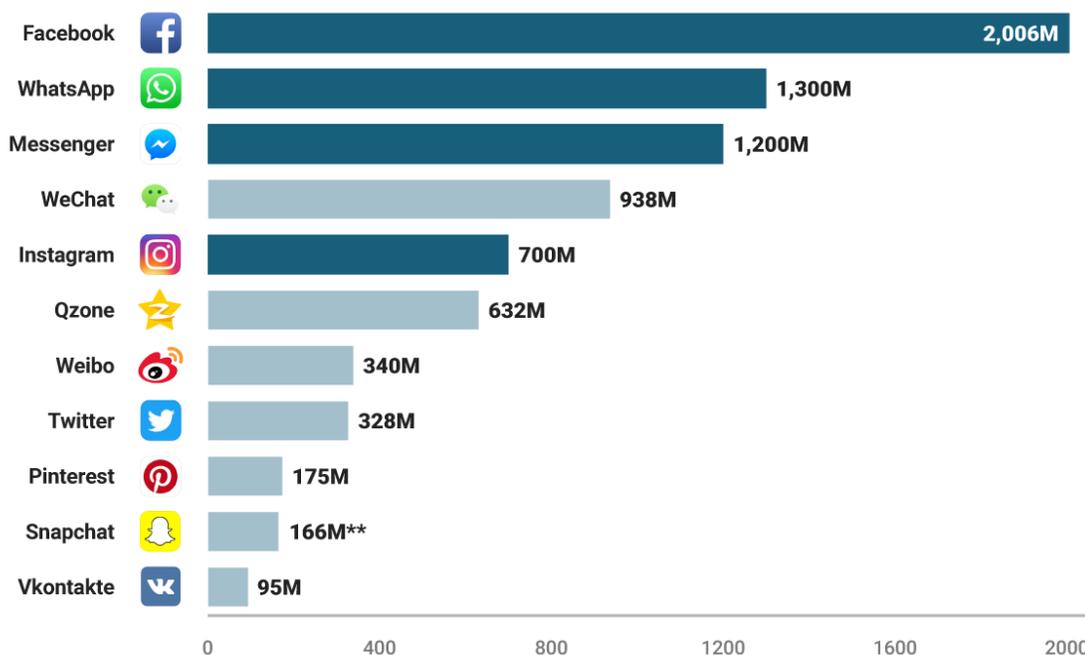
Each channel brings along a separate benefit somehow. For instance, stay active on Facebook let you know what is popular and provide a platform for customers to talk about updated issues and what they prefer. Or, hashtags and keywords are helpful for seeking your potential customers who are interested in what you are offering.

In the competitive world of business, more and more firms are capitalizing on the benefits of social media. For a firm being the leader in the field, it is necessary that the firm has to boost online traffic to the website and increase sales; you need to stay ahead of the competition while providing your customers with the best products and services. Social media offers customers a convenient and accessible way to describe their needs and gives companies a chance to react.

TECH | CHART OF THE DAY

FACEBOOK DOMINATES THE SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Monthly active users of selected social networks and messaging services*



SOURCE: Company data *Latest data (Dec '16–Jul '17) **Daily active users

statista | BUSINESS INSIDER

Figure 1: Social media monthly active users from December 2016 to July 2017 (Business Insider)

The chart shows the domination of Facebook on the social media landscape from December 2016 to July 2017. The amount of active user of a channel reflects the possible marketing visibility on that channel. As can be clearly seen on the chart, Facebook rules over the specific types of application with approximately 2 billion active users a month. Followed are WhatsApp and messenger with 1,3 and 1,2 billion active users monthly. While Instagram accounts for 700 million active users which are nearly one third to Facebook, Twitter has held 328 million of users in the same period. Above-mentioned applications are currently the most popular ones on the platform with a huge number of users; therefore, this is a significant opportunity for any business to join and search for potential customers.

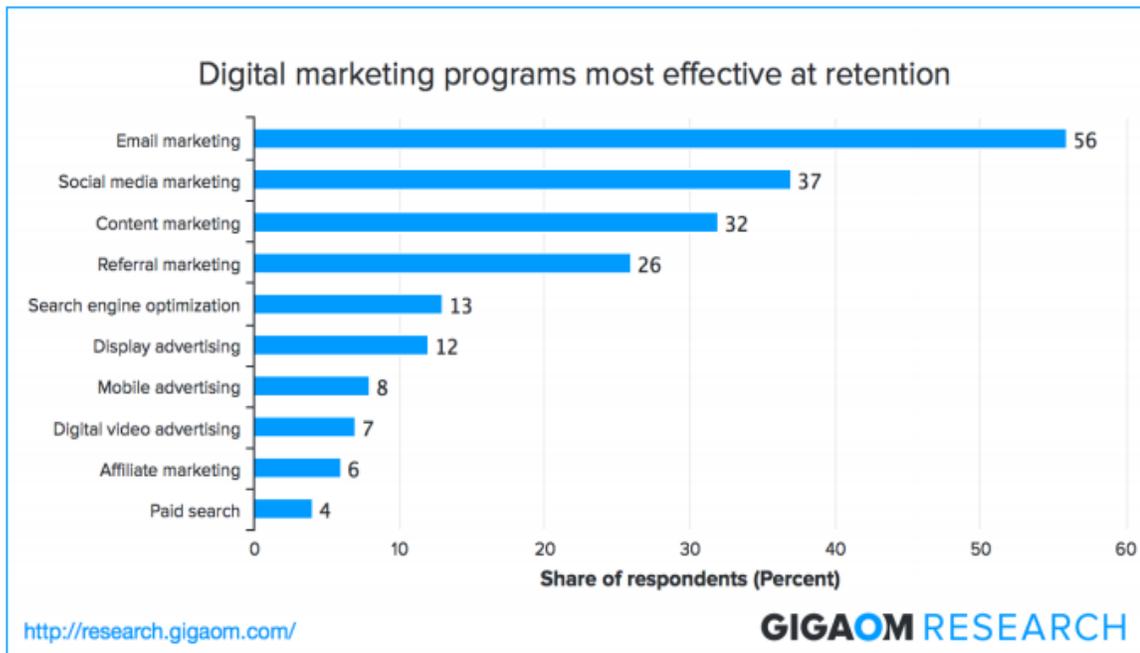


Figure 2: The digital marketing programs most effective at retention.

According to a report from Gigaom and Extole, digital marketers say email remains the most effective tactic across much of sale funnel (56% of respondents); followed by social media marketing with 37%.

Content marketing is standing for the third place with 32% of respondents. That explains why creating custom content is a great way to get to know your leads and customers while building goodwill. The more value you can provide with your content, the easier it will be to build trust with your target segments.

2.2 Content marketing

There are several definitions for the term "content marketing". According to the Content Marketing Institute (2012), "content marketing's purpose is to attract and retain customers by consistently creating and curating relevant and valuable content with the intention of changing or enhancing the consumer behavior. It is an ongoing process that is best integrated into your overall marketing strategy". It means to provide and support customer's buying process with the right kind of information. It also states that content marketing is to educate consumers through relevant and valuable information. (Content Marketing Institute, 2012)

The materials of content marketing are much useful and easy to use for both the audience and relate to what the company is offering. While traditional marketing only focuses on the first steps of customers buying process; it normally stops after products or services are bought, content marketing process follow through during the whole process until customers satisfaction formed and even moves to next step of referrals. Hence, a proper content marketing plan would help to build up the customer's loyalty and helps them to recognize the company's brand for the next purchase among competitors. It can be understood as the content marketing doesn't target on product direct selling; it aims to, using the useful knowledge for each customer's segment, encourage and push them to the brand's awareness. (Content Marketing Institute, 2012)

Content marketing is defined as a comprehensive term; In other words, it is essential to know that content marketing means creating and sharing valuable free content to attract and convert prospects into customers, and customers into repeat buyers. Content in the information for clients can be freely accessed, absorbed, and shared among clients. (Clark, B, 2013)

With the booming of digitalizing environment and networks, the business competition communication has shifted online. From that, a newer term "digital content marketing" has been combined and coined by Drotner & Schroder. Its definition can be understood as the right information is ready on the internet. Internet users/ potentials clients can reach many types of digital content: applications, infographics, videos, audios and so on. (Drotner & Schroder, 2010, pp.10-15)

In conclusion, content marketing and digital content marketing is a new concept of marketing field which aims to educate customers to the brand loyalty by providing relevant information, either online or offline, during the customers' entire buying process. In other words, a successful content marketing can improve the company image and receive the award as the purchasing decision and consumer's loyalty.

2.2.1 The importance of content marketing

Nowadays traditional marketing tools are becoming less effective in practice and modern marketing has always come up with thinking a new type of marketing that involves the creation and sharing of online materials. This is the consequence of the development in technology has relocated the consumers online. Given the number of different digital channels and tactics emerging, most companies do not have resources and abilities to effectively utilize all these. And content marketing emerged to give the right kind of information. Customers then can be approaching company current information.

In case the proper information is provided, not only the customers can benefit but also can the company. With the ideal case, the companies are able to strengthen their images, long-term relationship is established, and it will guarantee for a company sustainable development. In another way, the customers will get the right kind of information they need, and positive purchase action happens. (Lieb 2012, 47-59)

When the company provides customers what they want, there will be a higher chance that they will come back and as a result, increasing the company sales and turnover. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are gained. And, another point is satisfied customers will spread the company to their family and friends. (Gosnay & Richardson 2008, pp.10)

In this phase, we will take a deep look into the buying process to find out the answer to the importance of content marketing. Apparently, a business must identify the process of buying products and services to point out which is the most important stage. Since there, the firms can take a correct way to access customers reasonably.

The buying process consists of five stages:

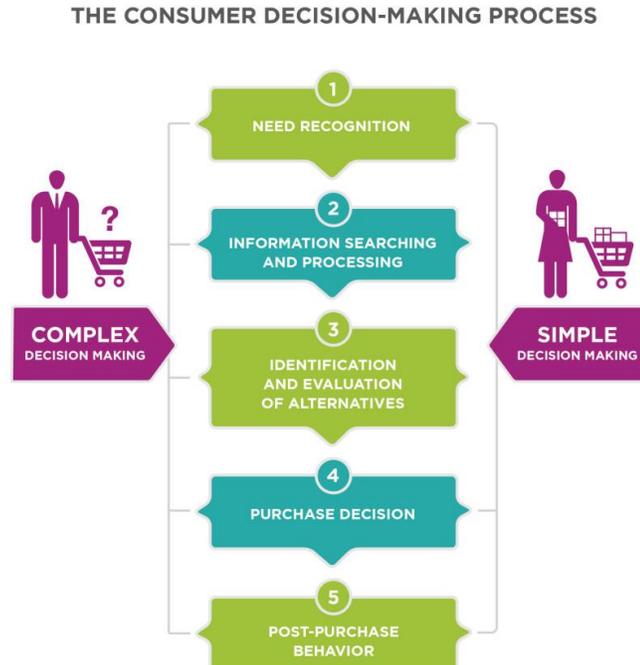


Figure 3: A framework of Consumer's Buying Process

In accordance with Sherlekar et al. (2010, pp. 155-158), the five-step process could be defined in the case of content marketing.

Need recognition: This first step of the process usually occurs when internal or external stimulations have affected a consumer. These internal factors could be personalities, emotions, attitudes, etc. and external ones are probably relative references, social statuses, or social trends, etc. And the role of the marketing department is to create strong signals to guide the customers to company products by using a proper keyword in case customers are using the internet; or, conduct a research with certain customer segments to find out the right cues for them. Taking handphone market as an example, this is a very tough competition at the moment as the need for a smartphone is increasingly becoming huge. However, different segments have different types of wishes. Young people might prefer a smartphone with a high configuration which allows applications run smoothly at the same time; while old people still preferring a simple and minimal phone which basically can respond to their daily usage with an affordable price. A marketer mission is to clarify which type of product is suitable for a certain group, which topics people are talking as well as on which channels that are happening. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp. 155-158)

Information searching and processing: When a customer recognizes their need and tend to find a solution for that, they will start searching for the information. For a phone buyer, he will wish to know what phone brands are popular on the market, which receives good reviews from the previous buyers, also they will see which ones are fit or not to his needs. In this stage, all the relevant information like quality, reviews, warranty services and reputation are sought. Numerous sources such as friends, family or social network connection will be referred. In this case, a marketer is required to create right information and get them available and accessible on the network. This work requires a well-planned marketing strategy to ensure that keywords will be associated with the appropriate channels to maximize the effectiveness. Obviously, with rightly relevant information and good reviews from a reference group, there is a bigger chance for the brand to gain customer attraction and lead to the next step. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp. 155-158)

If the buyer is happy with the brand and believe this brand is trustful, they will move directly to the stage: Purchase decision. Otherwise, they will continue to search for another option and move to Identification and Evaluation of Alternatives stage.

Identification and evaluation of alternatives: After having searched on several brands, now the phone buyer start comparing brands and other benefits he might receive to ensure that he will get the best product with best customer services. This stage is supposed to be critical in the whole process that consists of other factors in the evaluation procedure. To be successful in the market, the expert marketer should be awareness of the tough of this phase. A product/phone is considered

as a package of phone. Several features should be pre-designed by the company such as the model, configuration, design, and price. The marketer is asked to point out the hints of this and prepare a set of features of a phone in brands such as price, quality, etc. in order to launch a proper promotion campaign for certain product segment. This assure for right products can reach right customer segments. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp.155-158)

Purchase decision: After much searching and evaluating (or perhaps very little), consumers at some point must decide whether they are going to buy. It is worth to note that several decision situations can be integrated and marketed as one package. For instance, phone suppliers sell phones and stores that sell accessories try to sell them with add-on warranties. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp.155-158)

Post-purchase behavior: This stage determines the chance whether the customer will come back to the brand next time. All the behavior determinants and the steps of the buying process up to this point take place before or during the time a purchase is made. However, a consumer's satisfaction and evaluations after their buying decision are also vital to the company, because they will influence repeat sales and how the clients tell others about the company product or brand. In other words, if customers achieve a high satisfaction as they have expected, it would provide a positive preference leading to potential purchasing. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp.155-158)

When it comes to digital content marketing, the marketer can use social media to generate responses from post-purchased users, design a constructive content on other different channels and networks so that good comments can be "seen" by the potentially target consumers. With a proper strategy, the marketer can take specific steps to minimize the post-purchase dissonance and keep the company images and interfere even negative feedback emerges. (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp.155-158)

Content marketing walks into the entire buying process instead of focusing only on the first two stages of the path. To be more detailed, a content marketing plan is all about keeping the customer happy at every stage of the decision-making process, including post-purchase. It is not strange that customers sometimes have negative experience after their purchase. These post-purchase anxiety responses a phenomenon which is called cognitive dissonance and marketers must conduct special solutions for reducing that post-purchase dissonance. One solution for the firms is to increase the delivery of a quality solution that will satisfy customers. Another way is to use social media and searching engines to be always available during the communication of the selected customer groups (Lee, 2012, pp.15-24).

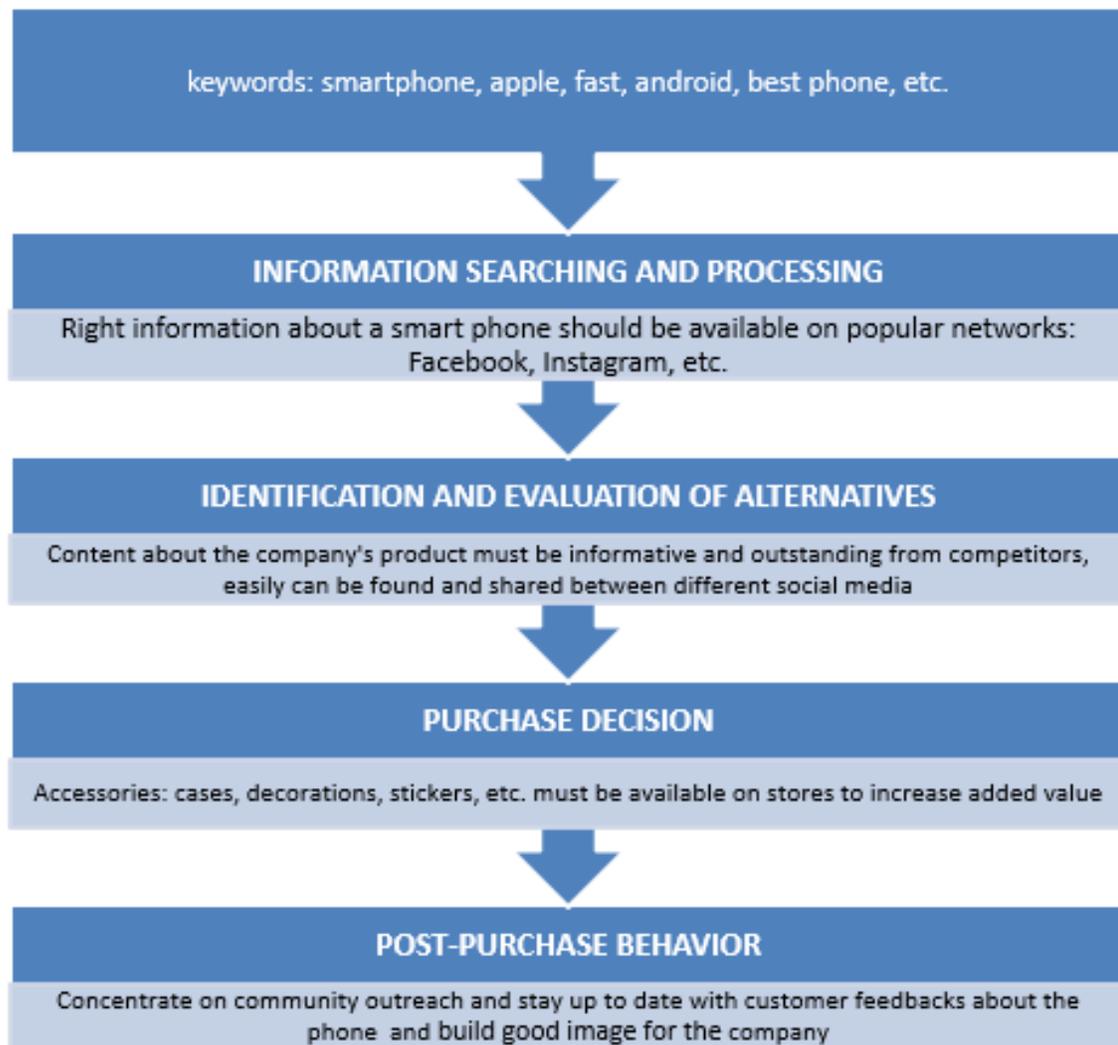


Figure 4: An example of content marketing in customer purchasing process of a phone- target customer segment is young people.

2.2.2 The correlation of content, search, and social media in content marketing

Developing a content strategy is such a challenge that every marketer has to think about it a lot. And, most of us struggle with organizing our enormous content workflow in such a way that we still manage to get user's scarce attention. I decided to take the model of the flywheel of Shane Snow (Snow, 2014) to clarify the relationship between content, search, and social media in content marketing.

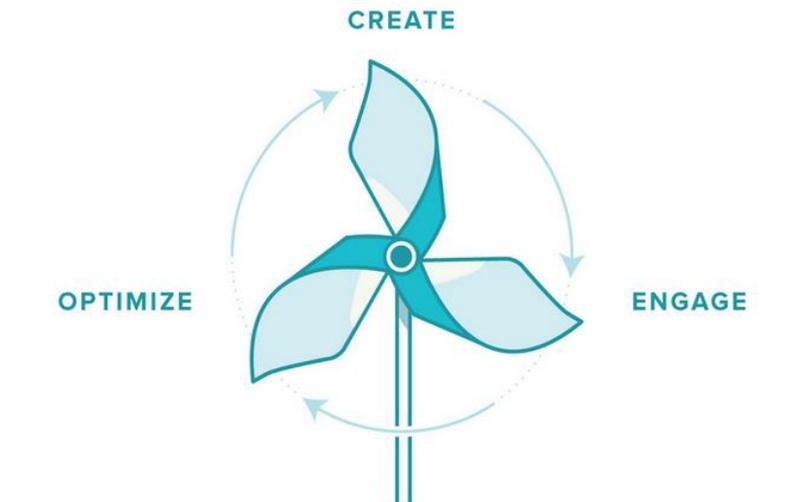


Figure 5: The marketing flywheel (Snow, 2014)

The flywheel's center is the content marketing and is surrounded by three wings which symbolize Create, Engage, and Optimize.

Create: The content of the marketing plan normally comes from the marketers. The content must be valuable and aim to reach target customers. It is also necessary that the content should be relevant to both the target products and users. (Snow, 2014).

Engage: This wing presents the connection and interactions between the brand's audiences. The content marketing has to assure that it will be visible on social media and the marketer's mission is to encourage the audience to spread the content broadly. The content of the marketing plan and the right information should be combined in this wing to transfer to whole image and message of the product to users. Taking a phone brand as an example, Facebook and Instagram or other social media channel of the brand are the places where the contents are published; those could be some advertisements, promotion campaigns combined with other interesting contents from other sources. However, this combination must satisfy the requirement of relevancy. If the audiences find the content interesting and useful, there will be more opportunities they will build an engagement to the channels. Hence, they possibly become the brand's future customers. Moreover, social media channels are nowadays the most popular and active ways for people to connect and interact with each other, the company will probably gain more potential customers as satisfied customers are probably willing to share their positive experience about the channels to friends and family. (Snow, 2014).

Optimize: According to Snow, it is crucial for the marketer to understand and build a proper strategy to optimize the searching process as it is difficult for customers to rely on search engines always. Marketers have to be aware of the importance of search engines to update the latest popular keywords or the newest trends are going on. By this way, they can re-design the company's content to help the brand's information appear on the search engines as top position. And there is a fact that the rank of the website can be increased along with the number of times the contents are shared on social media. (Snow, 2014).

In summary, the three wings of the flywheel are closely involved and form the entire content marketing plan. Results-oriented marketers will know how to create a comprehensive content marketing plan which is easy to be shared in social media and rank up the company page/ channels on search engines. The more effectively these three wings collaborate, the smoothly the flywheel will operate.

2.2.3 Executing the content marketing

As the competition in the market is increasingly becoming challenging, being creative and interesting is the only way for the firms to survive. Communication between all parties, therefore, must be interesting and addictive than before and content marketing, as a result, become an indispensable tool. In this section, we will learn how to establish a content marketing strategy with the keywords research, content planning and social network landscape in accordance with the publication of Garner (2013b).

2.2.3.1 Keywords research

At first, marketers need to build a proper strategy for finding keyword research on the internet. This is the key ingredient in the stage of need recognition (customer purchasing process-section 2.2.1) (Sherlekar et al., 2010, pp.155-158). It is because the companies are not able to familiarize with all customer segments and swift changing behavior of the clients, information needs to be collected continuously daily to keep the company up to date to the growing complexity and diversity of the market. This step has been emphasized by Hollensen (2007, pp.153-182).

As the internet user growth is booming, nowadays almost all review and analysis can be carried out online; a lot of technology companies have developed digital analysis tools to help this process. Especially, online target customers can participate in a group and describe their experience with certain products as well as they might do answer questions from the company or even a third-party agency. Clearly, data can be collected and analyzed much easier than before with traditional methods. Taking Pinterest as an example, most expert marketers apprehend that target focus groups are capable of being determined based on their hobbies and habits on Pinterest. Also, a

survey can be done online for a small fee with the help of survey websites: Swagbucks (<http://swagbucks.com>) or Toluna (<http://uk.toluna.com>) or free of charge with SurveyMonkey (<http://surveymonkey.com>). Briefly, social media and internet platform has offered many tools to access all kinds of potential customers if the marketers focus on their account and keep the brand page active. Online focus group then can be identified effectively and economically. Garner (2013b, pp.57-58)

The theory in this part was discussed to give a suggestion of online marketing tools which can help marketers to find the keywords what audiences are most searching on the internet, the hot topics they are talking about as well as the languages they use. From that marketers are able to identify the gap between the audience's need and the current content of the company and create and right content plans. There are a big number of tool are being used in the network, depends on the need of the marketers and the ability to handle the survey cost; however, in the scope of this paper, the author will focus on Google and Bing which are the most popular searching tool and most used by people all over the world.

Top Search Engines (01-Jun-2016)

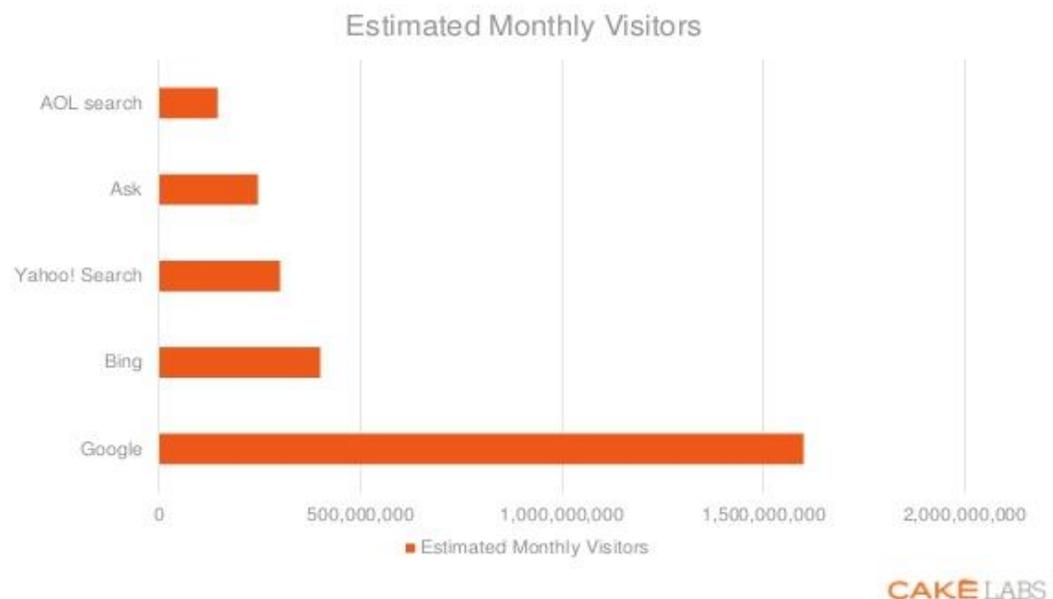


Figure 6: Top search engines (June 2016)

Google - This is the world's biggest search engine amongst search engine optimization companies. Gradually, Google has evolved itself as the best search engine monster holding trillions of data and giant database. Technically, Google is using web crawlers to organize information from web pages and other publicly available content in the Search index. This crawling process operates with a checking of billions of websites from past crawls uploaded by the website owners, using links on those sites to discover other pages. When keywords are added to the box, the results will be shown based on the average number of search during the latest period time for the target and related information. (Google facts)

Bing - is Microsoft's product to challenge Google in the area of search and is the second most popular engine after Google. It is originally from MSN Search and updated since 2009. First, Bing looks at the body of content, keywords, examine a certain search phrase within the content, find the value of relevant information and determines a page's content and reliability. Marketers can use the hashtags and look for the newest keywords from then can add the appropriate content with higher ranks on the search engine to reach the audience. (Garner, 2013b, p.77)

The crucial mission of the marketer is to be active on the network to be up to date with the users' newest search keywords. From there, he can identify and point out the target groups of customers and generate the right content for each certain group. (Garner, 2013b, pp.57-59)

2.2.3.2 Content developing

This section is about to build a relevant and abundant content based on data collected from the previous step. There are obviously many approaches to developing contents and, in this thesis, the author will focus on a familiar method which is a combination of two elements: headline and SEO Copywriting guide.

The headline is the message: According to Clark (2006), the 80/20 rule is the most famous truth of user reading habit. He stated that on average, there are 8 among 10 internet readers will read only the headline and only 2 amongst that will be likely to move to the content of the message of a news. Without the interesting headline, the rest will probably not be read. The key feature which highlights the uniqueness of the content is its headline, stated Garner (2013b, p.89). Consequently, the headline is the most important part of any piece of content - whether it is an article, newsletter, sales copy, blogs or just a message.

It is no doubt that the marketer must be creating a winning headline to steer the reader from message to message. By following the 6-step method, it guarantees the marketing content will be along with a winning headline: (According to public writings)

1. Understand the product/ message/ content thoroughly. It is important to understand the target group also. Once the marketer well controls both sizes, the headlines created will perfectly target the emotions of the readers.
2. The outline should be created first. Then the headline content
3. Try to be creative with some other different headlines.
4. Find the most important benefit that company wants to share with customers and include it in the headlines.
5. Include the product with the headlines.
6. Select the best simple headline which contains all and enough information.

Be noticed that the headline should be simple as simplicity is clear and the best. Readers might be just confused with complex headlines and might walk away from the content no matter what.

SEO Copywriting for the content: Here are two questions that the author will address in order to clarify the SEO Copywriting for the content:

What is SEO Copywriting and Why is it important?

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization. And improving your SEO strategy is meant to the actions taken to assure your website can be found in a search engine's results page (SERP) when customers searching for keywords or key phrases which are related to the content on company's website. SEO copywriting can be understood as a form of online writing to support your contents have:

- Contains key phrases - keywords that the internet users use when they want to search for information
- Support to rank up the content in search engines such as Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc.
- Increase qualified traffic to your site based on your goals.

To optimize the content marketing, the marketers always need to remember to include some of the relevant search keywords that decided to deliver to the readers/clients. It is essential to share the content from the company website or blog to boost the SEO. As there is a connection between social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and so on, if a content is shared to those above channels, it helps Google to index it faster.

One of the most important things is that the content and the headlines must be consistent; otherwise, search engines will crawl out the inconsistency and drive users to another site. It is vital to note that content needs to read naturally so that it should be natural looking in the content. (Copy Blogger, 2014, pp.33-38)

Keyword frequency: although the content always needs to position something or some message from the marketer, its necessary to avoid keyword stuffing as search engines will understand that they are trying to manipulate the ranking by repeating the keywords. With a percentage higher than 5,5% the content will be low down in the ranking. (Copy Blogger, 2014, pp.33-38).

Apart from content and keyword frequency, another factor which affects the SEO copywriting is link building. Basically, this means having a good site to site relationship through links. When the company has more quality websites linking to the home website, search engines will know that your website content is highly trustfully associated with other websites. Your website then is reliable and trusted and will automatically have a higher position in the results of user searching.

2.2.3.3 Building the publishing and conversational platforms

In this step, the marketer needs to choose which channels are most reasonable to publish the content and commit the engagement to the audience. It is important to say that the channels have to be smartly selected to assure that the content will go to the right target group. To be more detailed, it is not always that the content should be published in the big-four of social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+); it must depend on the content and the target group of the company. It can be explained as although the content is not on the big four, they still have the privilege of a group where members are from the target groups and they are interested in the products that the marketers are aiming. (Garner, 2013b, pp.63-67).

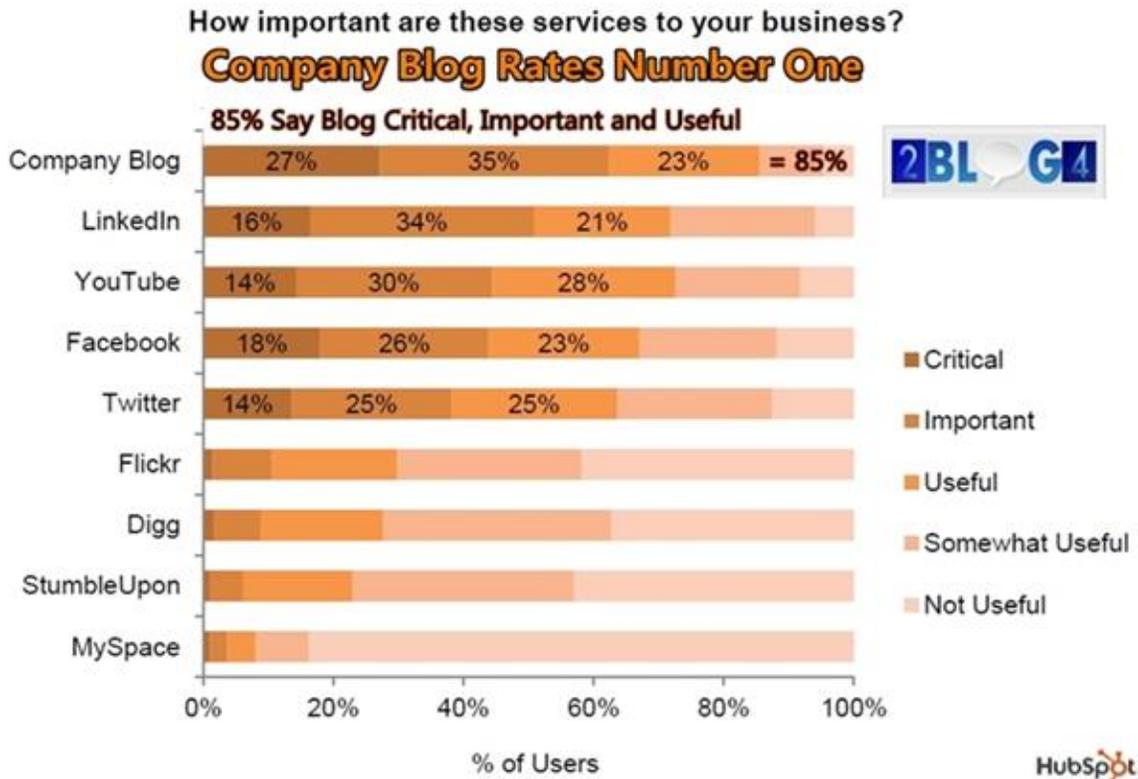


Figure 7: How important are these services to your business?

The above table is a research carried out by HubSpot pointing out the most important and effective channels that are useful for business. Of those channels, the company blog is cited by 85% of business as critical, important, and useful to business. In other words, blogging is the most effective way to deliver the content marketing to the users; followed by the big four social media channels LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

In conclusion, one of the biggest advantages of content marketing is it improves the brand reputation by building trust through content marketing. It is vital that building trust would help the firms to establish a brand reputation to customers. As the users will be affected directly or indirectly from other sites when they visit, the more value you can provide in your page, the easier it will hold the users. Marketers should distinguish the difference between traditional marketing and content marketing.

Marketers should follow three above-mentioned steps to build a competitive strategy for company content marketing plan:

- Keyword research: know how to use the search engines to seek for the most popular trend/keywords that the users are searching.
- Content planning: Follow the SEO copywriting to create a winning headline and body content. They must be consistent and avoid keywords stuffing.
- Platform developing: select the correct networks to publish the content.

2.3 Social media marketing

Today, with nearly half the world's population wired to the internet, the ever-changing increasing connectivity has changed the traditional thinking to online thinking. Many kinds of business types must change itself to adapt to this trend. Seemingly, with every single day passing, a new approach is born to revolutionize the entire business environment. In order not to be isolated to the trend, marketing focus now is also swiftly taking steps to move from traditional marketing thinking to online marketing.

There is a fact that customers in this time are very familiar and sensitive with the internet. They prefer to seek for the needed information before actual purchasing; let imagine if your company information is not available on the internet or somehow your website ranking is too low, there are almost no chances for customers to access to your brand. That explains why the online presence is even more important than actual presence in this era of technology. Online marketing is crucial as it aligns with the way customers make their buying process. According to Garner, the number of consumers who are using the internet and social media to look for and even make their own research and a comparison between alternative brands is surprisingly increasing. Therefore, internet marketing opens a big chance for even small-sized firms to reach and build a relationship with target customers globally at a minimal cost. (Garner, 2013b, pp.63-67).

As stated in section 2.2.1 The importance of content marketing, traditional marketing thinking is only focusing on reaching potential clients by advertising with flashing and interesting images. Those could be an advertisement on the TV, a beautiful image of video on the website, etc., its purpose is to get as many as possible customers and place in their mind the company/products image. This old tool is no longer successful in the world's digital revolution as it does not go with customer's buying process and they will soon leave after getting bored; whilst modern online marketing tool is to earn a place in customers mind by nurturing a sustainable connection and communication. Online marketing can be conducted via various platforms like the website, blogs, and social media channels. (Eve 2011, pp.7-8)

2.3.1 Websites

In today's digital world, an attractive and functional website is essential and indispensable to a business, no matter it is big or small size. Without a website or if a company website's content is not up to date, then probably the company will be losing great opportunities for approaching potential clients. Reality has demonstrated that websites can be useful in many ways to carry company strategies. Thanks to the significantly swiftly development of information technology, modern websites now can not only contain all needed information of the company but also consist of many different interesting social media contents which can help to improve the communication and connection with customers. In order to raise the effectiveness of this internet marketing channel, website contents, therefore; need to be updated and refreshed frequently. (Juslén 2011, pp.59-60).

Increasing company visibility is one of the striking points that make the website become important. Imagine if customers somehow have heard about the company, they may start searching for the information online first to research and make the comparison.

Usability and accessibility are key factors for the company website survival. Standing on the customer's side, information and communication technologies allow them to access the information they want in a convenient way. From the point of view of the marketer, different tools enable marketing creators to deliver the contents and strategies with various and interesting channels. Consequently, both clients and company can benefit from the provision of interactive assistance and information displaying.

According to Kim (Kim, al. 2007, pp.431). In today's enormous challenging, successful companies are required to pay more attention to website content and focus on customer segments. An effective website is not only delivered relevant information to the target group but also increase the company visibility and trustworthy in customer's eyes. To clarify, a high ranked website certainly will build up a high and beautiful image for the company and turn it into a competitive advantage. There is one point that needed to be noticed. A company website is existing for the purpose of serving customer searching process; hence, a company should put efforts to not only deliver the right information but also in the ways information are displayed. (Eve 2011, pp.84-85)

2.3.2 Company Blogs

Besides websites, the company blog is another similar way which helps to interact with clients. Marketers will use their voice to create interesting contents and lure the readers to the target. Company blog was shown as the most effective marketing tool for business (Figure above) because it will create a personal channel where a company uses to deliver information to the customer

about what is about the company and what the company is doing. Company blogs might bring many marketing tools possibly, where the company can describe company mission and vision as well as learning about customer's needs. Communication between customers and the company will become much easier through news and messages created in company blogs. (Lieb 2011, pp.73)

Marketing is so far known as a way to deliver company's value or product to customers. And economists have invented many ways to complete this mission and help the company become more visible in the market. Blogging is one of such those ways; this has been used since the 1990's until now. The effectiveness of blogs is mainly based on its features which allow readers to read and share their thinking by leaving comments on the blog posts. There has been a huge interaction between readers and the society and marketers are so sensitive enough to realize this opportunity and gradually develop blogs into a marketing tool.

A company blog is a very active communication platform where users and customers can freely leave their comments and thoughts about the contents which company provided. This is considered an advantage of blogging compared to other marketing tools as it is cheap to get customers attention without paying any costs. From there, the firms can improve service quality based on information collected of what customers like or do not like. (Gillin 2007, pp.5)

Another reason to highlight the advantages of blogging is that they can be created in many types. For a certain customer segment, blogs are made with a certain form; they could be a text, an audio, a video, or visual contents. Basically, blogs are a free-form communication tool where creators are able to develop their ideas without a barrier. Blogs can be created and be a focus on target customers, partners, press and even for company internal usage. (Lieb 2011, pp.75)

A successfully marketing blog consists of a comprehensive marketing strategy of effectively building blogs' contents. Basically, blogs are a form of social media where blogs creators and readers interaction happen. As blogs are about to tell company stories so that if marketers can create rich and attractive contents to make the story more interesting, more likely customers will take actions of following company's blogs for the next chapters. As a result, blogging becomes an effective marketing asset.

Apart from blogs advantages, this influenced tool also has several disadvantages demanding bloggers to have a great sense of writing style and huge communication resources. Another is this method requires a lot of time to ensure that blog contents are always up to date with the company's new messages.

2.3.3 Other social media channels: Facebook, Instagram

Facebook - Nowadays companies are aware of the importance of social media channels to their business. Several new opportunities can be found for business to customers if the company's management knows how to build a right tactic. There are three main advantages make Facebook important: popularity, content capabilities, and advertisement targeting tools. According to professor Kotler & Keller, the way how companies are using Facebook to promote business is described "Companies use Facebook to introduce new products, launch videos, and promotions, upload images, communicate to consumers, listen to feedback, and create an overall personal look and feel" (Kotler & Keller 2012, pp.564).

Found in 2004 and very fast Facebook has become the most popular and powerful network platform for social connection and business. To run a B2B social network marketing, companies are required to strengthen their presence in a place where having billions of users. In other words, if a company wants to access and communicate with billions of customers or partners, the company images must be visible on this Facebook network and interact with them. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 563). Among all social networking platforms, apparently, Facebook has demonstrated to be the most effective one to target customers. If a customer shows their interests to the company' page, Facebook will enable the marketers to realize that face and then allow them to build a direct communication to the customers based on their interests. By collecting details of your potential customers, Facebook gives companies a chance to build an effective marketing campaign based on their interests and connections. The purpose of this act is to guild customers to the contents that companies have already prepared; and, if the customers find it interesting, there are more chances that they will follow the company page or even share it. Consequently, the company's presence on the internet is helped to expand.

Although Facebook is a most interactive network with billions of users, there are challenges that companies should take into consideration. The fact is that companies only want to gain increasingly fans or positive followers, but anti-fans are inevitable. Along with positive comment and compliments that help company to influence the market, negative comments are also added to company's pages. In this case, a marketer should not try to delete those as it just clarifies that company is hiding something and not trustful. Instead, it is necessary to give answers to all positive and comments publicly. Only illegal comments should be deleted to protect company brand. (Levy 2010, pp.65)

Another challenge companies fear when using Facebook is that when customers like the company's page, it will automatically send information to the Facebook system and then Facebook will also send similar contents or advertising to the customers. (Facebook Ads) So if a customer sees others

are more helpful they will probably consider and take a chance to change their mind toward a newer company. Therefore, marketers must continuously update and build up new right and helpful contents to keep in contact with current customers before reaching potentials.

Instagram - a free application where users can freely share their photos and videos in real time. This app was established in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. In April 2012, Facebook has bought Instagram and has cooperation with this application. Like Facebook, the number of Instagram has been increasing significantly and create a big market for business since then. Currently, the number of monthly active users has reached 800 million. (Instagram fact)

Marketers have been sensitive to utilize this new social media network to expand company presence as almost all world biggest brand are using Instagram currently. There is no doubt that Instagram becomes one of the most important channels for marketers who want to target their customers. As a picture-based network, Instagram easily effectively allow customers to have a look directly at what company is offering visually; this is helpful for even small business. This can be clarified as no matter how big the company is, customers will spend time on its site if they are able to build an attractive and interesting account with very nice photos and videos. (Zimmerman 2013, pp.293).

Different from other applications, Instagram users tell their stories by sharing photo and messages with those; users tend to be more sensitive to what they will post and spend more time on editing pictures. In exchange, they are more likely to visit an account if it has eye-catching photos a unique rather than a less frequent one with normal pictures. Besides, visual communication allows marketers to transfer business message into pictures and videos which increases the possibility to communicate with customers effectively. When using a photo-based tool for brand communication, companies are having more opportunities to run the marketing campaign much faster than textual methods as usual.

To be more effective in the market, it is the company's responsibility to get to know and understand their customer's taste, since then marketers will know the customer preference and build right contents (photos and videos) in the most similar way to customer's taste. Successful Instagram account means posting great pictures and videos, following interesting people and gains positive followers from the market. Interacting with people is a way to guarantee you to have a great account. Once customers like your account they will follow and frequently like your stories, and this action will be saved to the app so that customers' followers can also see what they are connecting with. As a result, the company might have a lot of new customers who share similar interests. (Zimmerman 2013, pp.301).

Briefly, Instagram is undoubtedly one of the most popular social networks today which marketers can leverage to build up and strengthen company's brand. As we all know that there is a very big market on Instagram and it is the perfect opportunity to engage the firm's brand to the network. Like other tools, having an account does not assure the success but the thing is that companies must flexibly build a right strategy to target customer segment.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology utilized to do the thesis research will be described clearly. The business dictionary has defined research methodology as:

“The process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making business decisions. The methodology may include publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques, and could include both present and historical information”. (Business Dictionary)

There are two types of research methods: quantitative research and qualitative research. Both methods have pros and cons. The use of these methods depends on certain situations and the purpose of the author to reasonably collect and analyze data. In this thesis, both research methods were applied to design and execute the interview and survey. The reason for this will be discussed in more detail in the following parts.

3.1 Research approach

Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to collect the data for the research. This included collecting both primary and secondary data to make the research comprehensive and credible. Interviews' questions and survey questionnaires were used to collect information whilst a review of the past literature provided the secondary data.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is about to collect the qualitative data which is uncountable or analyzed based on the development of concepts that is useful to explore social phenomena. It is, however, referred to other resources or materials or interviews' result. The qualitative research points out either the view or thinking of the interviewees or by observation to explore the problems of the research cases. If the quantitative research only uses the number of the survey conducted to analyze the issue and come up with the possible solution, the qualitative research uses extensive knowledge and analysis to study the aiming and conceptualization of the target group who and target the solutions. (Saunders & Lewis 2006, pp.470-475)

The qualitative research method, in some cases, overweight the quantitative research method. It is, however, has a clear drawback that researchers are required to have a certain level of knowledge in the field related to understand, analyze, and summarize information collected before delivering them to the outcome. With the qualitative research method, researchers are given an opportunity to access a direct view of the issue through the interviews or observations rather than just working the number analysis. Therefore, the content would probably be studied more deeply in association with human behaviors and perceptions. (Adams 2007, pp.155-161.)

In the thesis, qualitative research method was applied to conduct the interview with the target groups who are experts with many years of experience in this marketing field. According to Myers (Myers 2013, pp.7-9), qualitative research is most matched to apply for social and cultural issues. Moreover, through this thesis, the author has the wish to combine personal theoretical knowledge with the experts' experience to deeply study the topic for future usage. (Myers 2013, pp.7-9).

Quantitative research

If the qualitative research method focuses on exploring information on human sides, quantitative search depends on the analysis the relationship between variables of the issues. Quantitative research method needs many results from variables measured at one time and the output is based on the integration of many objects. In reality, there could be hundreds of independent or dependent variables being studied at one time. In other words, quantitative research is presenting the issue by integrating and analyzed data mathematically. Quantitative research requires a big number of results to quantify and transform it into a pattern which is used to cover the research topic. (Veal 2011, pp.36-37).

The advantage of quantitative research lies on its objectivity. While the result of qualitative research lies in the subjectivity of the target group's views, quantitative research method allows researchers to measure and analyze data mathematically which means variables are studied independently. The finding is more objective relatively. For that reason, quantitative research is often used in social behavior study when researchers want to find out the possibly common rules. Apart from its advantages, quantitative research method also has disadvantages. One of them is that the content of this method does not include as many details as the qualitative method. The quantitative approach's scope is although bigger but shorter and it is often applied in research of behavior of the whole. (Veal 2011, pp.36-37).

The reason for the author selecting quantitative research approach was to understand how customers respond to the content marketing strategy.

3.2 Data collection method and data analysis

Data collection method could be understood as the process of gathering information and performing them methodologically to the outcome of the issue. There are two main methods to gather information: primary and secondary data collection. While the primary method is used to collect data from direct cases, secondary data collection completes itself through other publicly trustful materials. For example, any kind of documentation: letters, agendas, company records. Another example of secondary data is a form of computer files and records. It could be for example survey data, charts, or reports of company performance. (Adam 2007, pp.107-112).

In case of study research, the interview and surveys are usually the main methods to collect the data. The best way to collect many-sided information is to interview people with different points of view of the situation. The main point of the interview is to understand how interviewees interpret the situation. For the interview with the target group, the author had designed questions which much focus on the knowledge and opinions toward the content strategy. Those questions surround the core that how they understand and experience the content marketing in real business and what they are expecting their company's marketing channel work (with the suggested plan). With this method, the aim is to collect high-quality data and possibly go deeper into the topic. This job comprises structured questions before the interview so that it will happen systematically and explore as many information as possible. However, several new questions might come up with during the interview and can also be discussed. Regarding the survey questionnaire, this approach is to address the problems with quantitative data collected. The content of the questionnaire is wide and might cover various aspects of the issue. The results could be analyzed and studied in many types of diagrams but mainly it is based on the statistical performance.

When studying the empirical part, the second method was the secondary data collection. The writer utilized the available public academic materials from the school library and trusted sources of materials. Besides, information was also referred from other verified sources to make the thesis content more reliable and truthful. Moreover, the author had a chance to do the "participation observation" during his internship there in 2016. However, the internship period was not long enough to help to build a rightly comprehensive view of the company situation. Instead, during the interview with the target group, those personal observations were added to questions with the host company manager in the open discussion at the end of the interview.

Data analysis step started after the data collection. Both empirical data and information from the interview and survey were thoroughly analyzed systematically.

When it comes to the analysis of the interview, qualitative data collected were integrated and summarize to seek for the common trend is happening in the company's marketplace. Qualitative data is not easy reduce to numbers, it is more related to company concepts, opinions, and values. Qualitative data analyses can be divided into five different categories:

- *Content analysis* - This analysis can be described as a method for summarizing any form of content by counting different parts of the content
- *Narrative analysis* - This method transcribes experience. It's important to know that almost every interview has narrative aspect
- *Discourse analysis* - This is a method of analyzing spoken interaction and different types of written texts
- *Framework analysis* - This method is popular in large-scale social policy research, but also medical and health researches.
- *Grounded theory* - Can be described as analytic induction.

(Source:<https://research-methodology.net/research-methods/data-analysis/qualitative-data-analysis/>)

The qualitative analysis of interview has been analyzed without any kind of software. The author decided to use a traditional method of qualitative analysis, which means after gathering data researchers the data were placed into various categories such as content marketing, social media, customer service, risks, and possibilities.

As been mentioned before the author used also quantitative method of data collection. The quantitative part of research is necessary to get an exact picture of customers' needs and find the solution to the research problem. Quantitative method is numerically oriented and involves statistical analysis.

The result is a synthesized information source from interviewees and theoretical study. Apart from that, data gained from the surveys were analyzed and summarized primarily by the writer's analytical skill. The gathered data can be used in the future to measure customer awareness about social media channels and to understand customer needs.

4. Empirical part

4.1 The case company Glow

The Glow limited company is a subsidiary of PPlus Company, an innovative agency - expert in the interactive advertisement, 3D hologram, Mobile App, Augmented Reality. The company was established in 2015 and it functions in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. The Glow management's vision: "Our services are to pull consumers closer to your business brand". (Glow limited company's material).

The company has serviced several clients such as ANZ bank, VIB Bank, and run various product marketing campaigns like Dutch Lady, Lifebuoy, Hazeline, AXE, OMO, Sunsil, Coca Cola. (Glow limited company's material).

Owned and managed by a young talented manager, the company has forward-thinking visions in marketing. Instead of pitching new products or services, the company's marketing team is providing new solutions to client's issues. The company's operation focuses on opening interactions between clients, implementing events or promoting services in the closet way to customers. All goals must be clear and involve and favoring clients' intentions. (Glow limited company's material).

The Glow limited company has main services in event organizing, including everything from searching marketing, generates new ideas, decorating, photographing and so on. As Glow also has just established a separate information technology apartment, the management has agreed to use newest techniques to promote company services. It can be considered a company's competitive advantages. (Glow limited company's material).

The company headquarters locates in Ho Chi Minh City but services in almost all provinces in Viet Nam thanks to strong available partnerships of the parent's company PPlus. (Glow limited company's material).

The process of developing a content marketing plan starts with the analysis of the present state of the company. And, SWOT analysis approach will be used to examine internal and external environment as the case company does not well handle those factors which include unpredictable variables, SWOT analysis is used to study the firm's strength, weaknesses and to predict potential opportunities and threats which affect the company position in the market.

4.2 Analysis of the present state

According to the interview question 4: " Which channels do you prefer to be the company's social media channels?", the CEO's answer was that he would select to build an active website for the company. He explained that in Viet Nam website is still the most effective and familiar channels

for customers to reach a company when they have to need to seek information. Neither Facebook or YouTube channel, commercial websites have been standing on the top of the effective way of marketing tool due to Vietnam customer's behavior. People might search for a company Facebook or other channels only if they already became a loyal customer.

However, according to the company resources and the author's work experience in the Glow Limited Company, the firm has not been effective in social marketing. The biggest problem was that the company do not have an active website which is crucial in any business nowadays. As a new young company, the Glow is facing difficulties of human resource for operations. Normally one worker has to be responsible for more than 1 tasks and it results in the low outcome. Although the Glow needs sometimes help from PPlus, most of the works could be conducted by their own resources. The case company was established by PPlus Limited Company (the parent company), and mainly achieved customers and as well as the website from the PPlus. The Glow used to have a website in the first days when the company was established in 2015; however, it was not active due to the lack of an Information Technology department. Therefore, in the scope of the thesis, an active and attractive website is the priority to help the company's ability to deliver messages to customers.

The answers collected for the interview question 8th "What benefits do you wish to have from your company's content marketing plan?" lead to a demand of a website which contents: eye-catching interface, modern design, and suits Vietnam people style of business.

The fact is that the Glow company's customers are mostly from the parent company PPlus (70%) and the remaining 30% are gained from own marketing department. Glow much depends on the PPlus portfolio understandably. However, Glow management board have been trying to build up a separately effectively marketing team to develop their own customer portfolios. The crucial point for the Glow company now is to somehow make a marketing plan with the right content to make them more visible in the market and stand out from the PPlus as well as competitors.

4.3 Competitors - Partnership - Target market

Competitors - The number of event management companies has been increasing swiftly along with the development of the economics. In Ho Chi Minh City where the case company Glow locates, there are approximately 5000 companies have registered which bring such a huge challenge in this industry. It requires every company have to be creative and even be in a partnership network with others to strengthen their visibility in the market. The biggest competitors do not come from big event agencies whose customers are national companies or big organizations. But, according to the Glow CEO, the Glow is now on the challenge of medium size firms in the market such as

Vietlinks, Fly Pro, Viet Sky and so on. The reason for this is that these companies do not only operate in the same market but also have the similar target customer segments.

The Glow company's situation is positive regardless its competitors since this is a sub-company from the PPlus and therefore, they share customer portfolio. There is also one thing needs to be noticed that PPlus is a medium-size even agency which has been operating in this field since 2008 and has a great partnership with other big event companies in the local.

Partnership - Currently, Glow has not successfully built a strong partnership with big event companies in Viet Nam or Ho Chi Minh City directly. This can be explained as the company was just established and run operation in last few years; the company resource is still not big enough for that. Fortunately, Glow inherited customer portfolios and partnership through the parent firm PPlus which sometimes allows them to reach unexpected potential clients when having cooperation in organizing events with PPlus.

Target market - The target market is the market where there are customers willing to pay and buy products and services that companies want to sell. Identifying target market demands the company must conduct several pieces of research to point target market out of the whole market. At the moment, the Glow company's target market consists of all business to business customers and individual customers which located in Viet Nam. Apparently, this target market comes from the fact that the Glow does not have enough resource to conduct big events in other provinces.

Another reason is that although there are many event agencies have been established these days in Ho Chi Minh City, the number of other companies which operate in other fields also significantly increase and it brings along a great opportunity for Glow.

4.4 SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix

SWOT is a method which entitles companies and organizations to defines and evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of products and services that they are delivering to clients. Internal and external elements are taken into consideration which is useful for the company to stand out from market competition. The output of SWOT is to help to recognize which business areas need to be improved or developed. When conducting SWOT analysis for the case company, the aim is to find out the position where the company located in the market and try to look for the target market based on its internal resources and external challenges. The result might be used as a reference when it comes to taking an important decision. (SWOT analysis 1996-2005)

According to Wehrich, The TOWS matrix can be used as “a conceptual framework for a systematic analysis that facilitates matching the external threats and opportunities with the internal weaknesses and strengths of the Organization”. On the one hand, the writer decided to use TOWS matrix to move further into the company’s situation to seek for the matches between the case company’s strengths and opportunities to identify a strategy for create competitive advantages. On the other hand, TOWS’s purpose is to look for a chance to overcome the weaknesses of the case company by utilize upcoming opportunities. Potential threats are also can be avoided by strengths. (Wehrich 1982)

	<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety of services offer - Present in many local business forums - Fast response to customer service 	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak brand awareness - Not effective in social media channels - The company website contents are poor and not up to date - Online traffic is slow and hard to find
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The explosion of internet - The development of digital marketing tools - Customer’s awareness of social media - Positive feedbacks might be useful for advertising 	<p style="text-align: center;">SO-strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen and increase brand image visibility - Focus on target customer segments 	<p style="text-align: center;">WO-strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-open a website with rich content and up-to-date - Improve the interaction with customers in social media channels
<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Huge competition in the local business zone - Negative feedbacks might challenge company’s image 	<p style="text-align: center;">ST-strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlight the company’s competitive advantage over competitors - Compensate the limitations by improving high-quality customer services 	<p style="text-align: center;">WT-strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding the brand - Improve the competitiveness by search engine optimization

Table 1: The SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix of the Glow Limited Company

According to Wehrich, The TOWS matrix can be used as “a conceptual framework for a systematic analysis that facilitates matching the external threats and opportunities with the internal weaknesses and strengths of the Organization”.

The SWOT analysis and TOWS matrix clears out that Glow has good strength points of company's operation such as product and services offerings and attempt to be present in many local business forums to expand the visibility. Weaknesses are pointed out as low awareness of company's image as well as the company has not been working effectively in the social media channels which is very important in this modern business life. As a result, they cannot make their own brand image and very less effective to reach new and potential customers. Suggestions to balance the weakness are to re-build a new company website with rich contents and well maintained. Customer services are always focused, it is required to improve the communication with client frequently.

The fact that local business competition in Ho Chi Minh city is tough with thousands of event companies are working in same area; this brings a huge challenge to all companies and is also the biggest threats to the case company's survival. It is recommended to expand the company brand with content marketing strategy. To be more detailed, Glow is suggested to improve the online traffic by improve search engine optimization. There will be probably chance to win the competitiveness if the company's brand and presence could be stayed visible in the market.

4.5 Implementation of the research

4.5.1 The interview

The interviews were conducted with the help of the research's target group which consists of four managers working in the field of marketing. The author's firm belief is that those experts, with their profound knowledge and valuable experience, would help to achieve quality data and level up the quality of the research. All these specialists whom the writer had a chance to cooperate with during his working experience before coming to Finland and during his first job placement.

The background of interviewees is presented in the below table.

	Level of expertise	Working sector	Location	Interview method	Language used
Interviewee 1	Former marketing manager assistant at PPL Ltd Founder of Glow Ltd Master's Degree in business management at New Castle University	B2B- B2C	Vietnam	Skype interview Email	English

Interviewee 2	Former SEO specialist at Unilever Vietnam Deputy manager at VXG limited company	B2B- B2C	Vietnam	Skype interview	Vietnamese
Interviewee 3	Former Chief Communication Officer at Aulac Do Brazil Restaurant, Vietnam Marketing manager at Sofitel Hotel Hanoi, Vietnam	B2B- B2C	Vietnam	Skype interview	English
Interviewee 4	Bachelor's degree in business management at Lahti University, Finland Marketing officer at Transval Oy, Finland	B2B - B2C	Finland	Face - face	Vietnamese

Table 2: General information of interviewees

Interviewee 1 is Eric Tong. He has been working in the marketing year for more than 10 years. Had been employed as a marketing assistant manager at PPlus Limited Company, he had been the Senior Content Writer at his company. He is the founder of Glow Limited Company. Additionally, he had achieved master's degree in business management at New Castle University, Singapore.

Interviewee 2 is Nguyen Duy Hau. During his career, he has experienced several positions related to marketing field. He has been in charge of the SEO specialist at Unilever Vietnam. Currently, he is working at Van Xuan Gia Limited Company as a deputy manager.

Interviewee 3 is Jay Tadifa who has so much experience in digital marketing. He used to be the former Chief Communication Officer at Aulac Do Brazil Restaurant, Vietnam and presently is a marketing manager at Sofitel Hotel Hanoi, Vietnam which proved his profession in the marketing field. Being a marketing manager requires him to work with SEO Copywriting frequently.

Interviewee 4 is Helen Huynh. Achieve bachelor's degree in business management in Lahti University in Finland, she started her career at Transval Company. During her daily work, she has to take responsibility to interact with customers by several means of communication. She maintains and support the company website, takes care of existing customers via email, and joins to looking for new potential customers.

All interviews were conducted separately during February 2018. The author decided to handle the interviews through the internet-based application named Skype which allowed to open a video call overseas because three over four interviewees are working in Vietnam and only one is living in Finland, which face-to-face interview was carried out. All the interviews were aligned o the agreement with the interviewees and the interviews answers are confidential and only used for this thesis's purpose.

During the interviews, all interviewees were asked to answer 8 questions with detailed explanation and, if possible, share their opinions based on practical experience in the market. Questions were around the core of content marketing strategy and how it affects the company's entire marketing plan. The interview questionnaire is included in the appendix.

4.5.2 The survey

The author designed a questionnaire to conduct the survey. The participant's data was extracted from the case company's customer portfolio with the agreement of the management. It was because the author was not able to travel to Vietnam to do the survey face to face, the method selected was sending survey questionnaire to client emails. This way probably has disadvantages that the results' reliability could not be examined as well as the waiting time could last longer

than face to face method. Fortunately, this could solve the distant problem and enlarge the number of surveys delivered. Another drawback of this email survey approach lies in the low rate of response. The writer tent to process 100 surveys to compensate the disadvantage but the case company's management only allowed to access 50 previous B2B customers. The participants were either marketing managers or at least officers who are working in marketing departments.

The implementation of the survey was also in February 2018 and was aligned with the interview method. A total of 50 questionnaire surveys were sent to customers' emails. The questionnaire was designed following the theoretical parts studied and aimed to answer the research question 2: "Which contents that customers would like to see when they visit company channels?". Most of the questions are multiple choice type and they take 5 to 10 minutes to complete the survey. In return, there were 42/50 responses received and 8 were missing. The response rate is hence 84%. The survey questionnaire is included in the appendix.

4.6 Result

4.6.1 The interview findings

Question 1: What first comes out in your mind when mentioning content marketing?

All the interviewees stated that content marketing is beneficial and plays a vital role in the entire marketing plan of a company. Interviewee 1 agreed that content marketing is a new and modern concept in the marketing field, it is the result of the business flow and the explosion of the internet. Compared to the traditional marketing method, content marketing is more beneficial not only for the company sale but also strengthen its brand. Interviewee 2 shared the same ideas with interviewee 1, he added an idea that content marketing requires marketers more SEO skills and abilities to use internet tools to optimize the messages to the customers. In order to complete and explain the interviewee 2' opinion, the interviewees 3 explains that nowadays, customers are likely to find the information via the internet because it seems to be the most convenient ways to them; with just a click and keywords, searching engines can release a huge number of websites and other channels which contains the keywords and related contents. He also showed his own experience when he was searching for partnership, Google and Bing searching engines are his first choices and selections are from channels who provide clear, right, and attractive content about the company information. Sharing similar ideas with the 3 interviewees in Vietnam, interviewee 4, moreover, concluded that the value of content marketing does not lie on the sale only, but it helps the company to build the brand and earn customers' loyalty. Briefly, all the four interviewees agreed that content marketing can improve the process of a customer searching information and high quality of content is the key to content marketing strategy.

Question 2: Do you think content marketing is an updated trend that marketers should follow? Explain more why you say that.

Although all interviewees are working in different field of business, surprisingly they all agreed that content marketing is now an updated trend of marketing tools. Interviewee 1 and 2 claimed that the world business is non-stop and being present and up to date with the world trend is the key to company survival. Due to the interviewee 1 working fields of event agency, he said that if content marketing is necessary for other business, it is even much more important in his fields cause event customers of this field always require the creation of ideas and all the events they are planning must be different from other competitors, this requires the change and catching up with hot trends that their customers are looking for. Interviewee 3 mentioned about the customer buying process nowadays is changing and they would like to have more alternatives and options and marketing tools also have to change to be matched with it. He also revealed that his company has invested and applied content marketing strategy in the market for last 5 years to compete with other competitors and hospitality in Vietnam is very challenging. Interviewee 4 simply agree with the idea that content marketing is a new and updated trend in the marketing field.

Question 3: What are the target customer segments that your company want to focus on when using social media marketing?

In this question, the answers were a bit different. The four interviewees are working in many different business fields, the target group is therefore not similar to each other. While the interviewee 1 and interviewee 2 stated that their target customers are business to business customer, the interviewee 3's target group consists all B2B and B2C. The interview 4 also confirmed that her company's customer target group is almost B2B. Briefly, 4 answers explanations were that for every purpose and target group, the marketing department has to create the separate marketing strategy to feed and hook target customers. It is not possible to use the same content to hunt all kind of customers and companies must do an investigation to be more effective.

Question 4: Which channels do you prefer to be the company's social media channels?

All interviewees confirmed that they have used many different methods to improve their company's social media channels. With the interviewee 1, the fact that his company was new and has not been effective in the social media channels. He is, however, building up a new marketing department which only focusing on content marketing with the purpose of creating and maintain the company social media channel. His choices now our website and Facebook which are most popular in Vietnam. The interviewee 2's thinking was pretty similar to the number 1; however, due to his business, he is also wishing to build an Instagram channel for his company. His explanation

was that Instagram is nowadays famous worldwide but in Vietnam, it is still new, and few companies are working well that channel as a marketing channel. He hoped that if the company entered this channel at the early stage, it is more likely that it will take a good position in the market and the company image might stay in customer's mind. Therefore, business results will be positive. Additionally, the interviewee 3 verified that his company belongs to a big international organization and the company has all 4 most popular channels: Website, Facebook, Instagram, and Blogs. The interviewee said that her company has Website, Facebook, and Instagram but the website is working well in terms of content marketing only. The website has the right contents and clear vision because it has been maintained often with a separate team. Other channels seem not to work well. She prefers the company management will invest more in those social media channels and link it to the company website to build an entire network and environment to the whole company.

Question 5: Has your company done research to drive audience to company's content marketing strategy?

Three of the participant stated that they (their company) have done research or survey to gather information about how to engage an audience with the content. However, the details were confidential and not shared with the public due to their company policy. Simply, the interviewees 1 and 3 revealed that they conducted research with the agreement with other marketing companies and research institutions. Whilst, the interviewee 2 said his marketing team had done it alone. And, the interviewee 4 honestly speak that she does not know if her company has done this kind of survey before.

Question 6: Currently does your company have a content marketing strategy to catch up with the trend? If yes, could you please shortly specify how you and your marketing team do it?

In case of this question, they all have similar answers that their company have own content marketing plan to be in time to catch up with the trend. The interview 4 mentioned that she has been working with another outsource to improve first the website for Transval and then Facebook. She confirmed that her content marketing plan is not separate, it is a comprehensive one which has a connection with other channels and it will be integrated into the company entire business plan. The interviewee 3 showed that he focused more to the customer buying process (mentioned in question 2) and he wants his content marketing plan will enter in all step of this process as the theory. There is a team of interviewee 3 has been sent to course in the parent organization which helps to improve their SEO skills. Interviewee 1 has invested to do a research of current trend in Vietnam now and his plan targets were to build up a strong marketing team, and this team's job

is to create suitable content for digital and social media marketing channels which is the weakness of the company. The interviewee 2 hold the same ideas with the interview 1.

Question 7: What are challenging factors your company face when content marketing strategy is applied in current situation? Specifically, social media channels are focused.

The answers to this question are briefly presented in the table below.

Interviewee 1	<p>Skillful personnel and resources are the biggest disadvantages</p> <p>After being aware of the trend, the problem is to find out the content ideas for the trend</p> <p>I might create conflict with the traditional marketing concept.</p>
Interviewee 2	<p>The content marketing plan is costly and requires a big investment in a long-term</p> <p>Time-consuming</p>
Interviewee 3	<p>Content marketing strategy is a process and the outcome will not be achieved in short term.</p> <p>Diverse skills are required</p>
Interviewee 4	<p>The trend is always temporary and changing that required marketers must be cautious and sensitive to the market.</p>

Table 3: Challenges when applying content marketing strategy

4.6.2 The survey results

Question 1 + 2 + 3: Demography of survey's respondent

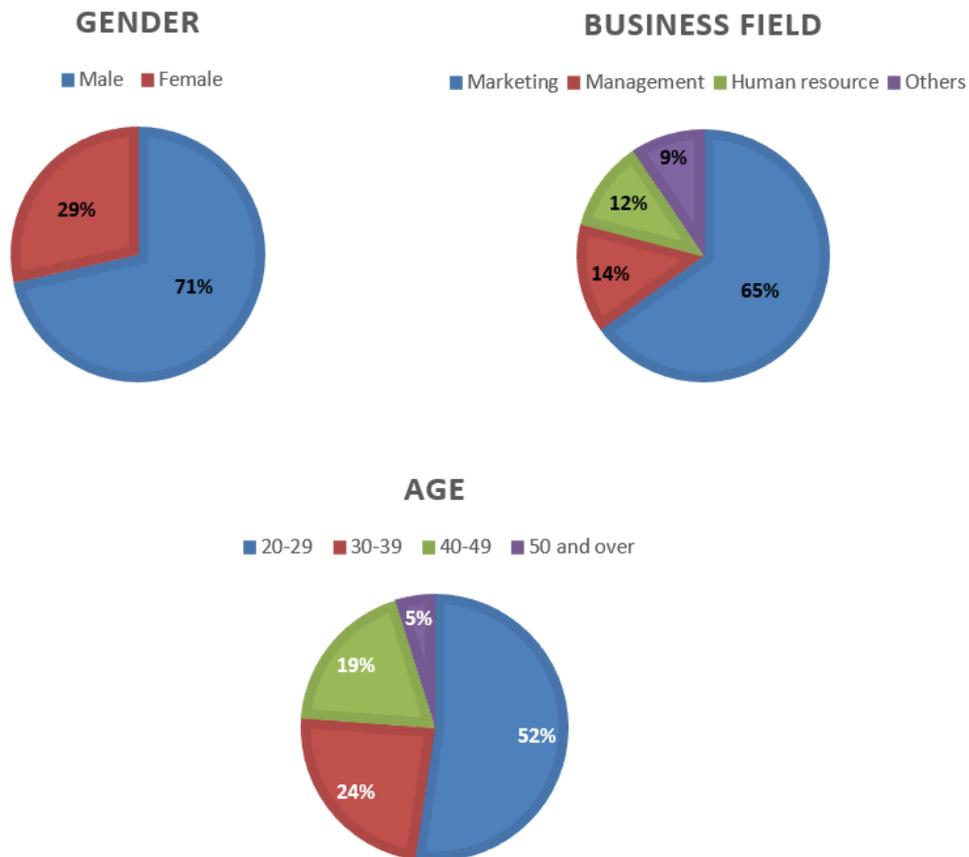


Figure 8: Demography of survey's respondent

The survey was conducted in February 2018 and it took 2 weeks to receive the responses. There were 50 survey questionnaires were sent to customers who are the case company's customer portfolio, of which 42 qualified responses were received. As regards respondent demography, most of respondents participated in the survey were men; 30 were male and 12 were female, accounting for 71% and 29% respectively. With the question of respondent's working field, 65% of the total who responded to the survey are working in the marketing field, followed by 14% in management field. There were only 5 respondents whose jobs are related to human resource, 12% and 4 respondents working in other fields, standing for 9% of the total.

Out of the total respondents participating in the research, young adults dominated approximately 3/4. Specifically, respondents between 20-29 years old taking up for the majority with 52%,

followed by 24% from 30-39. The number of respondents between 40-49 years old were 8 (19%) and only answers were over 50 years old (5%).

Question 5: How often do you use or read social media channel?

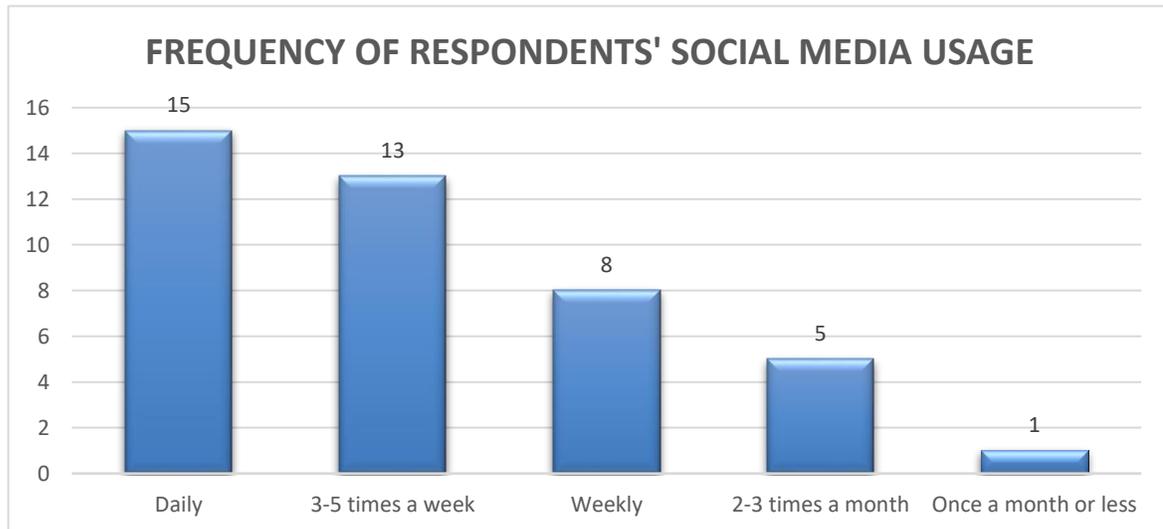


Figure 9: Frequency of respondents' social media usage

The question number 5 was designed to measure respondent's frequency of social media usage. The explosion of internet in general has put a huge effect on young people in general. As can be seen in the diagram, there were no surprise that only 1 respondent who chose the least frequency, meaning she was only active on social media once a month. On the contrary, the majority of responses agreed for the most frequency of using social media habit. Specifically, daily use accounted for 35.7% of the total (15 in 42); followed by approximately 31% of those who use social media 3-5 times a week (13 in 42). Next, 19% of respondents answered that they were using social media weekly and about 12% revealed to 2-3 times a month.

Question 6: Which of the following channels do you use when you want to search for a company's information?

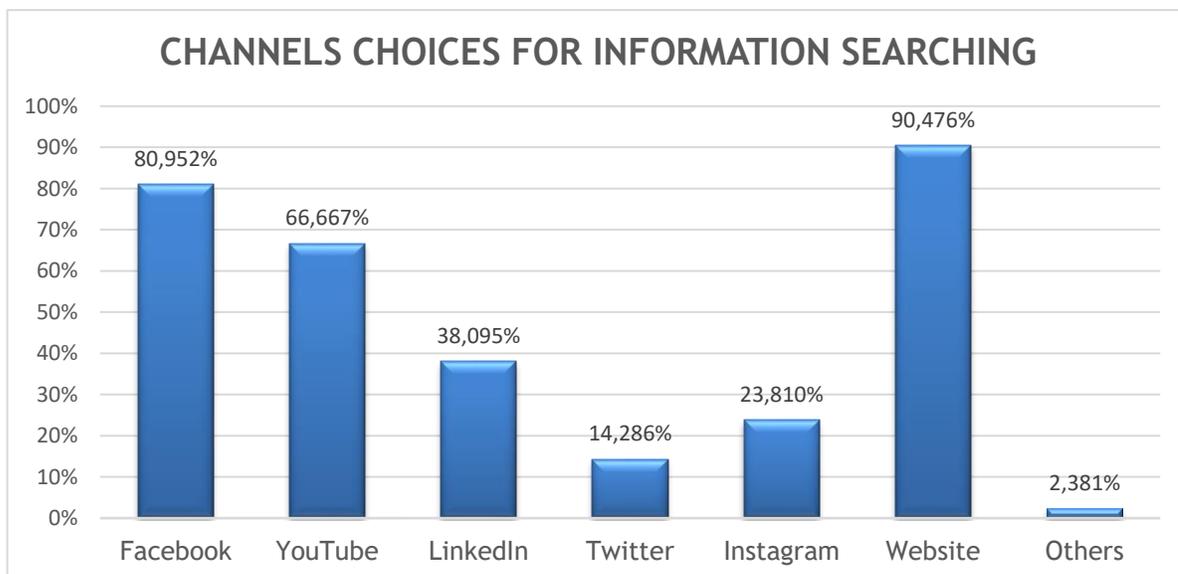


Figure 10: Channels choices for information searching

In question number 6, respondents were asked about which social media channels they prefer when searching for a company's information. Respondents were allowed to answer more than one options in this question. There was no surprise that company website and Facebook accounted for the largest percentages with 90,48% and 80,95%. Followed by another large group who chose YouTube were their searching channel, 66,67%. Meanwhile, the percentages of people who LinkedIn and Instagram only represent 38,1% and 23,81% respectively. Instagram is not a popular searching channel to respondents which its results showed only 14,29% of the total. And only 1 respondent who chose other channels when for information searching.

Question 8 and 9 were aimed to find out the relationship between respondent's post frequency and company's post frequency.

The bar chart showed a tight connection between 2 variables. For those who frequently create contents for company' social media channels also had a need to see other interesting contents very often. 16 respondents updated company's channels weekly corresponding with 17 people who preferred company's posts every week. While respondent's daily post and their preference to company's daily post shared the similar number with 9 answers for each, 3-5 times a week had also witnessed this fact with 14 answers for respondents post and 10 for company's post frequency. For the options of 2-3 times a month and once a month or less, the number were small with less

than 5 answers. However, even respondents did not create contents for their company, still they expected other companies to update their channels more frequently.

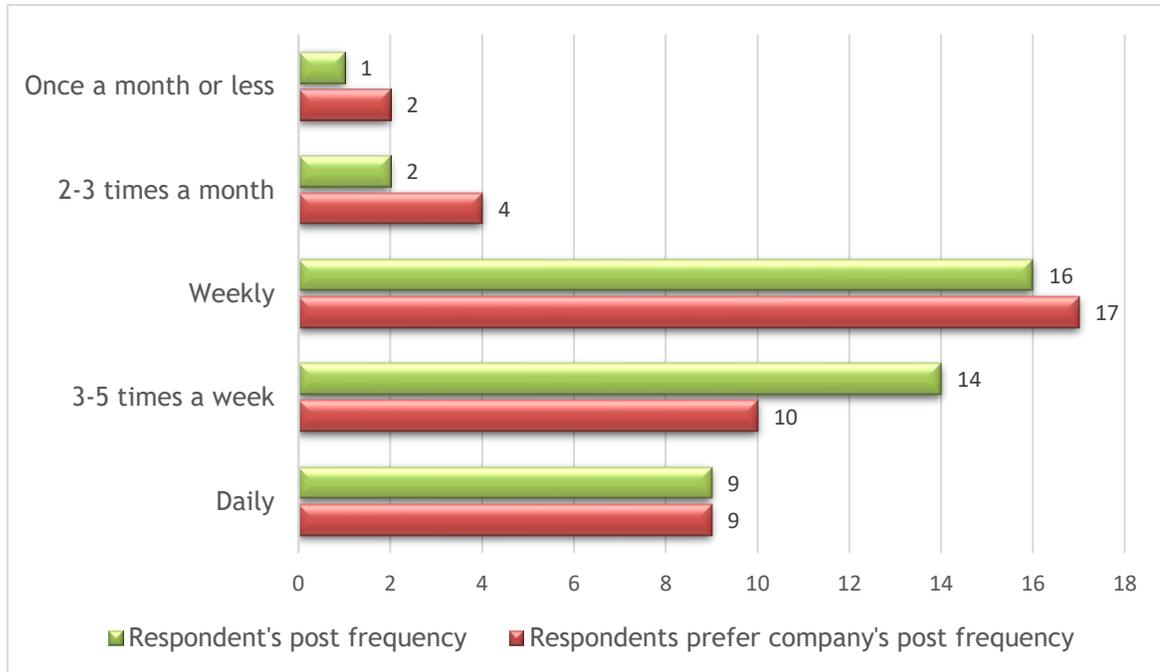


Figure 11: The relationship between respondent's post frequency and company's post frequency.

Question 10: What kind of content interests you?

As to the type of interesting content, Facebook gained the highest interesting content type which participants preferred with 34 answers, followed by 28 survey participants who expressed their interests in video contents. These 2 visual-effect contents dominated over 50 votes. Short texts such as newsletter received 24 votes for respondents' content priority. 14 out of 42 participants agreed that long texts, for example, blogs satisfied them while using social media channels and only 2 participants mentioned other content types.

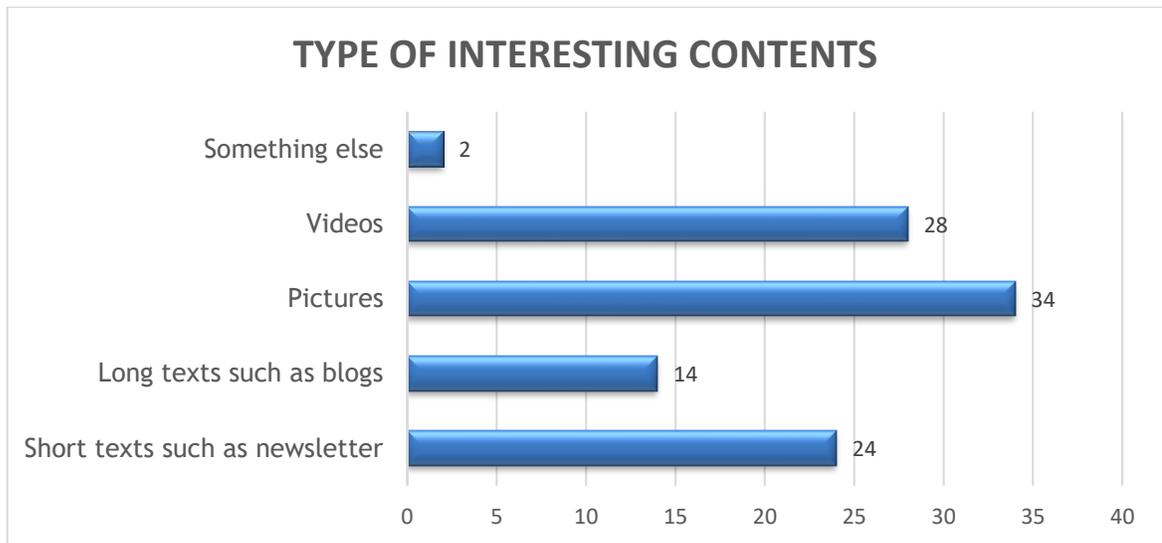


Figure 12: Type of interesting contents

Question 11, 12 and 13 present the channels which respondents are following.

There were totally 28 respondents revealed that they were following other companies' channels. Among those, exactly 22 participants chose Website as their following channel, taking up around 79% of all answer. Another social media channel which took respondents' favorite choice was Facebook with 18 votes qualified, accounting for 64% approximately while YouTube and LinkedIn and Instagram stood for the small proportion of the total answers collected with 6%, 4% and 2% respectively. Twitter has not made any choices and there were no other channels mentions in this question.

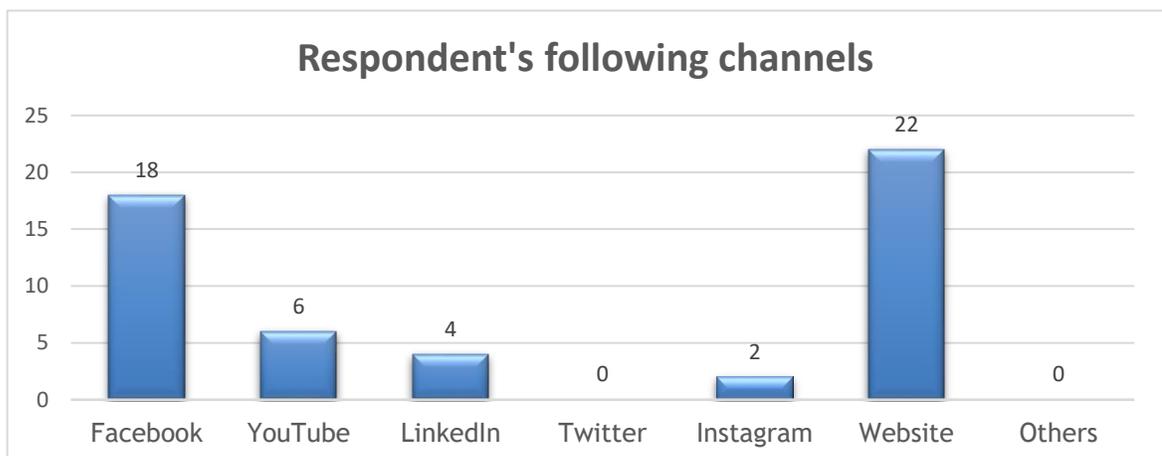


Figure 13: Respondent's following channels

Question 14: Which of following social media channels might suit the best for content marketing strategy in an event management company?

	Suits very well	Suits well	Suits decent	Does not suit	No opinion
Facebook	34	2	1	1	4
YouTube	28	4	2	2	6
LinkedIn	16	6	5	7	8
Twitter	6	4	18	8	6
Instagram	10	4	20	3	5
Website	38	1	3	0	0
Others	1	0	0	0	41

Table 4: Best channels for event management companies

As company's website, Facebook and YouTube channels have been well known in Vietnam for long and it obviously had a huge effect on many fields of business. While most of survey respondents agreed that these 3 above mentioned channels do suit very well for an event management company with a large number of votes, 38 votes, 34 and 28 votes out of 42 collected, Twitter and Instagram somehow had gained a potential trust that it could suit the event company decently, the vote numbers were actually remarkably 18 and 20 answers. Apparently, the survey's participant who are working in this marketing field have the belief that Twitter, and Instagram will soon develop and beneficial to business in Vietnam in future. And, it is worth noting that LinkedIn were also believed as an effective channel for event companies which 28 votes including 3 level of that channel suits company.

4.7 Interview and survey analysis

As been written before the author made an interview and designed a questionnaire to understand deeper about content marketing theory and how marketers create the strategy and apply it on practice.

As has been stated that content marketing is playing a vital role in company's marketing plan. All interviewees agreed with a fact that content marketing is more beneficial and necessary compared to traditional marketing.

The most important thing, that all four interviewees mentioned: clear, right, and attractive content about a company is the first and most crucial step to get customers' attention and key to content marketing strategy. As interviewee 3 mentioned customer buying process is changing and for according to his suggestion, companies should pay more attention to creating more alternatives and options for marketing tools. Companies should plan very carefully the marketing strategy and make sure that their marketing plan is better than their competitors' marketing plans. That is why companies should do more research or surveys to gather more information about how to engage the audience with the content. Three of interviewees stated that their companies are doing such kind to surveys to develop the marketing content. Unfortunately, the survey's results were confident, and the author could not analyze and compare companies' methods to gather information.

However, using managers answers from question 3 (interview) and age figure (survey), the author admits that Glow company can easily define company's target audience and use this information to create great and right marketing content.

According to age figure, young respondents are dominating. It gives a good start to planning content for young adults. However, company should pay more attention for other ager groups, especially groups of age 30-39 and 40-49, and try to balance the content that can satisfy all age groups.

Interviewee 1 and 2 stated that their target customers are B2B customers. According to business field figure, 65% of respondents are working in the marketing field. For company it might be good and bad result as well. The customers already know what kind of content they would like to see on company website/ Facebook, which can cause pressure for company to create the right content to satisfy customer needs. However, company can get good ideas from 65% respondents as has been mentioned, they know what kind of content is interesting for them.

Figure 9 gives a clear picture of social media usage: 35,7% of the respondents are using social media daily. It's a good number for companies if they want to get more customers and start planning a marketing content. Updating websites or another social media channel daily (or more often) is giving a good possibility to get new customers fast. However, company should pay an attention to those, who use social media not that often for example weekly or even 2-3 times in a month and create a solution how to get them as customers if they use social media rarely.

Almost all interviewees confirmed that they are using different social media channels to approach customers. The interviewees' answers are pretty similar to the respondents' answers. As we can see in Figure 10 and 13, company website gets the largest percentages as the social media channel respondents use. It makes sense because the company website is first what comes to customer mind when customer wants to know more about company. Users usually form an opinion very fast, so if website design exceeds customers' expectations and gives them clear and compelling information about company and products -possibility to get new customers is high.

Facebook using is very popular nowadays and its popularity is still growing. According to Figures 10 and 13, Facebook is the secondly most following channel. Which means that it's also important to pay attention to company Facebook page. For company, that wants to get more attention and customers in social media, Facebook is one of the most powerful tools. There are 3 options for customers to get customers: pages, ads, and groups. However, the risks must be mentioned. It can be hard to build a good customer base with a page and ads might cost a lot, which is not good option for small/medium size companies.

Figure 11 presents the relationship between respondent's post frequency and company's post frequency. The noticed point was that for those who has a high frequency of posting content would prefer the similar from the company. It means that audiences generally would like to be updated with the company's post to know what company is doing. The company, therefore, should focus on the post's frequency to keep contact with customers.

As previously has been mentioned in the Figure 12 the highest interesting content type which participants preferred with 34 answers was pictures, followed by 28 survey participants who expressed their interests in video contents. These 2 visual-effect contents dominated over 50 votes. As the Internet has been a huge worldwide marketplace, where marketing companies are trying to sell their services, high-quality pictures have an important role. In this field, Facebook is the most popular marketing channel at the moment. However, company should pay more attention to Instagram, which becomes more popular among young adults and in the future, it might be more effective marketing channel comparing to Facebook.

4.8 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are obviously the most important things when every research is published. It presents the author's professionalism and the value of the research. A research which is not trustworthy or aligned with the era will be considered as "useless" papers.

Simply speaking, the reliability of a study is measured by the degree of its stability and consistency. The more stable and consistent, the more reliable of the research. In the thesis, the author has considered the content validity of the theory and the interview as well. To be more detailed, the four subject-matter experts who agreed to help to answer the interview questions are all working in the marketing fields with the manager position. Meanwhile, validity represents the accuracy and level of materials used. Once a study or research is published, it should assure that the readers can access the information which is not only reliable but also correct and convincing.

During the thesis implementation, materials and data were collected from verified books and reliable data sources in the library of the author's school and other libraries as well to create a solid background for the theoretical part. Interviewees were marketing experts and survey respondents were extracted from the case company's customer portfolios. The survey questionnaire was designed following strictly the empirical part. All ensure the high quality of the research's result. For all reasons mentioned above, this thesis is considered as highly reliable and valid.

5. Suggestion for a content marketing plan for Glow

5.1 Content marketing plan

The Content Marketing Institute defines:

"Content marketing is the strategic marketing approach of creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience - with the objective of driving profitable customer action."

Content Marketing Institution 2016

Based on the definition, a content marketing plan can be understood as a part of a marketing plan. Whereas marketing plans focus on all factors of marketing and mostly emphasize the importance of advertising and revenue, a content marketing plan is to create the content which is valuable and informative and develop distribution channels to increase the mutual interaction between the company and its clients. More than just a documentary, content marketing plan can be considered as a guideline leading to effective content creation. A content marketing plan is a non-stop procedure where the interaction between customers and companies are highly maintained and developed. Differed from the marketing plan when it often ends when the process of attracting customers ends, content marketing highlights the relationship maintenance which could help an organization to earn the most important thing in business - customer loyalty. Therefore, content marketing plan requires content creators to frequently update and renew to keep the content involved with target customers and meet company's expectation. (Content Marketing Institution 2016)

There is no such a certain template for a content marketing plan. However, in the next part, the author will attempt to create a simple marketing plan for the case company based on the theory of content marketing strategy of Garner which includes three steps: keywords research, content planning and building the publishing and conversational platforms. (Garner, 2013)

5.2 Content marketing plan for Glow

In this section, the result of research - interview findings and survey results - will be discussed and integrated with the case company's desires to create a possible content marketing plan.

	The Glow Limited Company
Target group	Mainly business to business customers in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam Possibly public and private sector customers also
Goals	Strengthening Glow's findability and visibility on the internet Increasing the effectiveness of mutual interaction between Glow and its clients
Added value	The thesis might be useful to help Glow access potential customer segments and improve marketing plan
Selected content marketing channels	Website Facebook
Materials used	Copyright of the Glow limited company

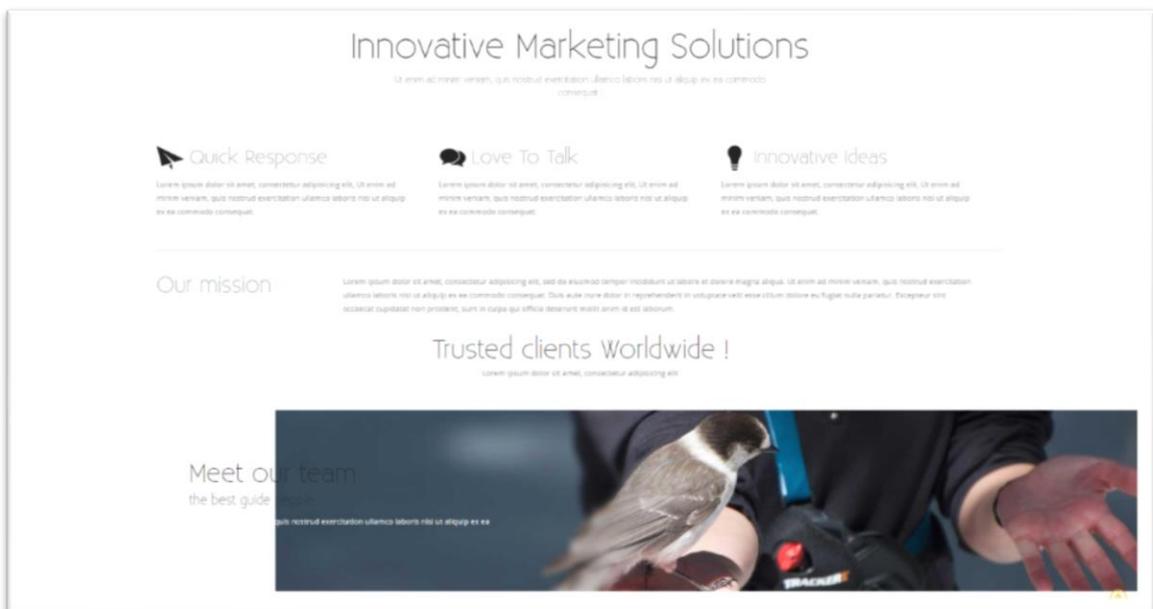
Table 5: The sample of a content marketing of Glow

According to the interview findings which were conducted with four managers in Viet Nam and Finland, company website and Facebook are currently standing on top of the most effective marketing tools in Viet Nam. Despite the explosion of many social media application worldwide, webpage and Facebook are the first channels which customers think about whenever they need to look for a company's information. And the fact that Glow did not have an active webpage at the time the thesis was conducted, the management had agreed with the idea that suggested content marketing plan will contain a sample of the company website. With the agreement between the Glow company and the thesis author, data, photos, text, and other materials were used legally for creating a website for the company. The table below describes sample steps which the author followed to create a potential content marketing plan for Glow in the combination of theoretical knowledge discussed and research conducted.

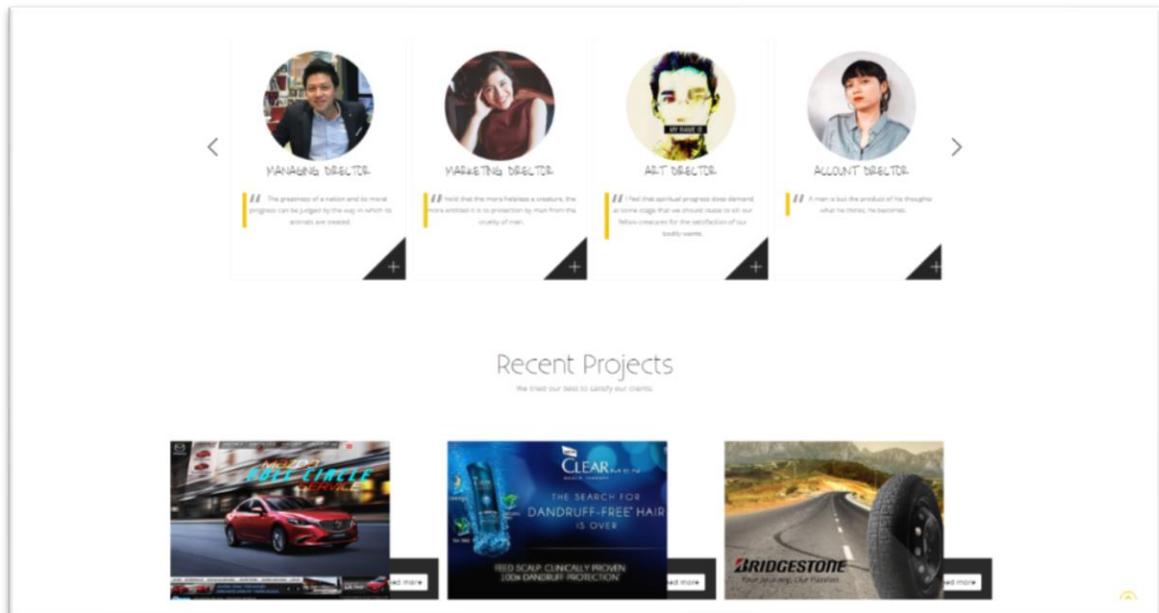
Below is the suggested website which the author has tried to create upon the request of the Glow Limited Company.



Picture 1: Website of the Glow Limited Company



Picture 2: Website of the Glow Limited Company



Picture 3: Website of the Glow Limited Company

A website has been demonstrated as one of the most popular and effective ways to deliver company value to clients. Like other channels, company webpage demands the marketers stay up to date frequently. This action is to assure that Glow website is always active, and messages are often refreshed because if the content of the webpage is too old, searching engines will automatically not lead internet users to the company address. Moreover, for existing customers, a boring and less frequently updated website would probably bring customers a thinking that company business is not running well, and they would change their mind to other alternatives.

The content marketing plan would be immediately useful for Glow visibility in the market. First, with an active website, internet users and potential customers are able to see Glow and what it is offering. Secondly, the website will create a necessary platform for Glow to integrate with other marketing channels in the future such as blogs or link it to Facebook, YouTube, or Instagram. Future use is worth to look at.

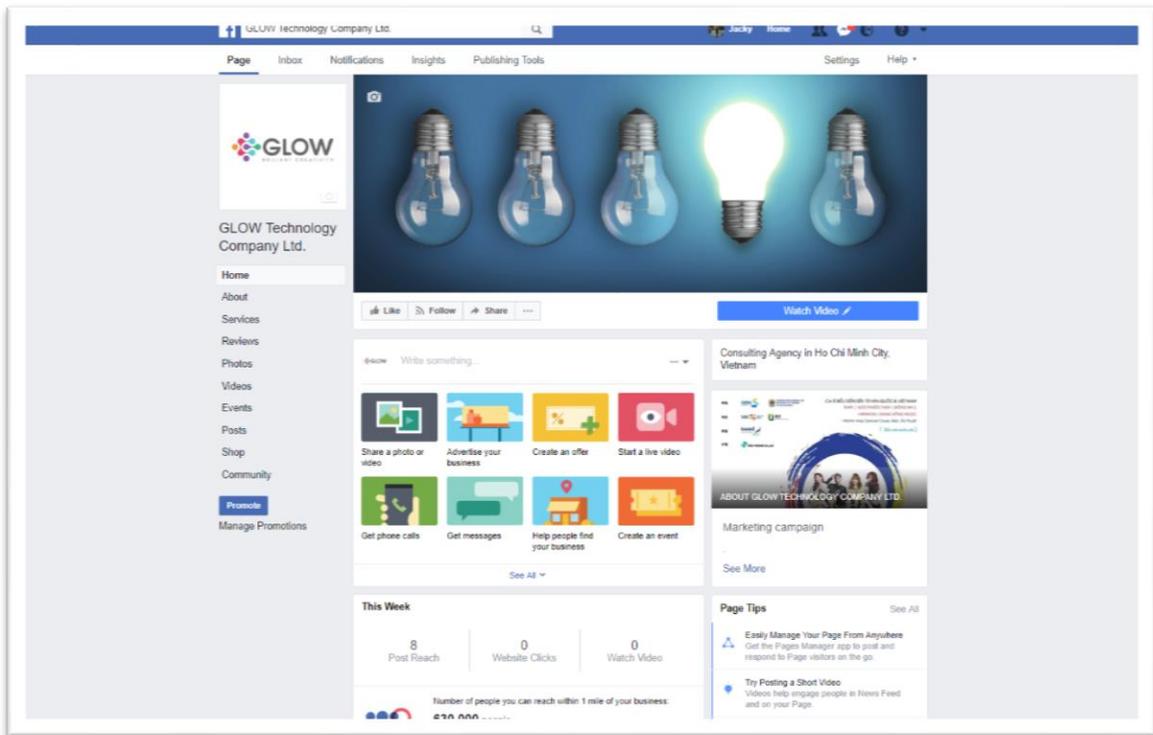
The suggestion for website post is that all texts, messages, pictures, and videos should be consistent to optimize the message delivered to clients. Interaction with customers should be significantly considered. Not only posting contents on the website but also focusing on commenting and interacting with customers. Marketers or marketing department is required to put much effort into visual contents; for example, pictures and videos to improve the quality of content. Creating

a content is not difficult but optimizing and building an attractive content requires skills in other fields. More and more successfully big companies have pages and other channels which are very eye-catching and even they are daily updated.

As blogging always proves its important role in marketing, another suggestion was that Glow should add blogs to the website. Company blogs do not need to be updated every day; however, it requires a very high level of the bloggers in terms of writing skill storytelling skill. In exchange, if the Glow company opens blog feature, it might open a new group of customers who are interested in reading blogs. And, with an existing website, blogs already have a platform to perform.

Beside Glow's website, another suggestion for content marketing plan is a Facebook page. The importance of Facebook or social media channel, in general, has been discussed above and based on the survey result, the author discussed with Glow to generate a Facebook page sample below.

Alike with the website, the condition for an active and effective Facebook page lies on how it is maintained and updated. A combination is necessary to optimize the company's visibility and support the content marketing plan to reach out its targets. Glow is recommended to upload posts which are consistent with the content on the website. Tags and links should be used effectively to create a perfect network which can lure customers to Glow's offerings. The content of Facebook posts is not only about the company products, they should be more creative. Videos and stories are the great combinations for this. It is worth to notice that Facebook is existing based on the interaction between users. Differ from websites, Facebook demands more on the frequency of company response.



Picture 4: Facebook layout of the Glow Limited Company

In the scope of this work, the recommended content marketing plan is not comprehensive because, based on the theory, the content marketing plan is an on-going and non-stop process. The author has put a huge effort into creating a content marketing platform for Glow situation; since then, the marketers of Glow will continue the work to develop and maintain it.

6. Conclusion

Content marketing is a new concept, but its role is obviously crucial to determine company success. Companies and organizations need to have a competitive content marketing strategy targeted at generating and delivering relevant consistent content through websites and social media channels to access potential customers.

The discoveries of this study had answered two research questions mentioned in the beginning. With the theoretical part, the writer has clarified all aspects related to the term “content marketing”; starting with the basic understanding of content marketing, then the correlation between content marketing and social media was also discussed. Lastly, the execution of creating a content marketing strategy was presented step by step for the purpose of answering the research questions.

The answers to research questions:

- What kind of content marketing strategy should the company need to build to run marketing effectively?

Before starting planning the content marketing strategy, the company should make a research and understand what potential customers’ needs are. Understanding customers- can be the first right step to creating a successful marketing strategy. Being close to customers helps to build strong relationship and trust between company and clients. According to the survey result, Glow’s marketers should focus on creating contents which consist of visual effects such as pictures and videos. Besides, short texts such as newsletter should also be developed.

- What social media channels should the company focus on building a content marketing strategy?

As referred the research result, the company’s website and Facebook are the most powerful and popular channels nowadays. However, the company should pay more attention to Instagram channel and video blogs are getting more popular among young users. Not only are the company’s website and Facebook page created but also the maintenance should be prioritized.

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Appendices

INTERVIEW'S QUESTIONS

1. What first pop out in your mind when mentioning content marketing?
2. Do you think content marketing is an updated trend that marketers should follow? Explain more why you say that.
3. What are the target customer segments that your company want to focus on when using social media marketing?
4. Which channels do you prefer to be the company's social media channels?
5. Has your company done research to drive audience to company's content marketing strategy?
6. Currently, does your company have a content marketing strategy to catch up with the trend? If yes, could you please shortly specify how you and your marketing team do it?
7. What are challenging factors your company face when content marketing strategy is applied in current situation? Specifically, social media channels are focused.

The interview's result is confidential.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS USAGE IN EVENT MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Survey question:

1. Gender
 - Male
 - Female

2. Age
 - 20-29 years old
 - 30-39 years old
 - 40-49 years old
 - Over 50 years old

3. Business fields:
 - Management
 - Marketing
 - Human resource
 - Others

4. Email (optional):

5. How often do you use or read social media channel?
 - Daily
 - 3-5 times a week
 - Weekly
 - 2-3 times a month
 - Once a month or less

6. Which of the following channels do you use when you want to search for a company's information?
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - LinkedIn
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Website
 - Others

7. Name the companies that you follow on social media or websites:

8. How often do you prefer that companies should post or create content on social media channels?
 - Daily
 - 3-5 times a week

- Weekly
 - 2-3 times a month
 - Once a month or less
9. If you are working in the marketing department, how often do you create content or update your company's social media channels?
- Daily
 - 3-5 times a week
 - Weekly
 - 2-3 times a month
 - Once a month or less
10. What type of media channels content that you are interested in? (multiple choices are accepted)
- Short texts such as newsletter
 - Long texts such as blogs
 - Pictures
 - Videos
 - Something else, what?
11. Do you follow any event management companies in Vietnam or abroad?
- Yes
 - No
12. If yes, which company?
13. If your answer is yes in questions 12 and 13, in which channels do you follow them? (you can have multiple choices)
- Facebook
 - YouTube
 - LinkedIn
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Website
 - Others
14. Which of following social media channels might suit the best for content marketing strategy in an event management company?

	Suits very well	Suits well	Suits decently	Does not suit	No opinion
Facebook					
YouTube					
LinkedIn					
Twitter					
Instagram					
Website					
Others					