Digital marketing plan for a non-profit organization

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Abstract

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This is a project oriented thesis with the objective of creating a digital marketing plan for the commissioning organization Small Steps.

The theoretical framework explains the digital marketing terms and methods and presents the necessary tools for digital marketing plan development. Since the organization provides holistic health and wellness services, the theoretical part includes a literature review for marketing complementary and alternative therapies and the motivations for seeking health and wellness services.

The digital marketing plan was created using the SOSTAC® planning model by P. R. Smith. The main recommendations were to use paid advertising, content marketing, social media marketing, and search engine optimization. The plan was presented to the commissioning company and the thesis reports the feedback that was received.

The digital marketing plan is attached as an appendix.

The thesis process evaluation and assessment of student's own learning are reported in the last chapter of the thesis report.

Keywords
Digital marketing, marketing planning, health and wellness marketing, non-profit marketing

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1   Introduction

With the development of new technologies the internet and its possibilities become more accessible to people every day. Many services can find use of online communications or digital technologies. Digital marketing is an accessible, cost-effective and measurable marketing method. The purpose of this thesis is to find out how a small-sized local non-profit could use digital marketing methods for marketing their services.

1.1   Thesis objectives

The aim of the thesis is to create a digital marketing plan for the commissioning company. The thesis is project-oriented and should result in a digital marketing plan that corresponds to the marketing objectives of the commissioning company. The marketing plan focuses on digital marketing specifically, because it is an accessible marketing method for the commissioning company but they do not have enough knowledge on how to start using it effectively. The student's objective is to learn about digital marketing and the development of a digital marketing plan. The commissioning company's objective is to have a plan for their digital marketing communication efforts. In addition to digital marketing and marketing planning, the thesis will look into the aspects of marketing complementary and alternative therapies and health services.

The goal of the thesis is to create a digital marketing plan for the commissioning company that matches their objectives and current resources. The thesis goal is to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is digital marketing and how to plan it?
2. Which digital marketing methods are applicable to the commissioning company?
3. Which social media channels are the best to use for the commissioning company?
4. Which content should the commissioning company share on their digital marketing channels?
5. Which budget their digital marketing efforts require?
6. How should the commissioning company's digital marketing efforts be managed?

1.2   Case company

The commissioning company is a non-profit organization named *Väiksed Sammud,* which translates into Small Steps in English. The organization operates in Pärnu, Estonia since August 2016. It is run by two people and has a physical location in downtown Pärnu. The physical location offers space for events and gatherings, and a private therapy room. When the organization was established, their mission was to provide a community and services for pregnant women in Pärnu area, especially mothers who are looking for natural and holistic approaches to childcare and pregnancy. Nowadays their services could be divided into two categories – services for pregnant women and services for anyone who is

interested in holistic wellness and natural living. They offer prenatal and baby yoga lessons and workshops about childcare and pregnancy. They also manage a Facebook group for young mothers to share their childcare-related questions and receive support. Apart from the services for pregnant women, they offer alternative therapies and events and seminars related to holistic health practices for a wider target audience. The organization is not affiliated with any religion. They aim to support natural and holistic approaches to childcare and health which originate from Eastern philosophies and alternative and complementary medical practices.

The organization's current marketing and communications situation will be discussed in the situational analysis of the marketing plan.

1.3   Thesis scope and structure

The thesis covers the digital marketing plan development process and presents a digital marketing plan as the outcome. In order to reach the objective, the student conducts a research in digital marketing and marketing planning theory. The theoretical findings are presented in the first part of the thesis. The theory also includes literature findings about marketing health and wellness services and complementary and alternative therapies. The theoretical framework is followed by the emprical part by applying the theory to the case company. The marketing plan itself is added as an appendix and presented to the commissioning company. The student collects feedback for the marketing plan from the commissioning company by conducting an interview.

2 Planning digital marketing

American Marketing Association (2018) defines marketing as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large".

Keller and Kotler (2016, 27) write that marketing is meeting human and social needs profitably. Contrary to popular belief marketing is not merely the art of selling products. Marketers do not get people to buy things they do not want but rather identify and respond to the pre-existing human needs. (Keller & Kotler 2016, 31.)

A marketer is someone who seeks a response from another party – a prospect (Keller & Kotler 2016, 29).

James (2017) argues with the broad and "fuzzy" definition provided by the American Marketing Association as it is not precise enough for marketing planning. James (2017) proposes the following definition "Marketing: the removal of obstacles to buying and selling". Brilliant marketing is about removing as many of those obstacles as possible while spending as little time and money as possible (James 2017).

Marketing can also be defined as putting the right product at the right time in the right place at the right price (Mind Tools 2018).

Marketing planning is the process of determining how to provide value to the customer, as well as to the company and the stakeholders. The marketing plan is a document that summarizes the marketing processes over a period of time. (Wood 2014, 4.)

According to Keller and Kotler (2016, 59), a marketing plan is a tool for managing the marketing effort and it has two levels: strategic and tactical marketing plan. The strategic marketing plan is a result of analysing market opportunities and defining the value proposition. The tactical marketing plan is for specifying the marketing tactics such as product features, promotion, price, service, and sales channels. (Keller & Kotler 2016, 59.)

2.1 Marketing communications

According to Fill (2016, 3), marketing communications include the methods, processes, actions, perceptions, and meanings that audiences undertake in association with products, services or brands.

American Marketing Association (2018) defines marketing communications as messages and media that is used in order to communicate with a market. Marketing communications are executed through various channels, such as print, radio, television, direct mail, and personal selling. (American Marketing Association 2018.)

At a basic level, marketing communications could correspond to the Promotion in the 4P marketing mix that was created by McCarthy in 1960, as its primary purpose is to communicate the business offering to the target audience. However, there are also marketing communications that are unplanned, such as experiences from using the product or service, or unplanned brand experiences. (Fill 2016, 11.)

Planned marketing communications have three elements: tools, media and content/messages. To get messages through to audiences, organizations have three routes:

- Paid media
- Own assets (Physical location,vehicles, employees, own website)
- Encourage people to talk about their brand

(Fill 2016, 11.)

This applies to digital marketing as companies can use three types of digital media: paid, earned, and owned media (Flores 2014, 39).

According to Fill (2016, 16), marketing communications have four main tasks, which are to:

- Inform
- Persuade
- Reinforce experiences
- Differentiate

2.2   Digital marketing

Digital marketing refers to the use of digital media in order to promote products or brands among consumers (Flores 2014, 3).

Digital marketing goes beyond internet marketing, as it includes all interactive digital tools, such as mobile phones and interactive television (Flores 2014, 4).

Digital marketing is not limited to using the internet, the marketing messages can also be promoted offline, for example through offline applications on digital devices. Digital marketing includes: E-mail marketing, E-books, games, content marketing, video marketing, mobile marketing, and TV ads. (White Shark Media 2018.)

Online marketing or also referred to as "internet" marketing is a subset of digital marketing. Online marketing requires internet connection to work. Online marketing includes: website, search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising, display advertising, and social media marketing. However, the terms digital and online marketing are often used interchangeably. (White Shark Media 2018.)

Digital marketing can also be referred to as e-marketing (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 2).

Charlesworth (2014) has categorized digital marketing methods into the following subcategories:

- Search engine optimization
- Online advertising
- Email/Permission marketing
- Social media marketing

2.2.1 Search engine optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a practice of making a website attractive for a search engine to display it as a top search result for the searcher. This is done by presenting the website content in a way that the search engine assumes the website to be the most relevant result for the searched term. (Charlesworth 2014, 191.)

The relevance rank is based on keywords on the website and backlinks. Keywords are terms that users search for. Having relevant keywords on one's website lets the search engine see the website and show it in the search results. Number and quality of backlinks raises the trustworthiness of the website for the search engine. To rank higher, there are two components that should be optimized: on-site optimization (optimising website to contain the relevant keywords) and off-site optimization (generating backlinks from other sources). The referring sources for backlinks can be articles on other websites or blogs, social media channels, or discussion boards. The more legitimate the referring source is, the more it is going to effect the search result ranking of the website. (Bluehost 2012.)

The commissioning company's website is set up on the WordPress platform, therefore the following SEO methods apply to their website as suggested by WPBeginner (2018):

1. Using SEO friendly URL structures. The URL should include words or a heading rather than a combination of numbers or symbols. An example of a good URL for SEO: http://www.wpbeginner.com/common-wordpress-errors-and-how-to-fix-them/
2. Using a SEO plugin.
3. Adding the website to Google Search Console, also known as Webmaster Tools. It provides reports and date on how the website is seen by the search engine.
4. Optimizing blog posts for SEO. This will be discussed further in the content marketing chapter.
5. Using categories and tags properly. Categories are for broad grouping of topics while tags are specific keywords which describe individual posts.
6. Internal linking. For example linking one blog post in another.
7. Optimizing WordPress comments. Avoiding spam comments.
8. Optimizing website speed and performance. It is important that website loads fast, which depends on the files on the website. For example, the image files should not be too big.
9. Optimizing image tags and title.
10. Keeping the website secure. Blacklisted websites do not show up in search results.

2.2.2 Online advertising

Another digital marketing method is online advertising. Paid online advertising can be done on social media websites, search engine results pages, portals, blogs, community websites, virtual world sites, podcasts/video streaming, newsletters, emails, question-answer websites, newsletters, and any other website. The main question to ask is which sites does the target market visit. (Charlesworth 2014, 231.)

The three main online advertising objectives are initiating direct action, lead generation, and branding (Charlesworth 2014, 225).

Charlesworth (2014, 224) points out that online advertising has 3 major benefits, which are:

1. Targeting – possibility to target a specific audience
2. Analytics – possibility to monitor and measure the results
3. Interactivity – the customer can purchase the product immediately

The targeting of online advertisements can be based on contextual (relevant to the content of the webpage), behavioural (ad relevant to the previous action on the web), and geographic (location-based) factors (Charlesworth 2014, 227).

According to Charlesworth (2014, 227), the common payment methods for online advertising are:

1. Cost per click (CPC) or pay per click (PPC) – the advertiser pays when the ad is being clicked on. The cost of PPC depends on the keywords that are "purchased" for the ad.
2. Cost per thousand impression (CPM) - this is used for display ads and the cost depends on the website that displays the ad.

3. Cost per call (CPC) - used for some specific services ads, the advertiser pays for each received call through the ad.

Search engine marketing (SEM) is a paid advertising method which is based on the concept of matching searcher's keywords with specific sponsored search results. The advertiser can "purchase" specific keywords from the search engine to rank higher as a sponsored search result for those search terms. One of the benefits of SEM is that it gives some control for the company for their search result rank. Also, the text of the ads can be written by the advertiser which is not the case with SEO. Having paid search results may increase the customer's perception of the brand's quality. However, there are a few downsides to search engine marketing. While good search engine optimization is hard for competitors to reproduce, then for search engine marketing the keyword strategy can be copied. (Charlesworth 2014, 244.)

When creating paid online advertisements the following aspects should be considered:
- A call-to-action (CTA)
- A design that fits the ad format (platform where the ad will be shown)
- Consider the target audience and keywords
- The brand displayed prominently
- Direct, concise and urgent language

(Dodson 2016, 110.)

The following six factors should be tested before posting the ad:
- Content
- Offer
- Pricing
- Creativity
- Banner size
- Call-to-action

(Dodson 2016, 110.)

When writing text advertisements, Google AdWords (2015) suggests the following considerations:
- The length of the text that is visible in the ads
- Highlighting product uniqueness
- Call-to-action such as "Book here" or "Buy now" and similar
- Including sales terms or an offer, such as "Get 25% off for online bookings"
- Matching the ad to the keywords
- Matching the ad to the landing page so that the offering that is advertised can be found easily on the link

The landing page is a webpage that the advertisement links the client to (Charlesworth 2014, 261).

The objective of the landing page is to direct the customer towards desired action, such as buying the product. Therefore it is important that the landing page includes elements that guide the customer step-by-step to the desired action. (Charlesworth 2014, 263.)

Charlesworth (2014, 263) suggests to consider the following:
1. Move the customer towards desired action
2. Having content that is short and to the point
3. Representing the organization in colour, layout, and tone
4. Self-contained – the page does not have any other purpose than to be a landing page for the specific advertisement

2.2.3 Email marketing

Email marketing is a marketing method that is one of the most successful channels for delivering high relevant messages to targeted subscribers. While different social media platforms come and go, email is still used. If optimized correctly, email marketing can drive great returns and levels of engagement. (Dodson 2016, 121.)

Dodson (2016, 122) writes that the success of email marketing is based upon a consistent process. Dodson (2016, 122) suggests three steps to email marketing:
1. Initiating – Who are the subscribers and what type of content would bring the most value to them?
2. Iterating – Measuring and analysing the performance of the email campaign
3. Integrating – Incorporating the email marketing campaign with other online and offline marketing tactics

Pinkham (2018) writes that email marketing is a cost-effective method for reaching customers on a platform that they use every day. Pinkham (2018) points out that the email marketing can be used to build credibility, strengthen customer relationships, improve communication, boost sales, build the brand, and save time.

When planning email marketing in Europe today, the new General Data Protection Regulation should be considered. The General Data Protection Regulation is a European Union regulation which commences on May 25th 2018 and aims to standardize and strengthen data protection policies for residents of EU member nations. (GDPR EU 2018.)

The General Data Protection Regulation affects the collection of e-mail addresses for e-mail marketing. The General Data Protection Regulation requires proof of the e-mail address owner's consent that they have agreed to share their e-mail for marketing purposes. In other words, the opt-in consent of the e-mail owner. The opt-in consent should be collected in a clear manner. A hidden check-box within other text is not enough. (GDPR EU 2018.)

In addition, the company is not allowed to use the customer's email for other purposes without their consent. Consent should be received for each data processing purpose separately. (Smart Insights 2018.)

2.2.4 Social media marketing

Social media marketing is a significant part of digital marketing. Charlesworth (2014, 292) has defined social media as a collection of social network and community websites including blogs, podcasts, reviews and wikis. Charlesworth (2014, 292) adds that social media are websites where users can add their own content but do not have control over the website itself.

Social media marketing can be useful for some companies for a cost-effective two-way communication with customers. However, for other companies the return on investment is questionable. Furthermore, poor engagement rates can generate negative perceptions of the company even more than no social media presence at all. (Charlesworth 2014, 291.)

Social media marketing includes social networks and online communities, blogging, viral marketing, online public relations and reputation management, and consumer generated content (Charlesworth 2014, 291).

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 137) write that customer engagement on social media can drive the business. Engaged customers can become brand ambassadors through word-of-mouth. The most valuable customer does not have to be the one that buys the most. A customer who posts ratings and reviews online can be a valuable influencer. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 137.)

Content marketing is a social media marketing method that is focused on creating and distributing valuable content to attract a clearly defined audience and to drive profitable customer action. There are three key benefits to using content marketing: increased sales, cost saving, and customer loyalty. As people are exposed to various messages every day, having a content marketing strategy helps to differentiate the brand by more relevant and valuable content. Content marketing is beneficial for social media marketing, SEO, paid advertising, and inbound marketing. (Content Marketing Institute 2018.)

Vaynerchuk (2017) suggests content marketers to post documented content rather than creating new content. Besides it being a more time-effective way of content creation, sharing documented content about the business can attract more attention than the "created"

content (Vaynerchuk 2017). Vaynerchuk has also suggested content creators to have a content schedule, such as theme days, for example "Meditation Mondays". One piece of content can be used across multiple platforms, for example, a video on YouTube can be transcribed into a blog post. (Kent 2018.)

Balkhi (2015) provides the following suggestions for writing blog posts, in order to have effective blog posts for sales and SEO:

1. Having a catchy title
2. SEO title under 60 characters
3. Having a meta description for the blog post
4. Having desired keywords in the title, content, and description
5. Having keyword variations in the text
6. Internal linking to other blog posts on one's own blog
7. External links open in a new window
8. Adding image sources
9. Adding tags to images
10. Check post thumbnail on different social media channels
11. Check formatting
12. Include and check call-to-actions
13. Add categories and tags
14. Preview and test all links before publishing

2.3   Digital marketing planning and the SOSTAC planning model

Planning is essential for any company. Without a plan, the company drifts unknowingly and may use its resources ineffectively. Planning reduces stress by putting the managers in control. A digital marketing plan should be integrated with the offline marketing plan. E-marketing plans tend to be closely linked to the marketing communications plan. The E-marketing plan should fit in with the general marketing plan and the business plan. Companies have short-term (one year), medium-term (two to three year) and long-term (three to five year) E-marketing plans. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 536.)

A plan without resources cannot be implemented. All marketing plans should consider the three key resources: Men, Money and Minutes. Meaning that the plan should find the balance between required and available resources. Men, Money and Minutes means how many people, how much money and how much time is allocated. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 576.)

According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 576), the following questions should be asked for each resource element:

- Men – outsourced or insourced? Who will reply to emails or respond on Facebook posts?
- Money – what is the ratio of e-marketing cost to sales return?
- Minutes – how much time will each action require?

There are many planning models that are used in marketing planning. One of those models is the SOSTAC® planning model developed by P.R. Smith in the 1990s. According to the poll created by Smart Insights in 2018, the SOSTAC planning model is in the top three most popular marketing models along with the Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning model and the 7Ps marketing model. (Chaffey 2018.)

Fill (2016, 171) looks at the model from the point of view of planning marketing communications and agrees that the SOSTAC model exceeds many others as a tool to formulate marketing communications plans. However, Fill (2016, 171) adds that since the SOSTAC model is designed for multiple purposes, the communications element can be lost in the situation analysis part by focusing solely on the general marketing plan. Fill (2016,172) points out the importance of identifying the characteristics of the target audience for developing marketing communications plans which is not focused on enough in the SOSTAC planning framework.

The SOSTAC acronym stands for the stages of marketing planning, which are situation analysis, objectives, strategy, tactics, action, and control (Smith 2018). The stages are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1. Recreation of the SOSTAC® marketing planning framework by Smith (2018).

2.3.1   Situation analysis

Situation analysis answers the question "Where are we now?" which should be analysed both internally and externally (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 540).

According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 541) the analytical areas are:

- Key performance indicators – business success criteria
- SWOT analysis in the context of e-marketing
- PESTEL analysis – external uncontrollable factors
- Customer profiles
- Competitor analysis
- Distributor analysis

The indicators that are used for measuring the performance of a company are called Key Performance Indicators, also known as KPIs (Flores 2014, 50).

There are two types of indicators: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative metrics measure the total audience of the campaign, such as the number of impressions, the number of clicks it generated, or number of items sold. Qualitative indicators show the direct and indirect effects of the message and how it was understood. (Flores 2014, 48.)

It is important to note the difference between marketing metrics and key performance indicators. While every marketing metric can be an important indicator, not all of them are "key" performance indicators. (Grigg 2016.)

The appropriate key performance indicators should be chosen based on the marketing objectives (Flores 2014, 50).

According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 541), the common key performance indicators for assessing online performance are:

- Enquires or leads
- Sales
- Market share
- Return on investment
- Online revenue or service contribution

Other key performance indicators of e-marketing are number of unique website visitors, conversion rates, number of page impressions, repeat visits on websites, time spent on the website, popular pages, subscription rates, number of unsubscribes, bounce rate, click-through rate, and social media engagement (shares, comments) rates. The number of hits alone is not enough to measure the performance of the website. Instead, many variables should be taken into account simultaneously, such as the number of sessions, page

impressions, repeat visits, bounce rate and duration spent on the website. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 542.)

Flores (2014, 40) has used the AIDA marketing model in order to determine which of the quantitative performance metrics should be measured and monitored. AIDA is a persuasion model that stands for attracting Attention, arousing Interest, inducing Desire, and causing Action. This model is applicable to digital marketing today as the objective is to get the customers attention, raise their interest, induce desire and cause action, such as purchasing the product. (Flores 2014, 40.)

Flores (2014, 40) applies the performance indicators to the AIDA model as:

- Attention – Website visits, unique visitors, number of impressions and time spent
- Interest – Coverage, affinity, clicks, click-through rate
- Desire – Clicks and click-through rate, conversion rate
- Action – Click-through rate, conversion rate

The situation analysis stage of marketing planning includes SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool that is used for situational diagnosis. The acronym stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and Opportunities. Strengths and weaknesses focus on internal factors of the business, while threats and opportunities investigate the external forces that influence the business. After determining the factors, the management can apply the results by reducing threats, taking advantage of opportunities, eliminating weaknesses, and reinforcing strengths. However, a few aspects should be considered when using the SWOT analysis model as a planning tool. SWOT analysis has received criticism for being too trivial, obvious or misleading due to the subjectivity in determining the factors. In addition, the factors are divided into opposing categories of positive or negative instead of a deeper investigation of their origin or possible impact. (CEOpedia 2018.)

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 541) however, recommend using the SWOT analysis to analyse the current e-marketing situation and call this method the "e-SWOT".

PESTEL analysis is a framework that is used in strategic planning to identify the external macro-environmental factors that influence the organization or business. The acronym stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal macro-environmental factors. (Professional Academy 2018.)

The situational analysis includes researching and analysing the competitors. Competitor analysis is the evaluation of competitors and their strategies in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses relative to one's own product or service. (Entrepreneur 2018.)

Tighe (2017) suggests the following 5 steps for analysing competitors' e-marketing:
1. Identifying the top competitors in similar product or service area
2. Analysing and comparing competitor content
3. Analysing competitor's search engine optimization
4. Looking at competitor's social media integration
5. Identifying areas of improvement based on competitor analysis results

2.3.2 Objectives

The objectives stage answers the question "Where do we want to go?" (Smith 2018).

According to Charlesworth (2014, 32), there are three objectives for any internet presence or activity:
1. Brand development
2. Revenue generation
3. Customer service or support

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 22) point out the following objectives for digital marketing:
1. Grow sales
2. Add value (extra benefits online)
3. Get closer and learn about the customers
4. Save costs
5. Reinforce brand values, extend the brand online

They summarize these objectives into 5S-s: Sell, Serve, Speak, Save, and Sizzle (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 22).

Swan (2018) advises to apply the SMART model to the objectives to make them measurable and realistic. The SMART acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Timely. Meaning that the objectives should focus on a specific issue, be measurable, and achievable. It is important to ask if the objective is reasonable and to set when the objective should be reached. (MindTools 2018.)

2.3.3 Strategy

The strategy stage of the marketing plan answers the question "How do we get there?" (Smith 2018).

This part determines what will be done in order to reach the objectives that were set in the previous part of the plan. A strategist should think of how to reach the objectives with the resources that are available. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 551.)

Each strategic decision should be evaluated by asking "Will this strategy achieve the set objectives?" (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 553).

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 553) write that all marketing strategies should include the segmentation, targeting and positioning analysis, also known as STP, which will be introduced in the next subchapter.

After determining the segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy and considering the marketing objectives, the strategist should decide on the following aspects, as proposed by Chaffey and Smith (2013, 554):

- Sequence – which tools will be used first, for example, updating the website before increasing visibility.
- Aquisition or retention – is the focus of the marketing effort on aquiring new qustomers or keeping the existing clients happy?
- Tactical tools – Choosing the marketing tools and channels
- Intergation – are the online and offline marketing methods integrated? Is the website integrated and accessible through all channels, for example on mobile or other applications?
- Social media – what will it be used for? For example, engagement or promotion? Will user-generated content be used? Content strategy development.

The segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) model is a marketing tool that is used to analyse the product offering and to identify the most valuable customer type. The method consists of three consecutive steps: segmentation, targeting, and positioning. (MindTools 2018.)

Market segmentation is dividing the target market into groups of prospects with similar characteristics. This allows the marketer to focus on the specific needs of each market segment. The characteristics for segmenting the market could be demographic, geo-graphic, psychographic, or behavioural. (MindTools 2018; Sargeant 2009, 132.)

The demographic segmentation is based on age, gender, occupation, education, socioeconomic group, family life cycle, family size, income, race, nationality (Sargeant 2009, 132).

The geographic segmentation is based on geographic location (Sargeant 2009, 136).

The psychographic segmentation is also called lifestyle segmentation. The individuals are segmented based on their hobbies, interests, feelings, aspirations, attitudes and media exposure (Sargeant 2009, 141).

Behavioural segmentation is based on the buyer's use, knowledge, attitude, or response to a product. For example which benefits does the user seek, their brand loyalty, and user status. (Sargeant 2009, 138.)

Targeting is choosing the most profitable market segments. In other words, determining which target market could contribute to the company the most. It is important to consider the potential growth of the most appealing market segments. Another essential aspect of targeting is to consider any technological, legal or social threats or opportunities that could affect the market segment. (MindTools 2018.)

Positioning is identifying how to position the product offering in the chosen target market. Selecting the marketing mix and identifying the unique selling proposition are key elements of this step. In order to create a value proposition, the marketer should look at the wants and needs of each chosen market segment. (MindTools 2018.)

According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 553), positioning should answer the following questions:
- How do we want to be perceived by the target audience?
- What exactly is the product and its perceived value in the marketplace?
- Is it a strong proposition and a source of differentiation?

2.3.4 Tactics

Tactics are the details of strategy, including the marketing mix and the communications mix (Smith 2018).

All the e-marketing tools that will be used should be listed in this part of the plan. It is also important to plan and set what happens when. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 559.)

2.3.5 Action

The action stage of the plan focuses on how to bring the plan into action (Swan 2018).

The action stage can also be named the execution or implementation stage. Each tactic becomes a project or process, requiring actions that need to be executed. In the action stage, tasks are allocated to specific people with specific timescales. This stage includes

risk management – brainstorming potential risks and their impact. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 565.)

2.3.6   Control

In the control stage, the strategist determines which metrics need to be measured at different times (Smith 2018).

The purpose of this stage is to evaluate which marketing methods work and which do not. All of the objectives that were set need to be measured and monitored. The performance needs to be evaluated regularly. After finding what does not work, the marketing tactics can be changed if necessary. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 566.)

This section of the marketing plan should indicate which metrics will be monitored, who will monitor them and how often, and who takes action if required (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 567).

2.4   Social media statistics in Estonia in 2018

In 2018, there are 1.27 million internet users in Estonia, which is 97% of the population. On average, 6 hours per day are spent alongside devices with an internet connection. The most common activities online are using search engines and spending time on social media. Other activities include playing games, watching videos, and looking for information about products. (Milos 2018.)

Facebook is a widely used social media platform, with 720 000 users. The most viewed content on Facebook is photos. Which is followed by links and status updates. Surprising, the least viewed items are videos, which contradicts the popular content marketing suggestion to upload more videos. (Milos 2018.)

According to Alexa (2018), the top 10 sites used in Estonia are the following:
1. Google.ee
2. YouTube.com
3. Google.com
4. Vk.com
5. Facebook.com
6. Postimees.ee
7. Delfi.ee
8. Mail.ru
9. Swedbank.ee
10. Wikipedia.com

2.5 Non-profit sector and the commissioning company

The terminology for defining the non-profit sector has changed over the years. The non-profit sector has also been called the third sector, independent sector, not-for-profit sector, voluntary sector and charitable sector. These terms have been used interchangeably. The non-profit or third sector is distinguished from the other two sectors: the government sector and the private enterprise sector. (Sargeant 2009, 4.)

Not all non-profits are the same and the organizations operate in various areas such as arts and culture, health, education, environment, human services, international affairs, public benefit, religion, or unclassified (Andreasen and Kotler 2008, 24). According to Andreasen and Kotler (2008, 25), the most important differences among non-profits are the extent of use of volunteers, the extent of for-profit competition, sources of funds, and what the organization is attempting to influence.

Charlesworth (2014, 20) writes that marketing in the non-profit or public sector is challenging because the standard marketing mix is often difficult to apply and such organizations are seldom market or marketing oriented. In the commercial business, stakeholders are satisfied by profits, while in non-profit organizations the priority may not be the end consumer but being applicable for funds. (Charlesworth 2014, 20.) The decision for non-profits is not to decide whether to use digital mediums but rather how to get the best use of going online. The internet is an extremely cost-effective way to spread the messages of the organization. Non-profits could use the internet for marketing communications as well as e-commerce, online credit card subscriptions for collecting donations for example. (Charlesworth 2014, 22.)

The commissioning company is a non-profit organization that operates in the health and wellness services field. They differ from other non-profit organizations by the fact that they do not rely on volunteers nor receive funds or grants from external parties. They are also not standing for a specific cause or attempting to influence social change.

The commissioning organizations primary mission is to provide services for people who are interested in finding holistic and natural approaches to childcare and health. Although their mission is not profit-oriented, they still have a high extent of for-profit competition. Therefore many for-profit marketing methods apply to the organization. Their success is measurable mainly by the number of sales. Including how many people have participated in their workshops or yoga lessons, used therapy services, used childcare counselling ser-

vices, or how many products have been sold at the store. Other success indicators include how many new people have joined their online community and how engaged the people in the community are.

3 Complementary and alternative therapies and healthcare marketing

The case company for this thesis provides complementary and alternative therapies and health and wellness related services. Therefore this chapter will provide literature findings regarding the topic of marketing complementary and alternative therapies and health and wellness services.

Brennan and Vos (2009, 350) find in their research that literature divides medicine into two categories: government regulated or mandated and all others. Government regulated medicine is also referred to as mainstream medicine, evidence-based medicine, orthodox medicine, conventional medicine, or scientific medicine. All other healing approaches were called "alternative" medicine until the 1980s, when the term "complementary" came into use, implying that the treatments were an addition to the mainstream medicine, rather than an alternative to it. Hence the term complementary and alternative medicine also referred to as CAM. (Brennan & Vos 2009, 350.)

Complementary and alternative therapies approach treatment from a preventative philosophy which aims to stimulate the body's own natural healing mechanisms. Complementary and alternative treatments focus on treating the "whole" person, rather than singular symptoms. There are numerous approaches and philosophies to complementary and alternative healing. There is no accepted industry definition for complementary and alternative treatments, however, the most established fields include osteopathy, chiropractic, homeopathy, acupuncture, massage, and esoteric practices such as crystal healing. (Brennan & Vos 2009, 351.)

The research by Brennan and Vos (2009, 355) found that the most important factor for seeking complementary and alternative therapies in the UK was to improve general wellbeing. This was followed by the therapy being helpful in the past, dissatisfaction with conventional medicine, stress-related condition, and chronic health problem. The less relevant factors were a new health problem and the desire to try a new approach.

Common reasons for trying alternative treatments is when conventional medicine has failed to find a solution for a chronic health condition. Another reason for choosing alternative treatments is that patients feel rushed by the doctors in conventional medicine and feel like they are wasting the doctor's time. The clients of complementary and alternative therapies find the length of time spent with the therapist, the customised treatment plan and the relationship with a single therapist beneficial factors for engaging in the treatment. Moreover, the clients' satisfaction depends little on whether or not their condition improved. (Brennan & Vos 2009, 356.)

Sepp (2016) writes about the motivations for seeking CAM therapies in Estonia and also points out the importance of attention and care in the patient-doctor relationship. Practitioners of complementary and alternative therapies fulfil the need for care by taking more time to listen and respond to the patient. Alternative medicine is often perceived as safe, natural, personal, and friendly. (Sepp 2016.)

Estonian Cancer Association (2018) recommends using alternative treatments if they provide relief for the symptoms and the treatment does not interfere with the conventional treatment. However, they warn people from being deceived by therapists who provide misleading information about the results of the therapy or who are unprofessional. They recommend doing research and consulting a doctor before choosing the treatment.

Knowing these viewpoints on complementary and alternative therapies can help in creating appropriate marketing messages for such treatments. Considering the information provided by the Estonian Cancer Association (2018), the marketing messages for complementary and alternative therapies should be informative, provide realistic expectations and show the professional and trustworthy quality of the therapy. The marketing messages could bring out the main benefits that are sought by using CAM therapies, such a time and dedication from the therapist, natural and holistic approaches to healthcare, personalized service, openness, and friendliness.

3.1 Healthcare marketing

Although the organization provides non-conventional health care services, some of the characteristics of health care services still apply. Therefore, it is important to look at the characteristics of health care products and their marketing. Although the health care product can be considered a service product, the marketing of health care has additional complexities. (France & Grover 1992, 32.)

The health care marketing challenges as suggested by France and Grover (1992, 32) are presented below.

- Firstly, the health care product is intangible. The consumer has no actual way of assessing the practitioner's skills or qualifications and consequently the quality of the service prior to the purchase as well as after receiving the service.
- Secondly, the customer expectations for the health care product may not match the actual delivery. In addition, how the results are perceived by the customer is determined by their individual psychology. The outcome of the service is influenced by the prior condition of the client.
- Thirdly, the demand for health care products is unpredictable.

France & Grover (1992, 36) offer the following marketing implications to those challenges.

- Firstly, they suggest the addition of elements to increase perceptions of quality. Adding tangible elements may increase the perception of quality. For example, adding physical elements to the therapy room that are relevant to the therapy. Written documentation of the client's outcome of treatments, plans of action, or suggestions for actions outside of the therapy session could increase the perception of quality.
- Secondly, the authors suggest positioning the product for specific segments in order to overcome the mismatch between clients' expectations and the product. For example, providing the service at certain times of the day to meet the needs of a specific market segment.
- Thirdly, it is suggested to add elements to overcome the inconsistent demand. For example, scheduling preventative care elements for times of low demand. Another suggestion is to use incentives to invite clients to use the services at specific times that are convenient to the provider.

Some of those suggestions could be applied to digital marketing. For example, the organization's website could explain the therapies and their benefits in detail. The website could also include testimonials from previous clients if appropriate. The patient could receive information about their individual progress or suggestions for further action via email. The organization could release blog posts about the latest discoveries or research regarding the therapies. This could show the professionalism of the therapist and increase awareness about the therapies. In order to overcome inconsistent demand, the organization could launch strategically timed marketing campaigns for periods of low demand, events that introduce the therapies for example.

Hinsberg and Maandi (2018) discuss that health services messages should be educational, trustworthy and yet simple to understand. While it is important to remain reliable, the information provided should not use too many complex terms. Hinsberg (2018) suggests using visuals to get the message across, especially for online communication. Infographics could be a great way to create a figurative understanding of health-care information among the target audience.

3.2 Motivational factors for seeking wellness

In order to understand the wellness product, let us look into the motivations for seeking health and wellness services. The study by Murrow and Welch (1997, 30) proposed several hypotheses based on the health belief model and the health promotion model.

The health belief model proposes that individuals are motivated to participate in preventative health care and wellness activities based on perceived threat. Their likelihood of taking preventative health action is in correlation with the perceived susceptibility and severity of the threat as well as the perceived barriers to the preventative action. (Morrow & Welch 1997, 31.)

The health promotion model organizes cognitive perceptual factors and modifying factors that influence a person to participate in health promotion activities. Cognitive perceptual factors include individual's perceptions of self-efficacy, control of health, health status, benefits of health-seeking behaviours, the definition, and importance of health. Modifying factors are demographic, biologic, interpersonal, situational, and behavioural factors. Contrary to the health belief model, the health promotion model focuses on the influential factors without the threat of disease. (Morrow & Welch 1997, 32.)

The study found that both a perceived threat and the desire for exuberant well-being are primary drivers in taking health-promoting action. The results showed that with increases in self-actualization the participation in health-seeking behaviour increases. People with high external locus of control perform more health-seeking activities than individuals with an internal locus of control. It was found that women perform more wellness behaviours than men. No significant correlation between income, age, and education level and wellness behaviour was found. (Morrow & Welch 1997, 37.)

The organization could use this knowledge in designing their marketing messages. The digital marketing messages of online advertisements, blog posts, and emails could include images that represent physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. The organization could share studies or success stories about how the therapies have helped to overcome certain illnesses. Their marketing messages could indicate to the healing and health-promoting benefits of the therapies.

4   Project implementation

The initial thesis goal was to create an online communications plan for the commissioning company. The student met the commissioning company to discuss their objectives for the project and an idea emerged to create an online store for the products that are sold by the organization. However, following a discussion with the supervisor and looking into the aspects of webstore management, this idea did not seem feasible considering the commissioning company's resources. In addition, opening the online store would have still required a marketing plan. Therefore the objective was redirected to marketing and communications. Focusing on the digital marketing specifically seemed practical, because it is an area that the commissioning company has been wanting to develop but does not have much knowledge of.

After the thesis goals were specified, the student conducted desk research in marketing, specifically digital marketing and digital marketing planning, in order to gain knowledge for creating the digital marketing plan. The student found the most suitable digital marketing planning framework to be the SOSTAC planning framework by PR Smith. The student researched strategical tools for marketing planning and the different digital marketing methods that are available.

The services offered by the organization are specific and targeted for a niche market, which provided both opportunities and challenges for the marketing plan. That is why the student decided to do desk research about marketing healthcare and wellness services and complementary and alternative therapies. The student found out that it would be important for the commissioning company to portray the quality and professionalism of their services in their marketing messages. This could be done by publishing content that creates realistic expectations for the therapy and introduces the services clearly in a professional manner. A significant selling point of alternative therapies is the personal approach, which could be induced by sending follow-up emails to therapy clients regarding their progress and results.

In order to gain a better understanding about the commissioning company's situation and background the student met the commissioning company for an interview and discussion. The student asked questions about the organization's marketing objectives and current situation of the organizations digital marketing. The student found out about the budget and prices of the events and services, their target group, and main competitors.

It turned out that the organization had not had much time to plan the digital marketing efforts. They had thought about opening a public Facebook page, but they have only

opened a private Facebook group which is still active today. The members of the group are carefully selected. Only people who have participated in the services of the organization or who are potential future participants are approved to the group. This helps to keep the group focused and purposeful. The majority of group members participates in the group discussions and are engaged in the group.

The organization had not used many other digital marketing methods. They representative said that they never tried online advertising or e-mail marketing. While they do contact clients by email as a follow-up to services and therapies, they do not send promotional emails. Their website was pointed out as their most used marketing communication channel. The representative told the student that they have mostly used offline marketing methods, such as articles in the local newsletter and prints in local eco stores.

The organization stated their main competitor to be an organization in Tallinn who offered very similar services. The student researched the digital marketing methods of the competitor and found that the competitor is better presented and more active on digital marketing channels than the commissioning company.

The commissioning company's representative stated their best target group to be local pregnant women who participated in yoga lessons, as they were very likely to participate in other services. However, the representative pointed out that in addition to the mentioned target group, they were interested in reaching people outside of Pärnu area to attend the events and therapies targeted for a wider audience.

It was discussed that people associated the organization only with services for pregnant women and young mothers and were not aware of other services offered. On one hand, the organization has the target market of pregnant women, but on the other hand there are services which could be targeted to a wider audience. Finding a common ground for such diverse target groups provided a good learning opportunity. It was decided together with the organization's representative that the digital marketing strategy should bring out the differentiation in the services and aim to reach a wider target group. In order to accomplish this, an idea emerged to create an entirely separate Facebook page for therapies and wellness services. However, after a discussion, it seemed better not to divide the organization that way but rather to communicate the different services more clearly.

After collecting information from the commissioning company, the student continued the work by analysing the current situation. The student conducted a competitor analysis and a SWOT and PESTEL analysis. The competitor analysis was done by researching online

resources for relevant services and keywords. The student looked into how competitors were presented online and which digital marketing methods they used.

The student carried out a research to analyse the commissioning company's online presence. This was done by checking relevant search terms and by looking at the website analytics.

The objectives were set based on the information received from the commissioning company and by analysing which objectives would be the most valuable. The student followed the 5S model by P.R. Smith and the SMART goals model to set the objectives. Although the commissioning company is a non-profit, they still need to consider the feasibility and return on investment in their activities. Therefore the objectives were mostly sales-oriented. While many objectives could have brought value to the community and clients, they may have not been financially feasible or provided questionable return on investment. The main objectives were to increase the number of baby yoga participants, to increase the number of therapy clients, to reach new prospects for events, and to provide additional value to clients.

When deciding the strategy of the digital marketing plan, the student used the segmentation, targeting and positioning tool. Two market segments were identified: local pregnant women or recent mothers and people interested in holistic health and wellness. The second target group would not be only local people but also people outside of Pärnu area. The variables of the market segments were presented in the plan.

As mentioned previously, the most beneficial target group was found to be pregnant women. People who were committed to a holistic lifestyle or had better off income were considered beneficial target groups as they may have been more likely to participate in other services.

The organizations unique selling points were pointed out to be the long experience in childcare and birth support, natural and holistic approaches to health and wellness, personal approach to each client, and the variety of services offered in one place.

The strategy could be divided into two: additional value strategy and online promotion strategy. The online promotion strategy included search engine optimization, paid advertising on social media and remarketing, search engine marketing, and social media marketing. The student recommended to open a public Facebook account based on the social media user statistics in Estonia in 2018. Instagram was planned to be used only for paid

advertising which is manageable through Facebook Ads manager. However, the organization would not open their own Instagram account. Opening an Instagram account could be considered in the future. For search engine optimization the student recommended to re-evaluate and rearrange the website contents for better search engine optimization. Another recommendation was posting blog posts with relevant keywords and internal linking. The student provided a blog post check-list in the marketing plan.

The search engine marketing would be used for marketing prenatal and baby yoga, as these keywords did not rank that high for the website in the search results. For therapies, paid search engine marketing was not recommended, as the organization ranked quite high in the search results for these keywords. Therefore, people who already knew about the therapy and were looking for a therapist, could find the organization quite easily. The marketing objective for therapies was more on reaching new people who may have not heard about the therapies before but could use them.

The paid advertising on Facebook and Instagram was recommended for baby yoga and events. The event promotion campaign would happen 3 weeks before the event. The testing budget for events was to be 35 euros with the testing campaign lasting for 7 days.

In order to promote the therapies, the student recommended to use content marketing. The most read blog posts on the commissioning company's website were articles that provided solutions for a specific issue. Therefore, the organization's website could have blog posts about recent findings about the therapies and their effect on specific health conditions. Educating the clients about the therapies could raise awareness, which could help to reach new clients. In addition, having recent and professional information about the therapies available would show the quality and proficiency of the therapist. The plan included recommendations for the content that the organization could to post.

Email marketing was recommended for sending out monthly newsletters that included event schedule for the following month. In addition to providing more exposure for the events, this could be a good way of staying in contact with the community and clients of the organization.

The student recommended cooperating with social media influencers or other relevant pages to reach new prospects. For example, reaching out to other organizations or companies that provide holistic wellness services or bloggers who are interested in health and wellness. The marketing plan brings a few examples for potential pages or content creators.

The additional value strategy included online registration options for the services and events on the webpage. The student suggested using email-follow up for events and therapy sessions in order to increase the number of return customers. Another suggestion was to post documented content on social media that could be shared by the customers who attended the event or workshop. Engaging or educational content could bring extra value to the clients.

The plan was created for one year. The first 1-3 months were set for making changes on the website for more sales-oriented content and search engine optimization, setting up email database and collecting emails, opening relevant social media accounts and gathering followers for those accounts. The paid advertising would start after those actions are done. The plan included actions that are ongoing, such as replying to comments or posting content.

One of the challenges for the marketing plan was that the organization is run by two people only, so the plan had to consider time constraints. Limited financial resources also played a role in developing the plan. In order to overcome these challenges, the student decided to focus on the aspects of digital marketing that would be the most essential for the commissioning company and to keep the plan clear and concise. For example, the organization could also try display advertising, opening an account on Instagram or Youtube, or advertising on Vk.com, but these options were left for the future and not included in the first year plan.

One of the solutions for the lack of human resources for implementing digital marketing could be outsourcing some of the services. There are online advertising agencies that provide services for creating and monitoring paid advertisements, search engine optimization, and content creation. Outsourcing the content could diminish the personal approach of the organization's services, which is one of the key selling points. The student would not recommend outsourcing the content creation, but hiring an agency to manage paid search ads or SEO could save time. On one hand hiring an agency requires additional financial resources. However, on the other hand allowing a professional to do the work could save the money spent on testing or ineffective campaigns.

The marketing plan was finalised by future recommendations and considerations after implementing the first year's plan.

The marketing plan was presented to the commissioning company which was followed by a discussion and collecting feedback. The commissioning company agreed with many aspects of the marketing plan, saying that they have thought about implementing those

methods, and it was beneficial to have a plan of action. They have been interested in developing their online presence and social media, but did not know where or how to start.

They were especially interested in the recommendations for the changes on the website because they have been trying to change it themselves. They said that they would like to implement those changes in the following months. They learned more about their web analytics and what to look for.

Another area that they liked were the paid advertisements for events and workshops. They said that some bigger events could use more marketing and that they would like to try the 7-day campaign idea to test out the marketing method. They found the budgeting predictions realistic and feasible for them.

They were especially interested in how to rank higher in search engines for the baby yoga keywords. Therefore they found SEO recommendations and SEM options beneficial for this service specifically.

The organization's representative responded to the e-mail marketing idea by mentioning that there may be a big overlap between the Facebook following and the e-mail subscription list and therefore it might not bring much extra value.

Regarding the content creation for therapies for their blog, they agreed that it could be an effective way to reach clients for therapy. They said that creating advertisements for the specific therapies has not let them reach people who have no knowledge about the therapies. In addition, they find that commercial advertising for such personal services may not be the best option. Creating content about the therapies and their effect on specific health problems might attract more new people. Their concern about creating the content was that there may not be much time left for it along with other activities. They found the blog post recommendations beneficial, such as including a call-to-action in the blog post.

Another suggestion was to cooperate with bloggers or influencers. The commissioning company said that they have never tried anything similar before. Since it was a new idea, they did not share many comments on that. It could be an interesting method to use in the future or if they find an appropriate content creator. However, in the moment it would not be the first priority.

Regarding the timeline, the organization's representative said that it would be realistic to focus on the website and Facebook page development during the first three months, as

their low season is just starting. They would most likely not try the paid advertising meth-ods before the event season starts again in the autumn.

5 Discussion

Since the implementation of the digital marketing plan was not a part of this thesis, it is not possible to analyse if the marketing objectives were met. The thesis process did achieve the goal of creating a digital marketing plan. The commissioning company found the plan to be useful and has started implementing some aspects of it. They wish to implement some of the suggestions within the next months. However, the effectiveness of the suggested marketing methods cannot yet be measured or analysed.

The student suggests the commissioning company to monitor which marketing methods work the best for the organization and their working style. It would be important to keep track of and consider possible changes in social media trends when creating future plans, as social media and digital marketing methods keep evolving. In addition, the new General Data Protection Regulation commences in 2018, which may bring along significant changes in digital marketing methods.

Digital marketing offers accessible and affordable marketing options for businesses and organizations. Online marketing efforts provide immediate feedback for the marketing effort through to online analytics. Online marketing can also be a cost-effective way of marketing and the immediate analytics allow the organization to allocate resources in an effective way. However, it is important to consider the human and financial resources that digital marketing requires. Although easily accessible, digital marketing still requires knowledge, time and financial resources in order to be planned and implemented effectively. It would be important to set specific objectives and monitor the results when implementing any digital marketing activity in order to use resources effectively.

When it comes to non-profit marketing, the performance of digital marketing efforts is difficult to measure in some cases. Although digital marketing provides quantitative metrics, the qualitative metrics are more challenging to measure. For example, if a non-profit's mission is to spread a specific message, the digital marketing metrics cannot determine how the message was received or implemented. The engagement rate might be high, but the influence of the message remains unmeasurable. This is the case with many not-for-profit oriented objectives.

However, the student thinks that digital marketing offers significant benefits for any non-profit regardless of the difficulty of measuring qualitative results. Social media and digital marketing offer exposure to the non-profit organization and its messages. Social media

can be used to increase customer engagement and provide two-way communication between the organization and its members. Publishing user-generated content could be an effective marketing method for a non-profit, depending on their mission and objectives.

Regarding complementary and alternative therapies and health marketing, further research could focus on how to reach people who are not yet familiar with the service and how to convey messages that represent the trustworthiness and quality of the therapy. One of the challenges for the student when creating the thesis was finding ways to market something as personal and delicate as health and wellness. Commercial advertising did not seem appropriate. The student finds that some commercial advertising methods might even reduce the perception of quality of the therapy. It would be important to remain informative, professional, but yet simple to understand for the client when creating healthcare marketing messages. Another challenging topic was the negative associations in society about complementary and alternative therapies. This reinforces the importance of remaining professional when creating marketing messages for complementary and alternative therapies.

The student finds the SOSTAC model to be an effective framework for creating digital marketing plans. The different stages such as tactics and action make the plan implementation manageable and clear. The framework includes most of the essential elements of digital marketing planning. The challenge for the student was incorporating financial aspects into the plan. The framework did not provide a specific method or section for planning financial aspects for the marketing.

The thesis process started in October 2017 and took altogether 8 months. The writing of the thesis took 4 months, starting at the end on January 2018. However, the thesis was not written full-time during these months.

The student learned about digital marketing and marketing planning. Concentrating on health and wellness services in a niche market provided interesting research topics for the student.

The thesis process provided an opportunity for the student to learn about their own working methods. For example, the 25-minute timer method for writing the thesis turned out to be effective. Writing the thesis took longer than the student expected and this was mainly because the subject changed throughout the thesis process. This showed how important it is to plan before implementing or starting working. A lot of time could have been saved if the objectives and the topic had been set better from the beginning. However, changes

may be an inevitable part of the thesis process, as the implementation process reveals new knowledge and viewpoints.

Having completed the project, the student finds that it could have been also beneficial to focus on one specific digital marketing method in the thesis. This could have provided a more in-depth understanding of a specific marketing method. For example, planning a paid advertising campaign on Facebook from start to finish could have been practical. Implementing any of the plan elements could have provided a valuable learning opportunity. The student hopes to see some of the suggestions in this marketing plan being implemented in the near future.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Digital marketing plan for the non-profit organization Small Steps

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Table of contents

Introduction

This is a marketing plan for the non-profit organization Väiksed Sammud (*Small Steps*), which operates in Pärnu, Estonia. The organizations mission is to provide support services for local women for going through pregnancy and childbirth. The organization offers holistic health and wellness services. The plan follows the digital marketing planning model SOSTAC® developed by P. R. Smith.

1 Situation Analysis

1.1 SWOT analysis

	Products/Services	E-marketing
Strengths	• Niche/unique services • Variety of services • Not seasonal • Suitable services for various target groups • Affordable prices • One client often engages in many services	• Private group on Facebook with 488 members, who are mostly active or engaged with the organizations activities. (No public Facebook page) • Sufficient website • Sufficient SEO • Listed on the website for licenced birth supporters
Weaknesses	• Niche service • Too few employees, limits the number of services that could be provided • Health-care product - unpredictable demand • Services for pregnant women – narrow target market • Therapies that are not included in conventional medicine	• Lack of knowledge regarding online communications or marketing • Limited financial resources • Limited staff • No public social media accounts
Threats	• Misinformation or negative associations with alternative therapies in society • Competition for therapies and health products • People assume that the organization's services are only for women or recent mothers	• Competitors have more online presence • Competitors for the store – food supplement and superfoods webstores • Articles and posts that reinforce the negative associations with CAM • Some of the potential target audience may not use social media a lot
Opportunities	• No direct competition in the area in the exact same services • Wellness and holistic/natural living trend in Estonia	• Many natural/holistic living online groups and communities on social media • Not too many competitors in the area – not too much competition for search engine rankings

1.2 PESTEL analysis

Political	Therapies that are not included in conventional medicine
Economic	Low income level in Estonia
Social	Wellness trend among Estonians
	Negative associations towards alternative therapies
Technical	Some of the target group might not use the internet as much
	97% internet users out of the population in Estonia
	Mobile internet is become more and more accessible
Environmental	The services are related to nature and some of them depend on natural resources
Legal	Right to sell food supplements
	General Data Protection Regulation impact on online marketing

1.3 Customer personas

At the moment the main customers are:

- women
- aged 20-50
- mostly from Pärnu
- young mothers
- interested in natural approaches/holistic lifestyle to varying degrees
- have found the organization through the services for young mothers

Variables	*Persona 1*	*Persona 2*
Demographics	Female	Female
	Aged 24	Aged 37
	Expecting a child	Single mom with two children
	In a relationship	Working as a massage thera-pist
	Working in a bank as a cus-tomer agent	
Geographics	Living in Pärnu	Living in Viljandi
Interests	Sports and physical wellbeing	Natural lifestyle and nutrition
	Being outdoors	Spirituality and self-develop-ment
	Travelling	
	Natural and holistic lifestyles	Eastern philosophies and health practices
	Healthy nutrition	

Media consumed	• Friends and female influencers on Instagram • Facebook • Facebook messenger • Online news portals • Facebook groups for natural and organic eating • Email	• Forums and websites about holistic health practices • Telegram.ee • News portals • Facebook groups • Email
Potential services used	Prenatal yoga, workshops for pregnant women	Events and workshops, therapies

1.4   Competitor analysis

Competitor	Competition / Product strengths/ E-marketing tactics
Sternum	• Direct competitor: many similar services • Located in Tallinn • Organization website • Second website – Family e-school blog • Webstore • 3 Facebook pages: Sternum e-store (1855 followers); Sternum Family School (502 followers); and Homeopathy training course page (983 followers) • Weekly post on the blog • Blog posts about health, holistic wellness, pregnancy, raising children • No paid search engine marketing • SEO top keywords: "homeopathy training in Tallinn" and similar
Pärnu Public Hospital Family School	• Pregnancy support and birth preparation, advice about childcare, swimming trainings for babies and trainings for pregnant women, monthly lectures about childcare and pregnancy • Conventional medicine • Pärnu Hospital website • Facebook page (1452 followers)
Villa Medica	• Complementary and alternative therapies and conventional medical services in Pärnu • Website • Facebook page (2189 followers) • "Reflexology in Pärnu" top organic result on Google

Tervistav Stuudio	• Complementary and alternative therapies in Pärnu, physio-therapy services; they sell food supplements and other health products • They use paid search advertising - top paid search result on Google for "Reflexology in Pärnu" • Website + blog on conventional and alternative medicine • Webstore for food supplements • No Facebook page
Paljajalu Yoga Studio	• Baby yoga in Pärnu • Yoga studio • Website • 2 Facebook pages: The yoga studio page(1074 followers); and Baby yoga page (77 followers)
Janne Ristimets' Dance Studio	• Yoga for pregnant women • Dance studio, yoga lessons once a week for pregnant women • Website • Facebook page (1260 followers)
Mahe Mandala	• Food supplements, organic products and superfoods in Pärnu • Physical and webstore • Website • Facebook page (777 followers)

1.5   Services

The services/products currently offered by the organization:

1. Support services for pregnant women and women with children:
   o Workshops
   o Counselling sessions
   o Prenatal yoga and baby yoga
2. Workshops/seminars about natural and holistic health practices
3. Training courses for therapists
4. Therapies: homeopathy, reflexology
5. Sales of food supplements and vitamins
6. Room rental for gatherings and events

1.6   Key Performance Indicators

The organizations success is visible through the following numbers:

• Number of people attending the events
• Number of people participating in trainings
• Number of therapies booked
• Number of return clients for therapies – if many sessions are required
• Sales of food supplement products
• Number of return visitors for events
• Number of active members in the community – meaning that the people attend events or yoga lessons regularly

Online the performance can be measured by:

- Number of unique website visits
- Bounce rate
- Number of page impressions
- Time spent on the website
- Top pages visited
- Engagement in the Facebook community – shares, comments, followers
- Number of people in the e-mail list

1.7 Website statistics

Most read articles are those which provide suggestions or educational information about childcare. Most of the traffic comes from mobile and desktop Facebook, Google, internal linking and the organization siet.ee. Between 800-900 daily visitors in May 2018.

1.8 Number of births in Estonia

Between years 2010 to 2016 the average number of births per year was

- 842 births per year in Pärnu County
- 14 229 births per year all over Estonia

(Estonian Statistics Database 2018.)

1.9 Budgeting

EVENTS

Event ticket price range:	5-25 EUR
The events that will be promoted by paid advertising:	20-25 EUR
Maximum number of attendance:	25-30 people
Average cost of events:	200-300 EUR

YOGA

One lesson	8 EUR
Maximum number of attendance:	12 people
One lesson maximum earning:	96 EUR
One lesson average earning:	48 EUR

2 Objectives

The main objectives are to **increase sales** and **provide additional value** to services. The organization can use online marketing and communications for the following purposes:

Sell	• Yoga lessons • Therapies • Workshops/events • Food supplements and vitamins
Serve	• Collect feedback and recommendations for future events • Answer questions
Speak	• Raise awareness about the therapies or holistic practices • Raise awareness about the organizations services that are available for a wider audience, not only for women
Save	• Save costs by emailing therapy progress and catch-up info instead of print • Online registration for events and yoga lessons
Sizzle	• Community building and extending the support services online

*The 5S digital marketing planning model has been developed by P.R. Smith

The goals for the following year:

SALES	Goal
Yoga lessons	1. 100 new baby and newborn yoga lesson participants within the next 12 months
Therapies	2. 80 new people coming to therapy within 12 months
Workshops/events	3. 75% average attendance on events within 6 months
Products in the physical store	4. Double the amount of sales in the physical store within 12 months

3   Strategy

The objectives will be reached by

1. Online promotion strategy to reach new customers
2. Creating additional value to increase the number of return visitors

3.1   Online promotion strategy

The promotion strategy will include:

1. Paid advertising
    a. Facebook ads
    b. Search engine marketing
    c. Remarketing
2. Search engine optimization
3. Content marketing
4. Social media campaigns
5. Collaborating with bloggers and influencers
6. Email marketing

3.2   Additional value strategy

7. Therapy and workshop follow-up via email
8. Content creation (informational + educational)
9. Engaging posts in the Facebook community
10. Sharing documented content from the events that can be shared by the customers
11. Online registration on Facebook and the website

3.3   Segmentation

The following variables will be used in creating target audiences for online advertisements or sponsored posts based on which service is being promoted.

PSYCHOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	**Interests:** • Health and wellness, natural living, holistic approaches to health and lifestyle **Hobbies:** • Yoga, healthy nutrition, holistic practices, self-development **Media exposure:** • Wellness and holistic health promoting blogs and articles
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	**Age:** 1. 18-60

Gender:

1. Female – for services for young mothers
2. Male – health seminars/workshops and therapies

Family status:

1. Expecting a child
2. Recent mother
3. Individual regardless of family status

Income: Better off (Able to support additional health and wellness services)

Languages: Estonian

GEOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Location:

1. Pärnu area – for regular services
2. All over Estonia – for one-time services

BEHAVIOURAL VARIABLES

Benefits sought:

1. Knowledge and support for going through pregnancy and giving birth
2. Physical wellbeing (yoga and therapies)
3. Educational information about childcare practices
4. Self-development: Workshops about holistic healthcare practices and therapies
5. Seeking treatment for a specific ailment - therapies

User status/ brand loyalty:

1. Participates in various services of the organization
2. Uses only one service

3.4 Targeting

The most beneficial clients are pregnant women who come to baby yoga, as they most commonly start to participate in other services that the organization offers for the next few years. Those who participate in various services or carry through the whole treatment in therapies are also good target customers. People who are financially able to provide wellness services. Also people who are committed to self-development, personal wellbeing or who have a high interest for natural/holistic lifestyles.

3.5   Positioning

Unique selling proposition:

- Natural and holistic approaches
- Many years of experience in support for pregnant women
- Alternative or an addition to conventional medicine
- Many services in one place

Want to be perceived as:

- Natural, holistic, professional, trustworthy, personal, friendly, open space to share and seek support

Value:

- Options for personalized service according to one's needs
- Time and dedication given to the client

Differentiation:

- More personalized/ more time dedicated to clients
- More natural and holistic in its approach to wellbeing and childcare than conventional medicine or other services
- Many services in one place

3.6   Content strategy

The messages that are shared are:

- Informative and/ or educational
- Show the professionalism and the quality
- Creating realistic expectations for the therapy or service
- Introducing and explaining the organizations activities

Suitable content:

- Information about the therapies and services
- Latest findings about the therapies and services
- Documented content from the workshops and events
- Educational content about childcare or holistic health practices

The images that are used will:

- represent wellbeing, wellness, nature or mother-child relationship

3.7   The blog post check-list

The blog posts should include:

1. In-text call-to actions
2. Internal links to other blog posts on the website
3. Catchy title

4. Meta description
5. Keywords
6. Tags and categories
7. Images should have tags, titles and sources
8. Check post preview on different channels
9. Check all links and call-to actions before publishing

3.8 Budget

EVENT
Case 1

Event ticket price:	20 EUR
Number of attendance:	23 people
Revenue from ticket sales:	460 EUR
Cost of event:	240 EUR

Paid advertising campaign for the event on Facebook

Daily budget	5 EUR
Total cost for 7 days of campaign	35 EUR

4 Tactics

In order to implement the strategy, the following steps will be taken in the order of execution:

1. Rearranging the website to be more profit oriented
   a. All of the changes should consider SEO
   b. Including Call-To-Action-s
   c. Developing landing pages for specific campaigns/events
   d. Differentiating the three service areas more clearly:
      - Services for pregnant women
      - Holistic health related workshops
      - Therapies
   e. Reassessing and rewriting the content to be more informative, educational, and professional
   f. Rearranging the blog for future posts
   g. Including online registration option
   h. Including e-mail subscription option
   i. Including the information about the physical store and listing the products and information about them
   j. Adding images that represent wellbeing and introduce the services

2. Set up the email database and subscription box
   a. Collect emails on the website
   b. Collect emails at the events and other services

3. Search engine optimization
   a. Install a SEO application for WordPress
   b. Include internal links to blog posts
   c. Change the URL-s if necessary
   d. Adding the website to Webmaster Tools
   e. Check image sizes, tags and title
   f. Check content tags and categories
   g. Ongoing process: create blog posts about the services and events

4. Search engine marketing setup
   a. Keyword research and choosing relevant keywords
   b. Creating the text ads
   c. Testing the campaign
   d. Measuring the campaign and making necessary optimizations

5. Opening relevant social media accounts
   a. Facebook: For the first year, the company will focus on opening and developing its Facebook account, with paid promotion appearing also on Instagram, however, the organization will not open their own Instagram account
   b. Google AdWords account

6. Promoting the Facebook page
   a. In the existing community

    b. Among current visitors

    c. Using Facebook's page promotion methods

    d. Giveaways, such as products from the physical store or an entrance to an event

7. Promoting the upcoming events on Facebook
    a. Sharing the events on own page
    b. Initiating existing followers to share the events by one free entrance giveaway or a discount, incentive chosen based on the event
    c. Sponsored posts
    d. Adding remarketing links to the website

8. Promoting yoga lessons on Facebook and Instagram
    a. Paid advertisements
    b. Remarketing links to the website

9. Promoting the physical store on Facebook
    a. Sharing posts about new products
    b. Giveaway campaign for followers
    c. Paid promotion
    d. Remarketing

10. Collaborating with bloggers and influencers
    a. Following relevant blogs and pages to notice opportunities
    b. Reach relevant bloggers or page owners to cooperate
    c. Examples who to follow:
        • Butiik Müstika
        • Blogger Kirjutaja Getter

11. Replying to comments, questions and inquires on social media

12. Documenting the events and workshops and sharing them on Facebook and the blog

13. Writing blog posts about the services and latest news or findings relative to them

14. Preparing and sending monthly event schedules via email newsletter

5   Action

Months 1-3	1. Website changes 2. SEO 3. Remarketing links on the website 4. Setting up the Facebook page 5. Gaining followers 6. Setting up email database and email collection 7. Monitoring the website and Facebook page analytics 8. Hiring a photographer for 1 day for images for website and Facebook
Months 4-6	9. Testing paid advertising campaigns for events on Facebook 10. Testing paid advertising on search engines 11. Testing baby yoga campaign on Facebook and Instagram 12. Creating content for the blog 13. Sending out monthly newsletter 14. Monitoring the results
Months 7-12	15. Adjusting the campaigns according to efficiency 16. Continuing with the most effective methods 17. Monitoring the results 18. Reaching out to relevant pages and content creators to collaborate

1. The website changes will be done in cooperation with the person who made the initial website
2. A photographer should be hired for 1 day to take images of the events and services that can be used on the website and social media. The service participants shall be informed before registering for the workshop or event.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

Every day	1. Replying to comments and inquires
Once a week	1. Monitoring the website and social media analytics 2. Creating or re-sharing content related to one of the services on the blog or Facebook 3. Sharing a documented content from one of the services 4. Following relevant blogs and pages for latest information and possible collaboration ideas
Once a month	1. Preparing and sending the monthly newsletter and event schedule 2. Planning the paid advertising campaigns of the next month

6 Control

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the marketing methods, the **number of sales** and the **number of people participating in the services** should be monitored.

It is also important to monitor **which channels and marketing methods are the most beneficial**. This could be done by collecting direct feedback from the clients how they found out about the organization or by monitoring the website traffic sources.

The following metrics should be monitored:

The website	1. Number of unique visitors 2. Number of page impressions 3. Time spent on the website 4. Bounce rate 5. Top referring sites 6. Top keywords and search terms 7. Search engine ranking 8. Search engine referrals 9. The devices used to view the page 10. Most read articles
Facebook page	1. Number of shares and likes 2. Number and content of comments 3. Reviews 4. Number of followers
Paid advertising	1. Ad reach and impressions 2. Click-through-rate 3. Conversion rate 4. Cost-per-click

7 Future recommendations

Throughout the year, it would be important to notice what is happening in the social media world in addition to the organization's own digital marketing metrics. Noticing the trends can help in setting the marketing objectives for the following year. It would be important to monitor which channels and digital marketing methods are becoming more popular. Especially with the General Data Protection Act commencing in 2018, changes may occur in the digital marketing methods. At the moment, the following social media channels and digital marketing methods could be considered for the following year:

- Instagram account
- YouTube
- Vk.com
- Display advertising

Another consideration is to hire an agency to outsource some of the digital marketing efforts, such as SEO or paid advertising.

If more resources become available for the organization, or more people join the team, the organization could consider the following online services and revenue streams:

- Online workshops or training courses
- Online support services with monthly subscription
- Webstore or Facebook store