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Thi Thuy Nga Bui

# Inbound Marketing Plan for Small & Medium-Sized Businesses

Case study: Baila Baila Oy

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

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Thesis

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<p>The objective of this study was to develop an inbound marketing plan for the case company Baila Baila Oy. Baila Baila is one of the oldest Latin American dance schools in Finland. The 20 years old school has a good reputation and several loyal customers. Baila Baila actively spreads its brand through marketing strategy, and it hopes to inspire more people to dance. Despite the company's effort, they cannot generate many new customers. Thus, the company looks for ways to improve its performance.</p> <p>The case company's data was collected for the current state analysis based on qualitative research. Several in-depth interviews with related individuals and group discussions were conducted. The aim was to have a comprehensive observation of Baila Baila's current marketing strategy. During the interviews, obstacles and barriers to the current marketing strategy were identified. The biggest challenges were the lack of competency, time, and budget. The current state analysis also defined the strengths and weaknesses of the case company identified and analysed its competitors. The results of the current state analysis helped develop a tactical approach to improve the company's performance.</p> <p>The existing knowledge section focused on identifying best practice and suggestions for building the proposal, especially in relation to a better understanding of how technologies change consumer's behavior and marketing strategies.</p> <p>The outcome of the thesis is the framework built on discoveries from the conceptual framework and current state analysis. The framework was constructed cautiously and included several methods and tactics to ensure the competency framework. It was evaluated by two marketing officers and the founder who can determine whether it is applicable or relevant to the case company in achieving its goals. These findings are also a wake-up call for those who are doing marketing in traditional ways. Also, strategies and tactics were chosen carefully, and good examples were evaluated thoroughly.</p>	
Keywords	Inbound marketing, Social media, SEO, Lead generation, Lead management

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Overview

Baila baila is one of the first salsa schools in Europe, which is located in Helsinki, Finland. The school's purpose is to spread Latin American dance style to Finnish dance lovers, and its business value is to provide them with an exciting time during every single dancing class and the inspiring atmosphere as well as a friendly community. Baila baila is not just a dancing school but also a place where people can share their interests in dance and socialize at the same time. To gain more market share and maximize its sales, Baila baila needs a proper inbound marketing plan which is suitable for their small-sized business.

### 1.2. Business Challenge

In recent years, inbound marketing is one of the essential tools of a company and its competitive advantage when it is used appropriately. Inbound marketing can help businesses to earn and gain more customers without spending too many resources, such as time, money, and human resources.

Nowadays, with the development of technologies where people find everything online that makes traditional marketing or we can call it outbound marketing is not that effective as it used to be many years ago. As a result, there is a transformation from outbound marketing to inbound marketing. Businesses can imagine what can happen without outbound marketing. Sales can and will be slow, market shares go down, and of course, profit will be decreased accordingly.

Have a proper online marketing plan which can target the right customers at the right time and allows customers to explore themselves with all the necessary information that they are looking for. While in the meantime, businesses can track every move of customers, and by that, it helps businesses to make decisions on closing the deal.

Baila baila has proactive actions toward marketing. However, they are doing it in a very traditional way, which is mostly by events or word of mouth. They are aware of the

importance of online marketing. Nevertheless, they do not have enough time as well as human resources to carry the prerequisite task.

The market is getting more competitive as more and more new similar dance schools enter the market. These newcomers are always full of energy, eagerness, and technological knowledge that they apply to their marketing plan. Thus, the business needs to take action as soon as possible, to retain and gain more market shares. The challenge is that Baila baila lacks the latest knowledge about online marketing and other supporting resources. The company needs clear steps. It needs to change the way they do marketing if they want to succeed in the competitive market.

### 1.3. Case Company

Baila baila was established in 1993 in Helsinki, Finland, by a young Cuban origin - Miguel Verdecia, who is passionate about rhythm and self-expression of Latin dance. He is also the winner of the Nordic salsa championship in 2001 and 2004 and the Finnish salsa championship in 2004.

Baila baila is one of the first salsa schools in Europe. It is the place where dance lovers of all ages can find different styles of Latin American dances such as Salsa, Reggaeton, Zumba, Bachata, Kizomba, and much more. Each class is designed according to the participants' level. Thus, there are classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced. Everyone, male or female at all levels, can choose the class that is suitable for their styles as well as levels. Members can come whenever they want to get plenty of joys and cheers as the classes include both solo dance and couple dance lessons. Participants can also join lessons for couples without a partner. After the class, members can take showers and saunas for refreshment.

The dance school not only provides dance classes but also organizes fun bachelor lessons and offers stunning performances, dance performances, and uplifting dance for any occasions such as birthday parties, small or big festivals or corporate events and also rents spacious facilities and saunas.

#### 1.4. Objective and Scope

The objective of this study is to develop an inbound marketing plan for Baila baila. Taking advantage of inbound marketing will support the company to spread awareness about their brand, more traffic to their landing page, to gain more subscribers as well as followers on social media, increase customers and maximize its sales and profits. Inbound marketing can be used for both long-term and short-term development strategy of the dancing school.

In order to establish an inbound marketing plan, it is essential to have support from many sources such as management level's view, financial reserve, technologies, and tools. The thesis inbound marketing plan will be undertaken in a deep and detailed level that will enable Baila baila to follow and apply easily in practice. The scope of this thesis is within online marketing activities that will improve sales and marketing for the company.

The outcome of the study is an effective inbound marketing plan that is custom-made for Baila baila. The inbound marketing plan will help Baila baila to achieve all the above goals.

#### 1.5. Key terms/Concepts

**Algorithm** is an algorithm which is developed by Google to separate and evaluate every website's quality, in order to decide which one to show in search results, and what order.

**CRM** is known as Customer Relationship Management software, which helps companies to manage, track, and analyze customer databases.

**SEO** is referred to as Search Engine Optimized, the process of improving the visibility of a website to internet users on a web search engine, Google.

**CTA** is described as calls to action, which is a message or image that compels a customer to take action

**Traffic** refers to visitors who visit or come across the website in order to look or compare products or services.

**Navigation** means allowing website users to move to different parts of a website or application.

## 1.6. Thesis Outline

The thesis outline begins with an introduction where business challenges and objectives will be presented. Furthermore, the following is a research design that will go through from the research approach, data collection, and validity in which the research is carried out by using qualitative methods such as interviews, internal workshops, and available data and documents.

The next part will introduce the background and theory of marketing, which also included traditional marketing and inbound marketing. Furthermore, tools for marketing will also be covered as well as processes to carry the inbound marketing plan. The purpose is to have a comparison between the two marketing strategies and how technology has changed the way people do marketing in recent years. Thus, businesses will have to apply the new techs to their development strategy. The current state analysis of marketing activities is carried through an interview with the founder, marketing officers, and other related stakeholders. The proposal is tailored after all related aspects are considered and analyzed to ensure the best fit with Baila baila organisation.

Validation and conclusion is discussed in the last part. Moreover, the findings and facts will be discussed. Suggestions or recommendations can be brought out for further research. This final part attempts to find the best inbound marketing plan for Baila baila based on validation of the management level.



## 2. Research Methods and Materials

This section is an introduction to the research approach and research design that is applied to this entire thesis that is covered from overview to validity. Moreover, this section also can provide readers an overview of how the thesis is executed.

### 2.1. Research Approach

This research will follow the gate model, which was introduced by Robert G. Cooper in 1988. The gate model is a practical approach that can be used to make the product development process more constructive and productive. There will be seven gates in the research as follows.

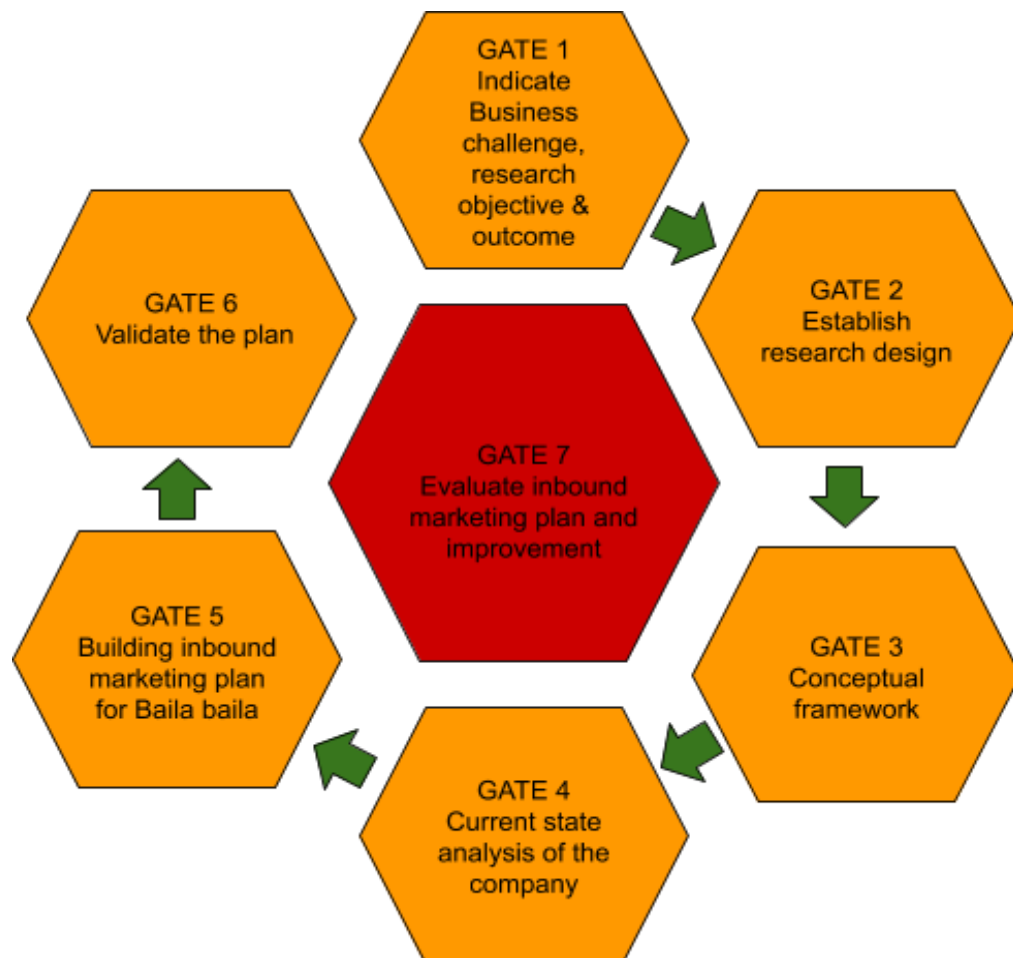


Figure 1. Gate model that is used for thesis work at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

As shown in the above figure (Figure 1), the gate model starts by defining the business challenge of the organisation. By that, the objective is indicated, and the outcome of the thesis is specified. The second gate will introduce research design and data collection that will be used for the current state analysis, which is based on personal observation, interviews, and workshops with customers and management level. Moving on to the third gate is about literature review and existing knowledge about marketing, which will explore various aspects that are in connection with marketing management and inbound marketing plan. The thesis follows this logic design, in order to have a better understanding of marketing in general and online marketing in specific and why it is so vital for business nowadays.

Moreover, it helps the organisation define which elements need to be considered when building inbound marketing plans. The third gate is followed by current state analysis. This gate is to gather knowledge about the current marketing activities of the company, and by that, it helps to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the organisation. The outcome of the thesis, which is an inbound marketing plan, will be presented in the fifth gate. The proposal is built after all related aspects have been considered and analyzed. Once the proposal is introduced, the sixth gate will take into account the validation, and the outcome will come out at the seventh gate, which is also a completion of the thesis.

According to David W Martin, who pointed out the difference between basic research (also known as fundamental research) and applied research in 1985. In the study, he illustrated that basic research starts with a theoretical question and ends with a theoretical conclusion. On the other hand, applied research starts with an applied problem and ends with an applied conclusion or solution. Thus, the research approach of this paper is applied research, which uses qualitative methods (interviews, observations, workshops) to conduct the study. The reason is that the qualitative method can give personal thoughts and perspectives, which can give useful insights into developing inbound marketing for Baila baila.

## 2.2. Research Design

Follow the gate model research design has very comprehensible five steps, which includes objective, conceptual framework, current state analysis, initial proposal, and final proposal. Below is a demonstration of the research design (Figure 2).

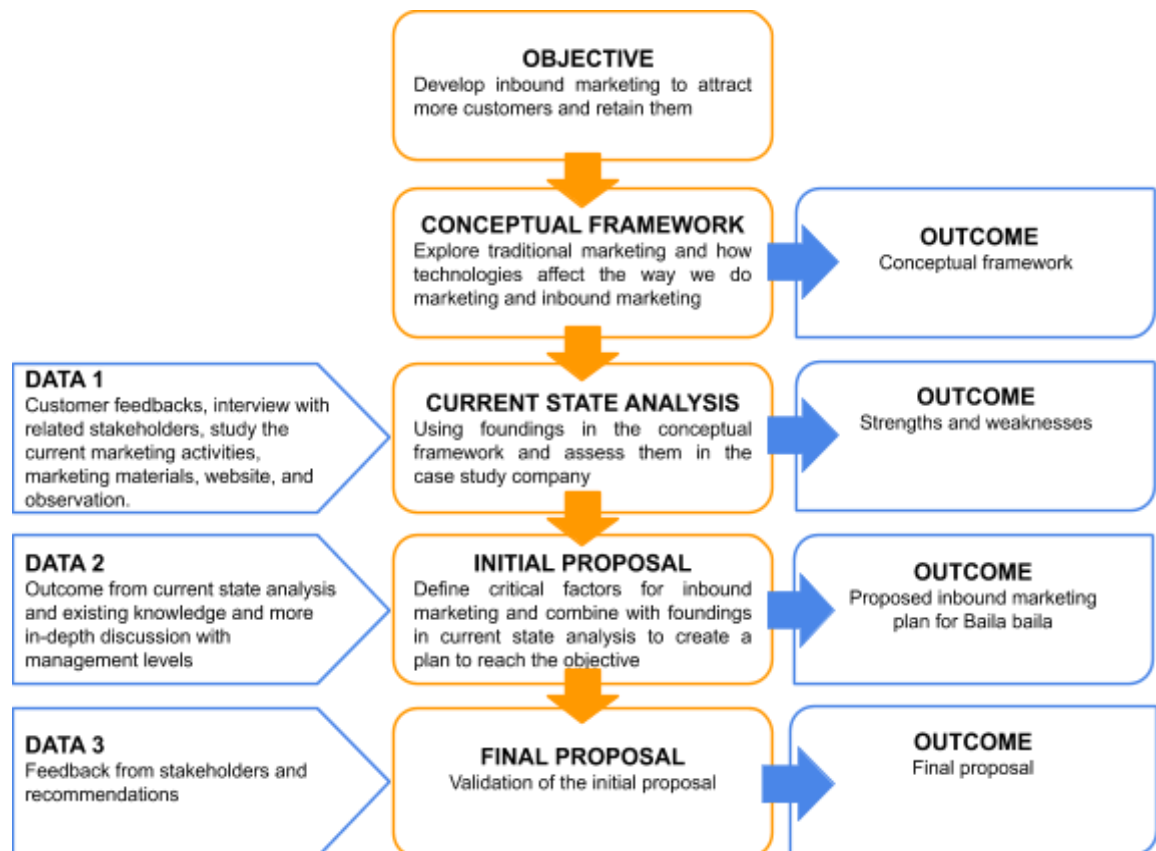


Figure 2. Research design

Figure 2 demonstrates that the objective is the beginning of the research. At this first step, business problems and challenges are recognized, and a solution for the difficulty is introduced.

Follow right after that is a conceptual framework, where marketing is researched from existing activities, different dimensions, and sources. On the other hand, inbound marketing is explored as a competitive advantage element as well as a way to increase awareness, achieve more visitors to the website, and improve marketing activities. The inbound marketing exploration of this part is also a foundation in choosing methods or

tools and additionally developing a proposal which is selected thoroughly for Baila baila.

The next step of the research is the current state analysis of the current marketing practices of case organisation - Baila baila. The purpose of this step is to study the organisation marketing situation. The findings are collected mostly from stakeholders' views, documentation, and observation. The outcome of this step is utilized in improving the marketing practices.

After current state analysis is the fourth step, which constructs a proposed inbound marketing plan that can be applied in both short term and long term strategy of the company. The proposal is made after all strengths and weaknesses of the current marketing operations of Baila baila are identified and analyzed in different dimensions in the previous step and with the addition of facts that found from the conceptual framework. The proposal contains five phases which are designated to appropriate with the case business.

The last step of the research is validation, in which the proposal is validated by the management level and also the founder through direct discussion and group meetings. The result of this step, which are recommendations and feedback, is used to finalize the final proposal.

The research evaluates and analyzes the current marketing activities of the company and brings out a total brand new solution for its practice that it has not been done before. The proposal also marks one step further closer for the business to stay up to date with current trends and technologies. Besides, it is another way to optimize the organisation operations, save time, increase the effectiveness of its sales and marketing activities, explore markets, find new customers, maintain relationships and stay in contact with them.

### 2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Data is collected from interviews and discussions with stakeholders, internal documents, and other related resources. The motivation of data collection is to find facts or evidence in order to analyze and mark out the situation precisely. Furthermore, to sketch the strengths and weaknesses of the current circumstances as well.

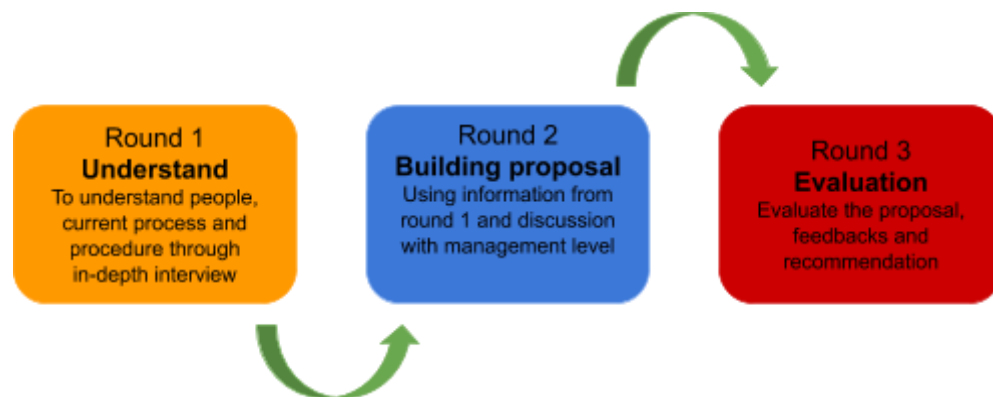


Figure 3. Interview plan

Data collection is divided into three rounds. The first round is to collect data through interviews for current state analysis. There are a total of nine interviews and one group discussion with three focus groups of interviewees. The three focus groups involved are from both internal and external sources of the organisation. The groups include: two current customers, three potential customers, and management level (two marketing officers and the founder). The purpose of the interview is to collect their views, opinions and perspectives, extract information and understand the current marketing operations of Baila baila. The interview approach is chosen for conduction because it is the best way to gain the right knowledge and useful insights from target groups of interviewees. Interviews are recorded through written notes, and questions are asked that are differences within focus groups. Each interview lasts around 30 minutes and not more than an hour. Besides interviews, marketing documents such as online and hardcopy materials and feedback are also considered thoroughly for further understanding of the current situation.

Data Round	Data Type	Data Source	Date	Recording	Purpose/ Focus
<b>Data 1</b>  <b>Current State Analysis</b>	Interview	Customer 1 Customer 2 Potential customer 1 Potential customer 2 Potential customer 3 Marketing Officer 1 Marketing Officer 2 Founder	Face to face on: 9, 13, 16, 22, and 24 Jan 2020	Written notes	To get insights and views about current marketing activities
	Internal Documents	Feedbacks, brochures, leaflets, class schedule, website	Feb 2020	Transcribed	To gain information about processes and procedures
<b>Data 2</b>  <b>Building the Proposal</b>	Group discussion	2 marketing officers and the founder	04 Mar 2020	Written notes	To build the proposal that suitable for the company
<b>Data 3</b>  <b>Validation</b>	Online interview	Marketing officer and the founder	May 2020	Written notes	To collect feedback, recommendation, and adjustment for the proposal

Figure 4. Data plan

The second round of data collection is conducted to build the initial proposal. Based on findings and facts that were found in previous rounds and existing knowledge. Current state analysis calls attention to strengths and weaknesses which assess every aspect

of the circumstance. The data collection is concentrated within internal resources, which are management levels and the founder. The motivation is to draw out the most suitable inbound marketing plan for the company.

The last data round is the validation process, which focuses on feedback and recommendations as well as evaluating the proposal from the management team, especially the founder. Adjustment or modification can be made if needed.

#### 2.4. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability have been taken into account for the entirety of this research. The research design is created with the purpose to make it more credible and trustworthy.

By using appropriate methods, approaches that can ensure the research is conducted cautiously and continuously. Moreover, useful practices from a variety of sources and existing knowledge about marketing are considered carefully. Also, a reference list is provided at the end of the research, which allows readers to access the sources easily.

The proposal of the research is enhanced with details that are collected by stakeholders and related documents. Data that is gathered are valid facts and critical viewpoints that can not be disagreed.

### 3. Conceptual Framework

This section explores the existing knowledge and theoretical concepts of traditional marketing and how technology has changed traditional marketing. In addition to that, the section will discuss modern marketing practices - inbound marketing and how it can reduce marketing costs while it can also generate efficiency results. Process, tools, and techniques are mentioned as well, which will provide readers the full picture of customer acquisition of inbound marketing.

### 3.1. Definition of marketing

Perhaps the question “what is marketing?” is one of the most debated topics among scholars. For years, many different definitions of marketing have been illustrated, and the definition has changed throughout the years. Despite the changes, some definitions are found to be quite complex such as McCarthy described in 1975 that:

*“Macro-marketing is concerned with designing an efficient and fair system which will direct an economy’s flow of goods and services from producers to consumers and accomplish the objectives of the society.”*

On the other hand, some definitions are found to be very simple such as the definition from American Marketing Associate (AMA) in 1960 stated that:

*“Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers.”*

Alternatively, another definition in 2006 by Philip Kotler, who is considered the father of modern marketing:

*“Marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others.”*

### 3.2. Outbound marketing

Outbound marketing is a way of doing marketing in a traditional method. It is a series of business’s brand promotion activities through traditional channels such as seminars, tv, radios, newspapers, leaflets, telemarketing, trade shows, with the purpose to strengthen and solidify its product brand. By doing that, it would be possible to reach potential customers and retain existing customers. Outbound marketing has evolved over the past few decades, and it brings significant outcomes that have been proven



through the years. However, outbound marketing involves a relatively higher cost than inbound marketing, and the ROI (return on investment) is much lower (Halligan 2010).

Companies that use outbound marketing are usually big or international companies such as Coca Cola, Fazer, McDonald's, or Telia. Some companies use it most of the time to increase their existence in the market. However, some companies use outbound only during promotion campaigns such as Stockmann (hullut päivät), Elixia fitness center (discount for new members), or Tripla shopping mall (opening celebration) ...



Figure 5. Image by Breckenridge

### 3.2.1. Marketing mix

Marketing mix is an essential supporting toolkit for outbound marketing practitioners when they need to identify the suitable offers to customers or consumers. The tool not only applies for the short term but also long term marketing strategy of the organisation (Palmer, 2004). Marketing mix gives a demonstration of how advertising strategy should be done to capture potential customers. It is the combination of Four P's: product, price, promotion, and place. The term "Four P's" was narrowed down from Neil Broden's marketing mix idea by an American marketing professor and author - Edmund

Jerome McCarthy in the 1960s. Since then, it has had a strong influence on marketing practitioners, academic scholars, and researchers in many ways that are from thought, marketing activities to research and practice (Grönroos, 1994).

Marketing mix or the four Ps is not only suitable for the marketing of consumer goods such as groceries and food items but also durable goods such as furniture, sports equipment, jewelry ...



Figure 6. Marketing mix. Source by Mark Acutt.

The four Ps of marketing is a crucial marketing strategy that needs to be considered when a business determines what to offer to the customer. Companies that wish to increase their sales and revenue need to understand the target market. Marketing mix is the best way for companies to sell their products or services successfully. According to Acutt (2015), each P is described as below details:

Product:

An item that is produced to meet the demands or needs of a particular group of people. It can be tangible or intangible, and it can be services or goods. The marketer needs to ensure the right product for the right market. Understanding the product life cycle is essential, it allows the marketer to know if a product has reached its decline phase, in order to decide on the product that they should reinvent the product to stimulate more demands.

Price:

The amount that customers or consumers pay to have the products or services. The price is one of the essential elements in making purchasing decisions. As a result, it can produce negative or positive impacts on sales and demands. The price of a product is affected by the perceived value of the product from the customer. Thus, a product can be priced higher than its actual value if the customer perception is positive. Whereas, a product can be underpriced if it has no value or little for the customer's perception.

Promotion:

An action that a company wants to communicate with its customers in order to enhance brand recognition and sales. Promotion consists of activities such as special offers, advertising, or public relations. The marketer needs to consider the suitable promotion channel to be used that fits for the product, the target customer, and the price.

Place:

Is how the product is made available to customers. It is mostly about product distribution. The marketer needs to place the product in the right place. They need to consider whether they can use intensive or exclusive distribution or franchise. Thus, selecting the most suitable distribution channel is essential.

Each of these 4Ps factors is expected to vary, and along with this, they are strongly coordinated and interlinked. If one of the factors changes, all other factors will change as well. Besides, all 4Ps are equally essential, and no factor is more important than others because an excellent product with a lousy price strategy or distribution strategy will not bring any customers (Bhasin, 2018). Hence, marketers need to learn and develop 4Ps for each product, and as soon as its features are described, the illustration

will provide business with an outline of the marketing plan showing how it can be developed and grown. Once the 4Ps is conducted precisely, it can change the competitive position of the company (Grönroos, 1994).

The marketing mix has largely influenced marketing practices since it was popularized in the late 1940s because of its simplicity and easy to understand or memorize (Rafiq and Ahmed, 1995). Schools all over the world teach it as an essential marketing course for its marketing students. Students learn it as the most crucial tool of marketing, and companies use it as a guideline to satisfy the target market. Successful stories of applying the marketing mix in developing products through the years are undeniable. Despite the proven success of using the marketing mix as a conceptual framework in the decision making process for marketers (Goi, 2009) marketing mix has received plenty of criticisms from experts and scholars in the industry. Robins (1991) and Vignali and Davies (1994) condemned the marketing mix as too internal oriented.

Furthermore, Möller (2006) also indicated that the marketing mix considered customers as passive, and there is no interaction or connection between the business, and the customer. Thus, there is no relationship established between seller and buyer. A successful marketing plan needs to focus on customers and put them in the center of the plan (Lauterborn, 1990). Perhaps the marketing mix was more relevant in the past when it was invented (Schultz 2001), and it is no longer suitable for 21st-century marketing (Yudelson, 1999).

### 3.2.2. Traditional marketing does not work anymore

In recent years, technology has developed remarkably, and it is still changing continuously. At the same time, it has changed consumer behavior consistently. As a consequence of the evolution of consumer behavior in the digital age, the criticisms which were mentioned in the previous part make absolute sense. As stated by the CEO of Hubspot Halligan in 2019, there are two reasons why outbound marketing becomes less and less effective than it used to be. First, outbound marketing interrupts people by using cold calling or spam emails that make people try to block them out. Second, people nowadays have a tendency to search, learn, or shop for things online instead of

going to a seminar or trade show, which is far away from where they are. Digital transformation has changed how businesses operate and deliver value to customers. The digital sphere allows people to reach vast amounts of information with just one single click by using a phone or computer. Consequently, customers have become more and more active in utilizing digital channels as a way to collect information and learn about a product before moving forward to the next purchasing process.

## Transformation of Marketing

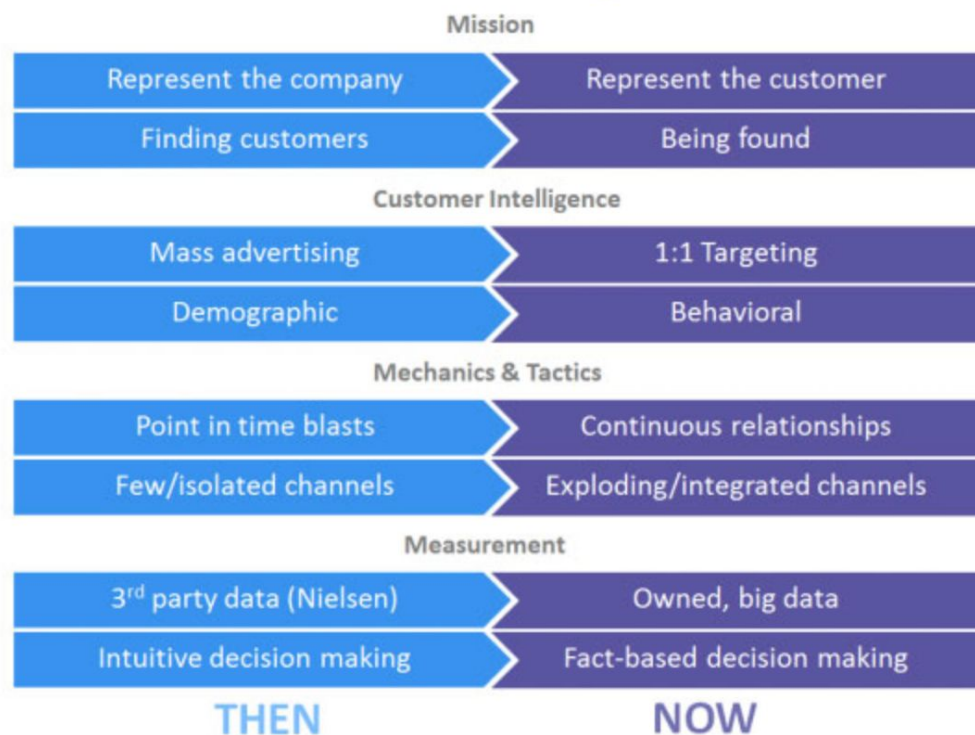


Figure 7. How marketing transform by Adobe (Marketo)

Below are key findings around the world that the author has found while doing this research. The figures are discovered on the internet. The data collected are from different sources, most of them are from statistical companies, and some of them are from government sites. These sources are also mentioned in the references of this thesis. The purpose is to ensure trustworthy claims of data, moreover, for the convenience of readers who want to reach out to the sources for their references.

- There are 4.5 billion active internet users worldwide as of January 2020. The number is equal to 59 percent of the global population. Among those internet users, Europe has 705 million users. (Statista)
- 6 hours 42 minutes is the average time per day spent using the internet via any device in the world. Among those hours, 2 hours 16 minutes is the time consumers spend using social media and messaging apps. The data is from a survey of internet users aged 16-64 conducted by GlobalWebIndex in 2018. (GlobalWebIndex Social Media Trend 2020)
- 81% of consumers carry out online research before making purchasing decisions. (SmartMarketing)
- 63% percent of companies use social media in Finland. The number has increased by 25% for the period from 2013 to 2017 (according to a survey by Statistics Finland in 2017).
- 60% of Instagram users reveal that they discover new products on Instagram. (Instagram)
- The 3rd most advanced digital economy in Europe belongs to Finland. According to European Index 2018.
- 28% of business owners shift from traditional marketing into digital marketing because the new way of marketing is more cost-effective than other marketing channels. (Hubspot)

The evolution of modern technologies has brought people closer than ever before. Anyone with a phone, computer, or something similar to that, which has a connection to the internet can communicate with their friends, loved ones, business partners, and access instantly to global news, trends and latest technologies. Therefore, it makes people more tightly bound together and shapes tremendous possibilities for everyone internationally. For consumers, it allows them to have a better understanding of the product and make a better comparison of which product or service and which company

that they want to purchase. For businesses, it has opened the door to enormous business opportunities such as small and medium businesses. The digital arena gives business owners the best chances for competition, growth, and exploration of the global market.

The golden opportunity is knocking every business's door and accompanied by plenty of unique challenges along with it. The question is, are business owners brave enough to step outside their comfort zone and take up the challenge which is worth taking? As soon as they are ready for it, they will have to face numerous obstacles. Weedman (2019) has raised the concern about the barrier to entry to digital marketing for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). Weedman has also carried out a survey, which he has asked many SMBs owners and marketers about the blockages in dealing with digital marketing. Number of challenges has been mentioned, and below are some of the most significant obstacles:

- Lack of knowledge: Most SMBs do not know about digital marketing because of its breadth and depth industry. Therefore, it is hard to reach without niche expertise. The ability to detect and select tools or platforms is also absent, not to mention skills to utilize them.
- Lack of time: To come up with a quality plan, it requires an enormous amount of time. SMBs are competing against big players that have professionals doing it for them. On the other hand, SMBs owners are doing it on their own because they also do not have a dedicated staff to handle the tasks.
- Lack of budget: SMBs are often in shortage of cash, and they often struggle with cash flow issues. They have so many bills to pay that make it even more difficult to spend on marketing.

The easiest way to overcome all the above-mentioned issues is delegating and automation. As SMBs, many responsibilities fall to the owners so that delegating is the ideal solution. Nowadays, the challenges can be overcome with support from plenty of marketing automation software that helps organisations, especially SMBs, to execute their online marketing strategy at the most cost-effective available.

### 3.3. Inbound marketing is the next choice for marketers

The above existing marketing models have opened up opportunities for future development. Thus, inbound marketing is chosen to apply for Baila Baila. The reasons for this decision have been described in detail in the previous section. These following subsections will be an in-depth discussion about the main concepts of inbound marketing. The discussion will provide more detailed information to readers about inbound marketing methodology and its strategy to gain a better selling and even enlarge profit or turnover at a low budget.

#### 3.3.1. What is inbound marketing?

Inbound marketing is a strategy that uses appropriate and eye-catching contents that are custom made to fit the needs or requirements of customers. There are several forms of content, such as blogs, landing pages, videos, ebooks, infographics. The inbound marketing indicates that businesses should help buyers to understand their problems and find out how their product can become a solution. The methodology of inbound is to establish trust and create value for a company's brand. Companies that take advantage of inbound marketing can make a significant influence on customers, raise their brand's awareness, and attract more business opportunities. At the same time, it educates purchasers and provides them knowledge about the company's product and service. By doing that, it can accelerate the sales process and close more deals. Because of its excellent tactics in persuading customers to pay for products, inbound marketing has become a successful marketing strategy that has been used in many companies nowadays.

Unlike outbound marketing, inbound marketing obtains audience awareness by making information available and easy to be found. On the other hand, traditional marketing tries to gain attention from consumers by interrupting such as when they are driving (radios); when they are watching movies (theaters) or when they are reading news (newspapers). The strategy of outbound marketing is to reach a massive number of people without knowing that the information provided is not relevant to them at all. The



reason is that each person has different needs and requirements. Consequently, the inappropriate strategy will annoy their consumers, and it will hardly develop positive relationships with them, not to mention this can harm the company's image in the long run.

Back in the early 1990s, the dot-com bubble, a period of rapid expansion of the internet in both usage and adoption, started to boom and reached its peak ten years later, the early 2000s. At the time, there was too much information and many messages sent out every day through traditional channels, and that made consumers tired of the materials, and tried to avoid them as much as they could. Customers decided to absorb only the information they want or found on the internet as an alternative solution when they had needs. Businesses realised that they needed to have good quality content on the internet, in order to catch visitors' attention. The idea of a high quality content has been used for years before Brian Halligan (Hubspot's co-founder and CEO) discovered that it is possible to track how a customer makes their purchasing decision in the digital age. He then came up with the term inbound marketing when he and his partner Dharmesh Shah, Hubspot's co-founder and CTO, established the company as a digital-driven marketing school in 2005. The methodology of inbound marketing is based on the idea that companies should not push customers to buy their products through annoying advertisements. Instead, they should get to know the target audience first, make customers like them, create relationships with them as a company if they want their business to flourish. The reason is that businesses will lose the critical opportunity to offer solutions through their product if they do not understand the exact needs of clients. Thus, the concept of Hubspot is to help companies understand the importance of using the internet and how they can achieve customers by creating high-quality educational content on social media, blogging, website, so on and make it easy to reach by using strategies (Becky, 2018).

### 3.3.2. Inbound marketing process

To have a deep understanding of how inbound marketing philosophy works, Hubspot has divided the inbound marketing process into four successive steps from strangers to promoters of the company. Each step is a fundamental point which demonstrates what businesses or marketers can expect to happen and what they need to do or follow, in

order to attract strangers, turn them into sales leads and satisfied customers who happily enjoy promoting their product or service. At the same time, each step brings up an individual's journey of a consumer who must go through during the whole buying process. Businesses and marketers are also advised how and which techniques can be attempted and succeed in each process.

Hubspot has created the diagram below as an outline of the inbound marketing methodology. The sketch describes what can happen at each step.



Figure 8. Inbound marketing methodology demonstrated by Hubspot.

#### 1. Step 1: Attract (from strangers to visitors)

Attract is the first challenge that businesses and marketers face in the inbound marketing process. The question is, who should they attract, and who is worth it? According to Hubspot, the methodology of inbound marketing is not to attract as much audience as they can. In other words, businesses should not try to attract everybody but attract only the right people at the right time and in the right place with the right product or service. Another way of saying is finding answers for who, when, and where (Cintel 2019).

The right people are those who may potentially want to become a customer. Businesses and marketers need to figure out, usually by using tactics or strategies, if they are dealing with the right person. Also, if the businesses pick the wrong target, businesses and also clients will lose their valuable time and money.

The right time is when businesses should engage with them. Finding the right time in this era of information explosion and the digital revolution makes it much more comfortable than ever. Nowadays, customer's behaviors can be analyzed by using big

data analytics tools that will help businesses discover useful patterns, insights, and trends. In this instance, it helps businesses to predict future activities of customers at each step. The collected information will provide the sales team significant advantages in approaching target customers.

The right place is where the business wants to be found and how to make it easier to be found by someone. Under this circumstance, it is the business's target or potential customer. In most cases, social networks function well in this early step of the inbound marketing process. In the meantime, high quality and relevant contents need to be developed so that it can draw the attention of customers. Let us have a look at some marketing channels that can be used for this attract step:

- Social media: Today, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are some of the most popular places for people to spend time on the internet. According to Statista, nearly 70% of the Finnish population participates in social networks (as surveyed in 2017). Businesses can use this advantage to reach millions of people by posting valuable content on these social networks. These networks will help to increase the list of right people (subscribers or followers) who can potentially become customers in the future.
- Website: Most of the businesses have a website these days, and having a useful website is essential for the survival of the businesses. Besides a well-written content, a qualified website needs to be a search optimized webpage that requires relevant keywords that appear on the website. A keyword or a focus keyword is a word or a group of words that internet users use to search on google or any search engines (Harsel, 2013).
- Blog: A blog is a specific type of website. A blog has information or discussion about a product or service. In contrast to web pages, information on the blog is updated more frequently. An excellent blog contains excellent content that will help businesses to demonstrate their values and also motivate readers to take further action, such as purchasing action or telling their friends about the product.

## 2. Step 2: Convert (from visitors to leads)

Attracting content has brought positive results that visitors are aware of businesses' products. They have collected preliminary information about the product and have learned several details about what businesses have to offer. This step businesses need to turn them from a stranger into leads who are actual prospects, willing to purchase goods or services.

Building relationships with strangers is one of the tasks, and it is not a one day job, it usually takes considerable time and effort from the companies. The relationship should be built up steadily, and it should be direct contact to have better outcomes. In exchange for contact details, or personal information, businesses must have something to offer that customers consider as perceived value. Once they are interested in the offer, they are willing to provide their contact information to companies in exchange to have access to it. Hubspot calls this CTA (call-to-action). The CTA is often under the form of images, buttons or messages. For example, subscribe for a service demo or register for a week free trial. The form (for register or subscribe) or landing page should not be too complicated but simple, easy, and fast to fill out. The purpose is just to get the main details such as name, email address, and phone number, not every information of the customers. As the details contact is collected, businesses can start to send leads marketing materials email. The email is tailored personalized by using CRM (customer relationship management). According to Zoho, CRMs help businesses to store, organize their potential clients, and keep track of their every signal activity. It also enhances communication through automatic reminders and email templates. Some of the most popular businesses that provide CRM software are Hubspot, GoSquared, Zoho, and Dynamics CRM by Microsoft ...

In the end, the convert step is considered to be successful when the businesses can turn a stranger who has no or less interest in the company into a lead, who is seriously ready to buy or considering to purchase from the company.

### 3. Step 3: Close (from lead to customer)

The third step is reached when businesses have in their hands some information about the lead or potential customer such as their demands, what materials they have

accessed. Because at this step, businesses can track their movements on the internet. Now it is time to take the inbound marketing process to the next stage in order to close the deal, the closing step. Businesses need to make them feel that it is time to decide that they should become a customer rather than just a wandering customer. The business should have a specific process for selling.

Ranking leads is one of the helpful tools to close the case effectively. It allows businesses to measure or compare who is more in doing business with the company and who is less valuable for further actions. There is always somebody who is spending more money than others and who is spending more time making purchasing decisions than others. Businesses will have a chance to distinguish these leads by giving them a ranking score based on their activities. Then, they can decide which one needs to give them more time and which one is worth following in acquiring an actual customer.

According to a report about email and mobile email use, that was conducted by Radicati, worldwide email users are over 2,9 billion by the end of 2019. The amount is much higher than the number of Facebook users, with 1,7 billion in the fourth quarter of 2019 (Statista, 2020). Hence, email is still a valuable tool these days for marketers. Businesses can use email as a way to engage with potential customers and encourage them to buy. An email contains information that reminds them about their needs, about the product, and the company's brand. Also, telling them that the company can be a solution for their pain and make them want to pay for the service. By using CRMs software business can also set up automated email campaigns that help to save a lot of work and resources. Thus, it helps to save time and money for the organisation.

#### 4. Step 4. Delight (from customer to promoter)

Goal is almost here, when marketers move to step 4, the last step of the whole inbound marketing process, customer delight. Customer delight is a procedure to bring customer experience to a higher level. It is not just to satisfy their demand but exceed their expectation so that companies can create a positive customer experience and maintain long term relationships with them (Hubspot).

This step is not less important than others. It is a crucial one if companies want to build a better business. At this point, they will need to maintain the positive image of the brand through prolonging incredible emotional reactions. Recommendation about a business's product or service, from a happy and satisfied customer to his or her friends and family, is better than any type of marketing channel. This method is called WOM marketing or word of mouth marketing. It is recognized that WOM marketing fosters more sales than paid advertisements. According to a research carried by McKinsey in the categories of skincare and mobile phones confirms the statement that WOM contributes from 20 percent to 50 percent of all purchasing decisions.

There are many different ways to boost customer expectation into extraordinary after becoming a paid customer, such as:

- **Build excellent customer service:** A business that has excellent customer service is often a good listener who tries to understand and figure out how their product can ease their pain on time. They do not just try to solve customer's problems, but try to understand why they need the product, and determine how to help them succeed. They ensure that their staff are always enthusiastic and positive in every interaction with customers (Hubspot).
- **Keep in touch:** Close a deal when a customer pays for a product, but it does not mean close the relationship between the buyer and the seller as well because they may purchase the product again. Therefore, businesses should maintain the interaction with them regularly. Social media or email can also be one of the options to keep this relation continuing. Businesses can keep in touch with them by setting up automated emails that inform customers about new products or remind them to sign up for a newsletter. Besides, having smart content, customer loyalty programs, or special events published on social networks are useful ways to increase social interactivity and cultivate a strong bond with customers (Becky, 2018).
- **Have a great customer community:** A customer community is referred to as a place or platform where customers, potential customers, experts, and others can give reviews, discussions, and recommendations about the product or service of a company (QuestionPro). It is a useful resource that allows people to

share their opinion with another about the brand. A positive can generate new unknown visitors (Rüttger, 2015).

### 3.3.3. Buyer persona

The term buyer personas has just come around for the past few years. However, it has been used by many marketers, experts, and researchers. A buyer persona is described as a target customer who the companies want to sell their product or service. The buyer persona is built based on customer research about their characteristics, such as shopping habits, income, or needs (Wright, 2017). From another angle, a buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of a seller's ideal customer. It is based on in-depth research and actual data of existing customers (Hubspot). The market research reveals insights, patterns, trends, and future behaviors of an audience who businesses want to approach. It also helps them understand deeply and empathize more about the prospective customer's problems and pain points. They can endeavor to offer solutions to the right target consumer for their challenge afterward and make them more engaged with the brand (Gamble, 2018).

Buyer persona is not just important. It is more than necessary because inbound marketing puts customers at the center of their marketing strategy, that is to say, a customer-oriented approach. An attempted approach will become a disaster if they fail to make a relevant conversation. For example, they try to sell a barbecue chicken pizza to a vegetarian. There is nothing worse than offering a wrong product or service to a promising consumer because it will ruin everything, such as trust, interest, and relationship, even before it is built.

Furthermore, it is challenging to create quality content if they do not know about the person they are targeting. Therefore, it is a fundamental task to develop a buyer persona. A business can have more than one buyer persona. A couple of personas usually works better than ten personas. If businesses build too many personas, it can cause distraction and confusion for the marketing and sales team, not to mention it may waste time and resources. Thus, it is worth having just a couple of personas that does not mean they can eliminate some of the target prospects who show their interests in the brand but narrow it down to the right one they want to sell to (Ruffolo, 2016). Once a constructive buyer persona (or some personas) is created, businesses will know who

should be attracted, who he or she is, what marketing materials or messages they should send. Because the more specific and detail-oriented they can, the more chance they have to increase intimacy in their relationship with prospective customers.

Information era helps businesses in getting customer's data easier than before. Data is collected when an in-depth research is processed. The research focuses on both demographics, and psychographics of an average customer such as name, age, location, interests, and activities, how often they visit a company's website, what they are looking for, what they think about the brand. As customer data has been gathered successfully, it is time to plan a buyer persona. Besides background information of a target customer, to build a buyer persona, there are some steps which are suggested in 2018 by Christina Newberry, a digital marketer:

- Find out the pain points: Pain point is a specific challenge or problem of a potential consumer. Pain points are usually diverse from person to person. Business tasks are to identify what problems or hassles they are facing? What is holding them back from achieving their goals?
- Identify the goals: Business needs to figure out what are the goals of clients. Knowing the goals helps businesses know what to offer because their products or services can become solutions.
- Know how business can help them: Is to understand how a business's brand can help customers overcome their problems or make their life easier and better. At this point, marketers should not think about a brand in terms of features and what the benefits can offer to customers. Instead, they should take a different point of view from the other side, the customer's view.
- Turn research information into buyer personas: At this step, businesses get all research details together and find common characteristics. When these characteristics are grouped together, a buyer persona is revealed. Then, businesses can name their persona, give it a title, a job, and other features as well as pain points, and goals.



### 3.3.4. Customer journey

Customer journey is a path of continuous steps and interactions of a customer who experiences a company's product or service. It can vary in length and scope. It can also be planned, measured, monitored, and managed (Transformation). Customer journey can also be interpreted as a process of a buyer who goes from completely unaware of the brand to have some perception of, start to consider and evaluate, and decide to make purchasing decisions of a product or service (Hubspot). The journey is separated into three steps (figure 7). Each step, customers search for necessary information or resources, and the role of a marketer is to understand all these needs.

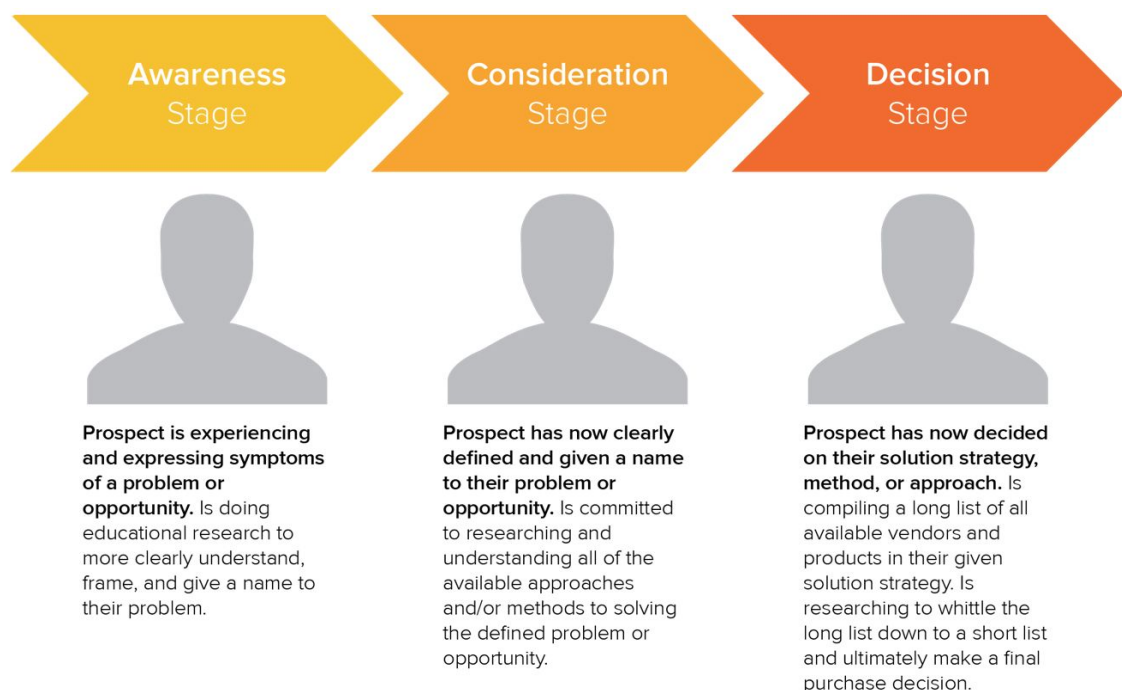


Figure 9. Purchasing decision (Hubspot)

- Step 1: Awareness stage

Awareness stage is when prospects realise that they have a problem or are facing difficulty. They may want to do some research about it and decide whether or not they should consider it as an essential thing that needs to be solved or should they get rid of it.

- Step 2: Consideration stage

In the consideration stage, prospects have fully understood what they are dealing with, and they also know that there is an opportunity to fix it. They will then search for different options or offers available that can be best suitable for the current challenge.

- Step 3: Decision stage

During this stage, prospects may already have a list of top solution categories. They will begin to make an evaluation based on found materials. In the end, the best meet for their needs will be chosen.

The customer journey is a helping map for marketers in chasing their objectives. The journey will give them insights, bring them into the desired customer's shoes and catch signs of their brand from the buyer's point of view. It helps sellers understand what potential customers care about, what their pain points are, how to improve their purchasing experience, and what kind of content or marketing materials they may need, in order to achieve sales. There are several advantages that a customer journey map can bring to the organisations. According to Salesforce (2016), these are some benefits of a customer journey map:

- Allowing businesses to know where buyers interact with them.
- Businesses can concentrate on specific needs at different stages of customers in the buying funnel.
- Helping businesses realise the gap between customer experience and the one they received.
- Identifying key priorities for development.
- Knowing which one is worth spending efforts and resources to maximize effectiveness.

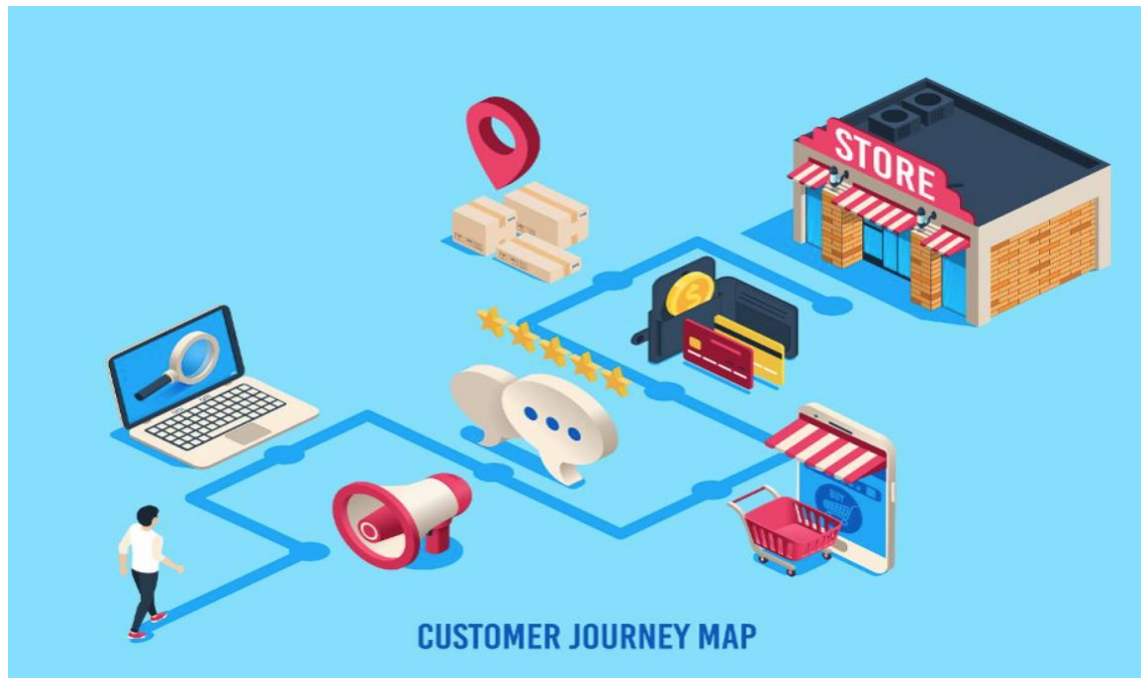


Figure 10. Customer Journey is not always a straight line (bigstockphoto.com)

A customer journey map arises typically soon after a buyer persona is developed. The template or format of the journey can be diversified. It usually depends on businesses that decide which one is suited the most to their prospective customer and product or service. It can also be renewed or updated because customer's behaviors change continuously. Therefore, the customer journey map evolves as well. In order to create a comprehensive customer journey map, it is necessary to include every single particular feature of the desired customer. For small-sized businesses or their first map, it is better to design the customer journey of their most common buyer persona (Hubspot). Marketers also need to consider making a list of buyer touchpoints, which are possible routes that the buyer persona may want to interact with them. The interaction can be person to person, websites, social channels, emails, or telephones. Generally, the more touchpoint is performed, the more chance for businesses to get their product sold. For example, If a person clicks many times on online ads and visits several times on a seller's website. He or she may be very interested in considering buying a product. A touchpoint can also be a negative experience, which is called roadblock or paint point. The paint point can stop clients from making their purchasing decision. Some of the most common roadblock or obstacles are cost, high delivery charge, poor customer service, and inaccurate information. Eventually, businesses can choose what elements

they want to show in the customer journey. However, the task is not finished there. Businesses need to evaluate the results and find out how they can help customers better to ease their pains and build a long term relationship with them.

### 3.3.5. Lead generation

A lead refers to a person who shows interest in the product or service of a company. In other words, a lead is a potential customer or a prospect. As a part of the inbound marketing methodology, leads are created when they allow businesses to have their contact details. All leads are not equally the same as others, nor are they qualified the same because each lead will be in a different stage of the purchasing process. They can also be scored and managed in order to make it easy for businesses to turn them from somebody anonymous to a known contact.

According to Hubspot, there are four different types of leads as below:

- Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL): they are interested in the product, but not ready to be approached or want to contact the seller.
- Sales Qualified Lead (SQL): they want to ask further questions about the product.
- Product Qualified Lead (PQL): they use a sample or trial version, but interested in features that are only available for paid versions.
- Service Qualified Lead: they reveal to the seller that they want to become a paid customer.

Lead generation is the process of searching for people or target prospects who see benefit in a seller's product and making them hand their contact information over to the seller, by using tactics and strategies, in exchange for something of value. Lead can be collected by the sellers, or it can also be bought from data marketplaces. However, buying a ready database may not generate good results as expected. Not to mention, it may harm the business's image. Because the prospect may have no idea about the product or they have no interest in the brand. It can become even worse if sellers try to contact them at an inappropriate time.

On the contrary, generating a lead helps businesses to know that the person is interested in their product, and they may want to hear from them. Besides, businesses will know who they are, what exactly they want (based on their provided details). Businesses will just need to provide them the right information at the right time. By doing that it will give companies more chances to persuade them to consider their product as an option instead of their competitors.

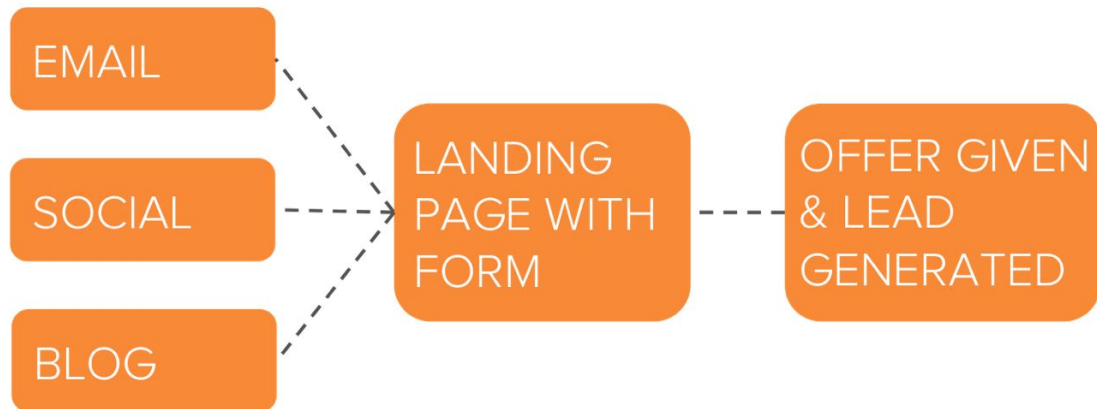


Figure 11. Leads are generated from marketing channels (Hubspot)

Five crucial steps to an effective lead generation (Honigman, 2019):

- Acquire lead:

In order to acquire leads, businesses need to produce engaging content that fits their audiences, and spread it to various marketing channels, where desired customers are active, to generate more traffic or visitors to their website. Several techniques can be used to increase traffic are SEO (Search Engine Optimization), pay per click advertisement, online marketing videos, blogs ...

- Nurture existing leads:

When a lead is acquired, it will be listed in the company's database. Businesses should continue nurturing them by using email, blog, or retargeting ads to retain their interest and bring their demand to a higher level. By doing so, businesses may move them to the next steps of the purchasing process.

- Score every lead:

Score every lead helps businesses to gain new sales leads, and strain qualified contact, that allows businesses to define which one is worth investing more time on than others. If the business fails to do so, they will end up missing out on opportunities to turn qualified leads to value customers. Scoring leads will also help to minimize wasting time and increase sales effectiveness and efficiency.

- Pass leads to sales:

Once all leads are scored, it is time for the marketing team to pass qualified leads to the sales team. At this step, the sales team's job is to keep nurturing them to convert their needs into buying action. Then enrich their experience in order to retain them.

- Evaluate lead generation process:

Evaluation is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the process and avoid weak performance leads. Moreover, it brings a chance for improvement that will enhance the overall development of the brand.

### 3.3.6. Lead management system

Lead management system is a software system or platform that stores collected leads from multiple sources and channels (ads, website, email) in just one place. Before inbound marketing became popular, most companies kept their contact details or leads in spreadsheets or simple contact databases. Nowadays, there are still many businesses using spreadsheets to manage their data. The practice usually happens more in small companies than big organisations, because spreadsheets are easy to use and understand.

However, if the business grows in size, it may create hassles since it is unable to manage a high volume of leads in spreadsheets. For example, a sales team can enter

500 leads manually to a spreadsheet, but they will have to spend more time and resources if leads escalate to 5,000 or 10,000 leads.

SALES NEEDS	LEAD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	SPREADSHEETS
Storing leads' details	✓	✓
Managing high volume of data	✓	✗
Automating lead capture and enrichment	✓	✗
Tracking leads' activities	✓	✗
Prioritizing leads	✓	✗
Creating reports	✓	✓
Making calls	✓	✗
Sending emails	✓	✗
Managing sales activities	✓	✗

Figure 12. Spreadsheets can not solve every needs (FreshWoks)

It is cruel to have an effective lead management system to manage leads. It helps businesses to save time and resources. Especially, it helps transfer all the works from manually to automatically, which means that they will have more time to focus on nurturing and converting leads to desired customers. Also, using the system, businesses now can capture more leads, generate more qualified leads, manage lead information and create reports in less time and less effort. The most significant advantage of lead management systems is that it allows businesses to monitor every movement of their leads. For example, what leads are looking at their website, how many times they visit their website, what product they are interested in, and where they are in the customer journey.

The system allows businesses to know leads more or even understand them more than the customer. It is a powerful tool for businesses to influence people by offering individual deals. For example, a lead has visited many times to an online education's website, and the lead has always watched anatomy videos, he even follows them on Facebook, but has not contacted the company or asked any further questions about the product. He can be an anatomy student, so budget maybe his biggest roadblock. The

marketer will want to turn this lead into a paid customer, by showing a pop up (which has a message: subscribe with 40% off for just today) on his computer's screen. Thus, he may not want to lose this opportunity.



Figure 13. Benefit of lead management system (SelectHub)

As mentioned in the previous sections, inbound marketing is best suited for small business owners who always look for ways to be more productive with a low budget. Lead management systems can help them automate workflows and use fewer sources. Below are some of the best lead management software and tracking apps that are available in the market for businesses, especially small businesses, as there is a free edition option.

- Hubspot
- Zoho
- Salesforce
- Really Simple Systems
- Freshsales



#### 4. Current State Analysis

Current state analysis focuses on the case company's marketing current strategy, Baila baila. The in-deep analysis is conducted based on the first two steps of the lead generation process (attract and convert lead), which is found in the conceptual framework.

Marketing documents such as leaflets, brochures, websites are analyzed. Findings from interviews with customers, staff and the founder is also used for current state analysis. There are a total of nine interviews and one group discussion according to three focus groups of interviewees.

When interviewees are questioned about what they usually do to spread their brand to others, and most of their answer is to send leaflets and organize promotional events. Both of the marketing officers revealed that it takes them much time to enter and manage customer databases. They can only have time to produce leaflets, send it out, and hope for potential customers to contact them. It seems inbound marketing methodology appears to be unfamiliar.

The founder realises the importance of digital marketing and is interested in making an innovation for the company's current marketing practice. At present, the company depends mostly on word of mouth marketing because most of their news leads that hear about them from their current customers.

At the moment, the company's main concentration is to generate more leads. Even though inbound marketing is considered to be necessary by the founder, to achieve the goal, he also expresses his concerns about the price if he wants to apply inbound marketing for the company. He also worries about time limitations because it is a small business, and it looks like everything is mostly under his responsibility. Besides, employee competencies seem to be another obstacle that may block the company from success in inbound lead generation.

The company can not distinguish the difference between sales and marketing. Thus, they do not have anyone who is in charge of sales to follow up and nurture potential customers. This lack of resources leads to low sales and incomes of the company.

#### 4.1. Current marketing strategy

The current marketing strategy of Baila baila is examined based on the first two steps of the lead generation process, which are to attract and convert leads to customers. These are essential steps for the business to generate more sales and profits.

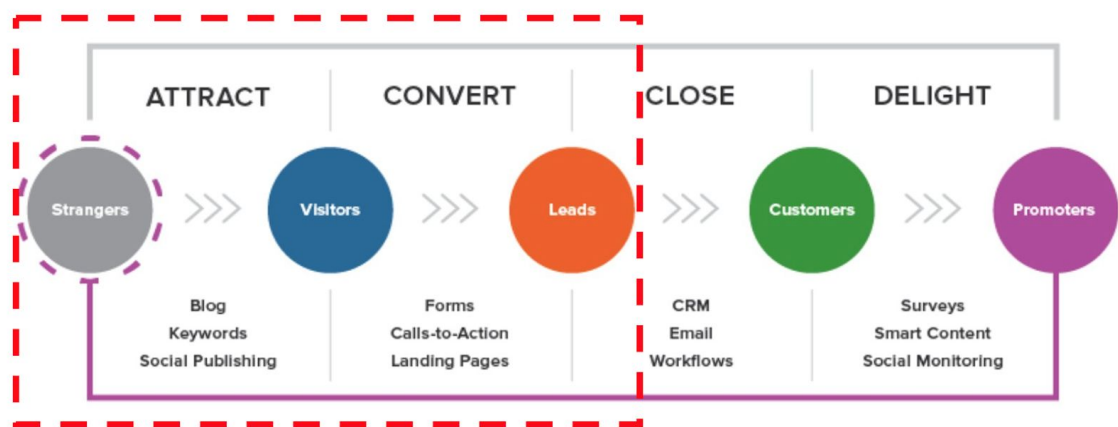


Figure 14. Focus areas of current marketing strategy analysis.

##### 4.1.1. Current attract practice

The current attractive practice of the case company is studied in detail, in order to increase brand awareness, enhance community engagement, more visitors, and traffic to their brand. For instance, analyze the website, Facebook, Instagram to understand what and how they are doing on media channels, are they able to attract more leads through these channels?. Also, printed marketing materials such as company brochures, catalogs, leaflets, and business cards are taken into consideration as well. Moreover, outbound marketing activities like tradeshows, promotional events are included in this research.

- Website:

News and activities are updated regularly. However, the website is quite slow, and it takes time to load images, most of the pictures are very old ones, and the picture quality is bad. The design is outmoded, and it has a bad color scheme. There are too many secondary links, which are inconsistent and cause confusion, difficulty in finding proper information about the company's services. In other words, the website navigation is difficult to understand. It is a messy and too long scrolling layout. The website does not work well on mobile devices. Too much information, similar, unorganized, and irrelevant content are published on the website. The website is only available in Finnish language. It is an unattractive interface. There is also no call to action (CTA) pop up or button (a tactic used to exchange something of value to visitors for their contact details).

In conclusion, the website is not optimized for SEO and conversion, which means that they may have a high traffic loss. The loss is due to the Panda algorithm, a part of google's primary indexing and scoring system that devalues low-quality content websites and promotes the ones with higher quality content. Therefore, the website's ranking is low.

- Social channels:

The company uses Facebook, Instagram as social channels to communicate with its customers. Similar to its website, current and future activities are also updated frequently. It has high ratings and many good reviews.

However, there is not much valuable content, such as dance tutorial articles or videos. Also, the number of followers is low and low interactions within the community.

- Printed marketing materials:

The company does not have brochures, but they use leaflets as marketing material. Leaflets are created for each particular activity with the purpose to promote that particular event, such as a special dance event on Valentine's day offers a 50% discount ticket price for current customers who bring their friends. After designing and getting approval by the owner, they are stuck on the walls around the school, every corner to ensure everybody is informed about the event. The design is very poor in quality, and it does not look that professional. Another printed marketing material is coupons that are delivered to people only on special occasions, such as when the company attends trade shows.

One important fact that has been found during the interview with marketing officers is that they do not have business cards, and they also mentioned that it is unnecessary to have one.

- Outbound marketing activities:

The company focuses mainly on promotional events. There are small events, which are arranged every Sunday (Sunday dance for salsa lovers). Some more significant events are organized every year, such as Gala night. Besides, there are events organized following holidays of a year such as Christmas, new year eve, easter. Participants need to purchase tickets when entering the events, and this applies for also current customers.

Another outbound activity is participating in trade shows. During the trade shows, the company will try to attract passing visitors to stop by their exhibition booth by using banners and leaflets, showing videos and some dance performances of the teachers. The author was lucky to join one of their trade shows. Compared to neighbor's booths, their booths look far less attractive, despite excellent dance instructors.

#### 4.1.2. Current convert practice

It looks like the company has no intention to turn its visitors to leads because no signs are showing that they are doing so. There is no pop up on the website. They do not try

to get the visitor's contact details. Even at the trade shows, a chance to get closer to them and make them more interested in the company.

From the observation of the author, mostly, they wait for people to approach them, give them the information they need, and wait again until they come back to make purchasing decisions.

Their marketing strategy is just to spread the brand and nothing else. They do not take any initial steps in turning them from strangers to leads, and then paid customers. The reason may be that they are afraid of annoying people if that person does not want to buy a membership. Human resources is also a barrier for this small company. As mentioned earlier, they do not have a sales team or a salesperson.

#### 4.2. Competitors

In order to stand out in the competitive market and improve business performance, it is important to understand competitors. This subsection will look into the competitor's current marketing strategy to get insights into how they are doing in the market, what they do to attract customers, and what makes them successful. The analysis can also give new ideas about how to make Baila Baila a better option for its customers.

According to the case company, their main competitors are Salsa Studio and VIP. Based on a preliminary review, none of the mentioned competitors has better marketing performance than Baila Baila. Therefore, this exploration will just study only Salsa Studio because its concept and marketing strategy are very similar to each other.

In order to make this competitive analysis more effective, the exploration will also need to investigate companies that have equal business models and good marketing performance. Helsinki Salsa Academy is a standout business in marketing campaigns of the same business segment, which has been found when this research is carried out.

- Salsa Studio:

Salsa Studio is not much different from Baila Baila. They have similar class schedules and similar events. Just as Baila Baila, their website does not look professional, and the content is not attractive. Salsa Studio is not doing good at increasing traffic and leads, and there is no CTA. There is no blog or education videos or articles. They also do not pay much attention to lead nurturing.

One interesting fact was found that the two companies have exactly the same teachers. When they are asked about the similar teachers, the answer was they can not give teachers a full-time job. Therefore, they can not stop them from working for their competitors at the same time.

- Helsinki Salsa Academy:

It looks like Helsinki Salsa Academy is aware of what they are doing. They want to generate as many visitors and leads as they can. Their website comes first in the search engine; it has nice and simple design, quality pictures, relevant content, and is easy to navigate. The website is in English and also Finnish, which means they can also attract non-Finnish speakers (while Baila Baila does not have that chance because their website is only in Finnish). Many feedbacks from current customers are included in the website. The videos, messages from the founder on their website are very compelling. They also have blogs that provide informative content about dance-related issues, which can inspire leads and turn them to paid customers.

**ALOITA SALSATANSSI MATKASI TÄSTÄ!**

**TILAA TÄSTÄ ITSELLESI MAKSUTON VIIDEN (5) PÄIVÄN ON-LINE  
SALSAKURSSI SÄHKÖPOSTIISI!**

5 DAY FREE  
**SALSA**  
**MINI**  
COURSE

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email*</b>	
<input type="text" value="Type your name"/>	<input type="text" value="Type your email"/>	<input type="button" value="Kyllä, haluan tilata 5 päivän maksuttoman Salsakurssin"/>

Figure 15. A compelling CTA by Helsinki Salsa Academy.

#### 4.3. SWOT analysis

SWOT is known as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. SWOT is used worldwide by businesses to evaluate a company's competitive position and strategic plan. This research will also utilize SWOT as a tool to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the case company. Findings and facts that were collected from the current marketing strategy and competitors are used as supporting evidence for this analysis.

❖ Strengths:

- One of the oldest dance schools in Helsinki.
- Good reputation.
- Qualified and trained teachers.
- Classes offered at a variety of times, styles, and levels.
- Many different teachers with different teaching styles.
- Fun and enjoyable atmosphere.
- Good location, right in the heart center of Helsinki.

❖ Weaknesses:

- Website is not attractive, slow, and not optimized.
- They do not have educational videos and blogs that have dance-related issues.
- Inbound marketing is not applied (they do not know how to generate traffic, leads, and nurturing leads).
- Lack of skilled employees.
- Lack of time.
- The budget for marketing is low.

❖ Opportunities:

- Finland is considered the most depressed country in the world because of its weather. Thus, dance can cheer them up.
- Many health benefits of dancing (rising health awareness amongst the population and high rate of obesity disease. Therefore, more people want to maintain good health).
- Different social activities for customers.
- Customers can balance work and life.

❖ Threats:

- Competition from existing dance studios.
- Competition from gym centers that also offer dance classes.
- Pandemic (COVID -19)
- Recession.

#### 4.4. Critical issues

- Website is old fashioned. It should be redesigned.
- There is no inspiring content. Therefore, articles, videos, and blogs with dance-related issues should be made.
- Visitors can not contact the company when they are on the website, online customer contact point (chatbot) should be available.
- Lead generation should be optimized and automated.

## 5. Building The Framework

Building the framework is developed based on the inbound marketing methodology, which is found in the conceptual framework. Thus, there are six steps in conducting the framework, which are buyer personas, customer journey, lead generation, lead management, tools, budget, and tracking.



The inbound marketing methodology is the best fit for small businesses like Baila Baila and its customers. It helps to increase visitors and leads, and turn them from strangers to happy customers with less work and budget. All the six steps are tailored for Baila Baila, based on facts found in the current state analysis, to ensure the practicality of the proposal.

### 5.1. Buyer persona

Buyer persona is built based on market research results, and actual data of Baila Baila's existing customers or who are interested in becoming a member. Demographics information is collected mostly from the company's data and its Facebook page. Other detailed information is gathered from interviews with the company's employees, customers, and potential customers.

#### Buyer Persona Profile:

From the buyer persona profile (Figure 16), the customer's name is Saara, who is currently living in Helsinki. She is around 24-45 years old and single.

She has not danced before. She is looking for a dance studio where she can learn to dance. Also, she cares about her health, and she knows that there are several health benefits of dancing. Therefore, she plans to attend class 3 times a week to keep a good healthy lifestyle and make friends at the same time.

She hopes dancing can give her a good time after work. She likes to be in a team and enjoys being around with people. She wants to learn dancing, but she is afraid the class schedule does not fit her. She wants to find a proper studio, but she does not want to spend too much time searching for information. She hopes the studios can provide precise information on their website. She wishes to have information about each dance class so that she can find out which style is suitable for her. If there is a video teaching dance for beginners such as Salsa or Zumba, that would be great. She prefers to use email or social networks as a means of communication.

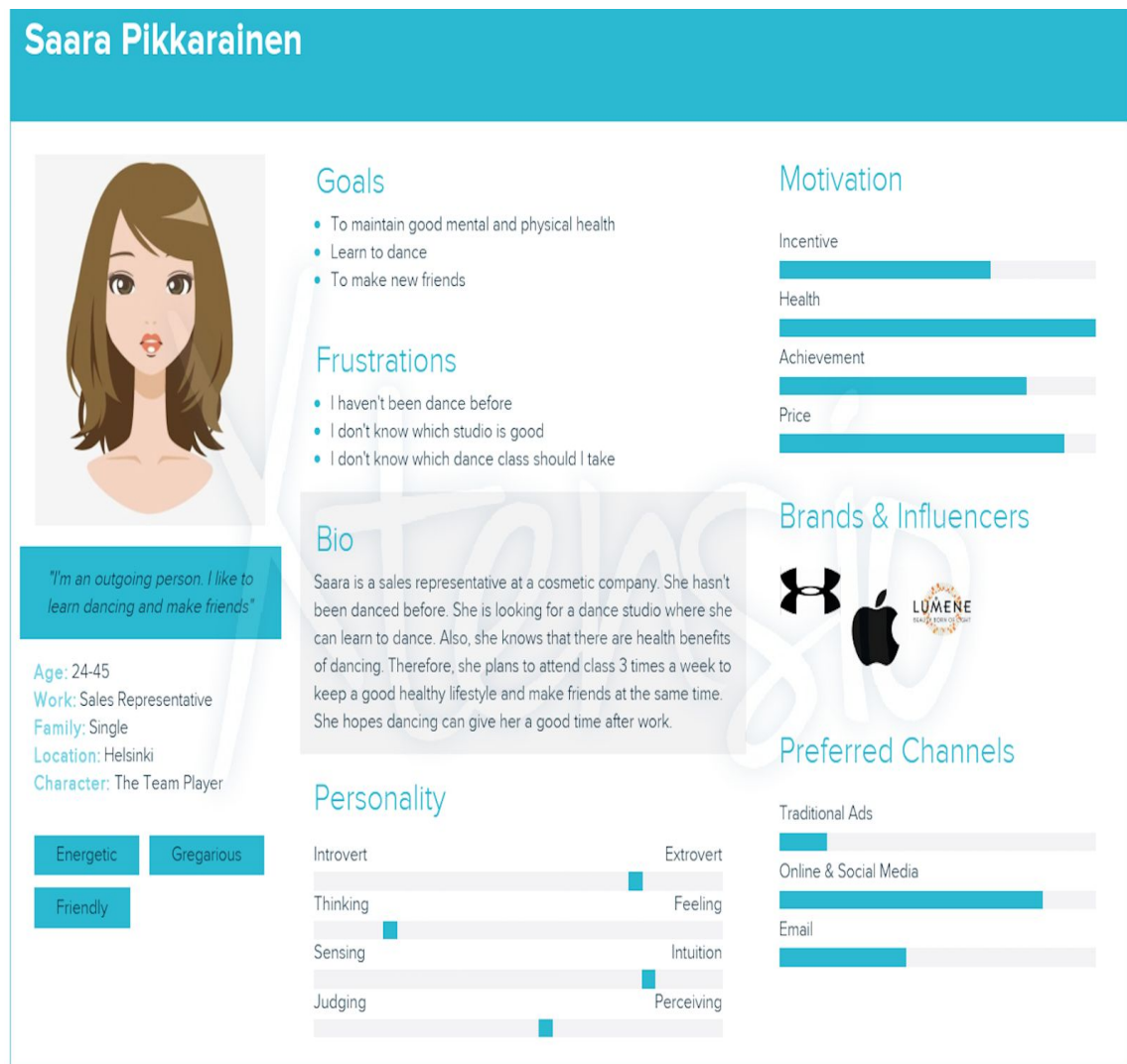


Figure 16. Customer persona for Baila Baila

Member fee is important to Saara, but it is not the only reason to choose a dance studio. The place should be in a good location, easy to reach by using public transportation because she does not have a car, a pleasant atmosphere, friendly staff, and experienced teachers. The class schedule is also important because she can only join the class after work and on weekends.

## 5.2. Customer journey

As the buyer persona is created, the customer's needs and demands are understood more. The customer journey is established to identify what obstacles potential customers are facing and figure out what should be done to reduce their pain points, and make them become paid customers.



BUYER'S JOURNEY					
	AWARENESS	ENGAGEMENT	EVALUATION	PURCHASE	POST-PURCHASE
Actions	I want to socialize through dancing activities	Search on google for good dancing school in Helsinki	Comparing options	Buy membership	Happy with the class but some dance move is hard to do
Questions and Thoughts	I don't know which school and which class level is best for me	Many schools and i need to decide which one to go	It's hard to make comparison	Do i have good choice?	This is the place i want to continue my dancing journey
Touch Points	I don't know any friend who can give recomendation about the place	So many schools out there	I need practical information	Web purchasing is slow	Class cancel at last minute happens sometime

Figure 17. Buyer's journey A

Most customers find Baila Baila on search engines. They also look at its competitors, make comparisons based on information they find on the internet, such as websites, Facebook pages, or Instagram. For beginner level customers such as Saara (the buyer persona) may have several questions to ask. Thus, information on the internet can be overloaded for her. She needs real practical information that can answer her questions. If the website does not work well, it is a significant disadvantage. She may give up and

find some other places. After making the purchasing decision, she may feel a little bit nervous when attending her first class. The class may be challenging for her to follow at the beginning. Sometimes classes are canceled, and it is a disappointment to her.

BUYER'S JOURNEY					
	AWARENESS	ENGAGEMENT	EVALUATION	PURCHASE	POST-PURCHASE
Opportunities	Actively promote advertisement on social media Facebook or Instagram	Use SEO, google adwords	Redesige website, chatbox offer, high quality content for visitors, create desire for action	Offer orientation class for new members, offer free 1 day pass for 1 friend , improve web purchase speed	Avoid canceling class at class minute. Offer promotion if they want to extent or upgrate membership
Content Needed	More advertise before event days such as salsa festival, chirmsas zumba party	Focus on main keywords, create attractive contents	Offer 3 days free entrance for 1st time customers	Target more on members who have not been dance before	1 month free if introduce 1 friend, upgrate now to get 1month extra ...
Notes	Depend of budget approved the advertisement will appear often or less	Try to put as much keywords to content	Require customer to put email and name to get free 3days pass	Instructors, staff should create friendly atmosphere and advice suitable class for each member	Give support to new customers. Follow member has soon to be expried memberships, offer desire to repurchase

Figure 18. Buyer’s journey B

Here is Baila Baila’s chance to make it work. They have somebody looking at them on their website. They need to actively promote their brand on social media, use Google AdWords, create new hashtags. Moreover, they must improve content as soon as possible because poor quality content will create more opportunities for its competitor to win customers. There should be a CTA to push them to take action. A very good example from Helsinki Salsa Academy is that they offer a five-day free Salsa mini-course for visitors. Thus, Baila Baila can do the same to increase leads. For instance, sign up for our newsletter to get a free five-day trial.

During the interview, an interesting fact has been found out that many current customers are interested in a dance competition that is organized for the members. Thus, Baila Baila can organize the contest to inspire members, and they use it as a way to promote its brand to people.

### 5.3. Lead generation

In order to acquire leads, Baila Baila need to process these following suggestions:

- Improve website quality
- Make online chat service or chatbots available on its website
- Make CTA available
- Make better content
- Create blog
- Produce videos related to dance issues
- Use Google AdWords (SEO)
- Create new hashtags

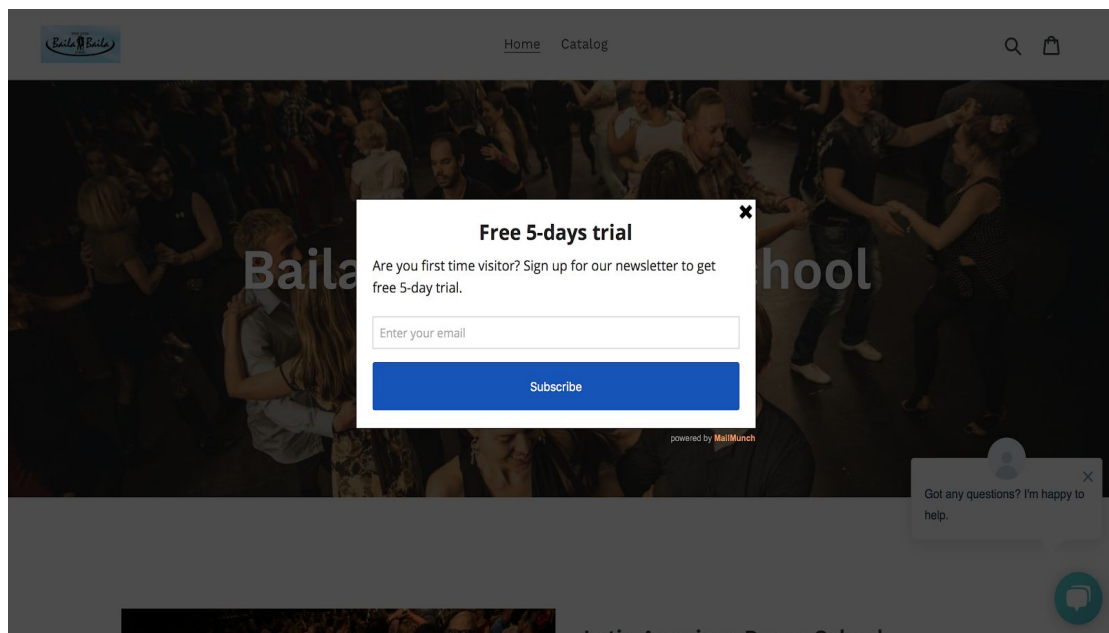


Figure 19. A demo call to action

A demo website has been created for the case company. The idea is that it can give the best demonstration of how it functions. The website is designed by using high-resolution pictures. The content included is simple and clear. Also, the layout is easy to navigate. Thus, it will not take much time for visitors to find information as they did before.

CTA is added (Figure 19). CTA will appear in the center of the website when customers visit their website. Customers may not want to miss a free five days trial.

At the bottom of the right side of the screen (Figure 20), a chatbot is added, and it is ready to answer questions from visitors.

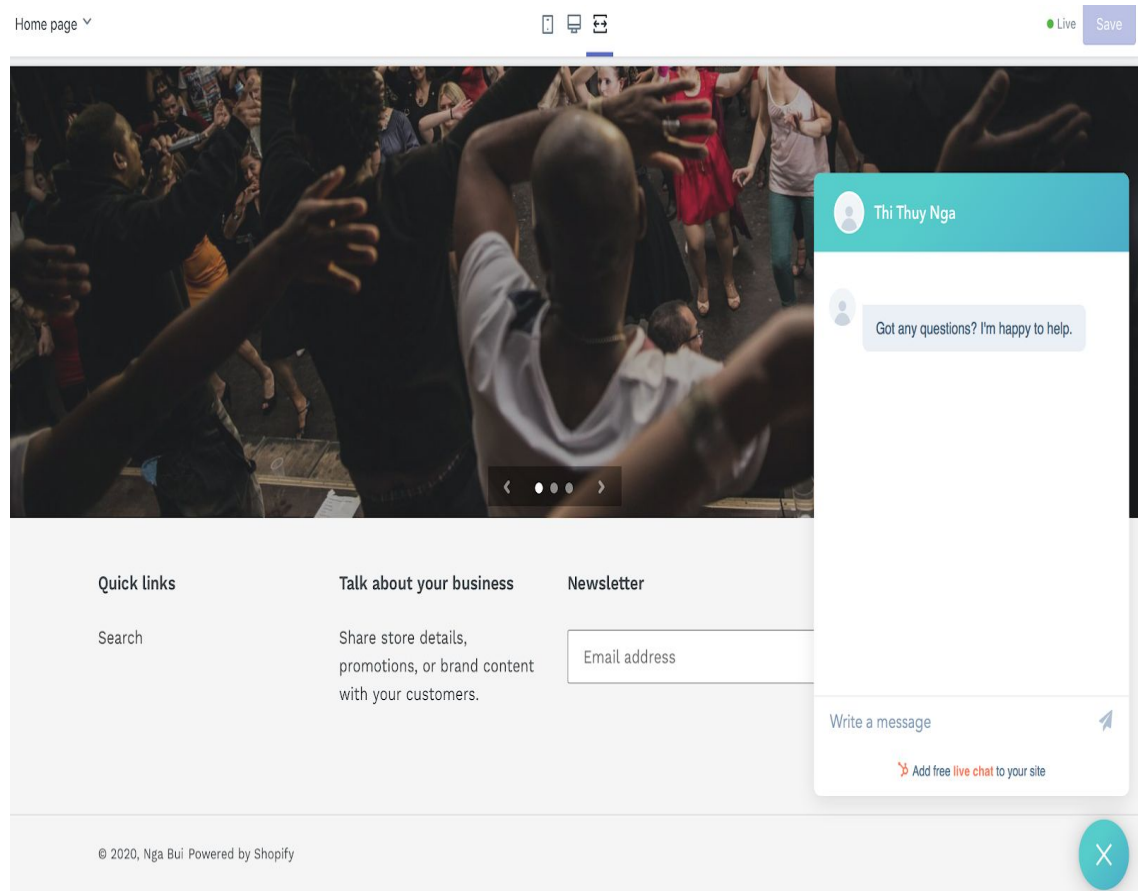


Figure 20. Chat window will appear when visitors click on the chat symbol

Leads can also be generated when customers subscribe for a newsletter at the bottom of the website (Figure 21).

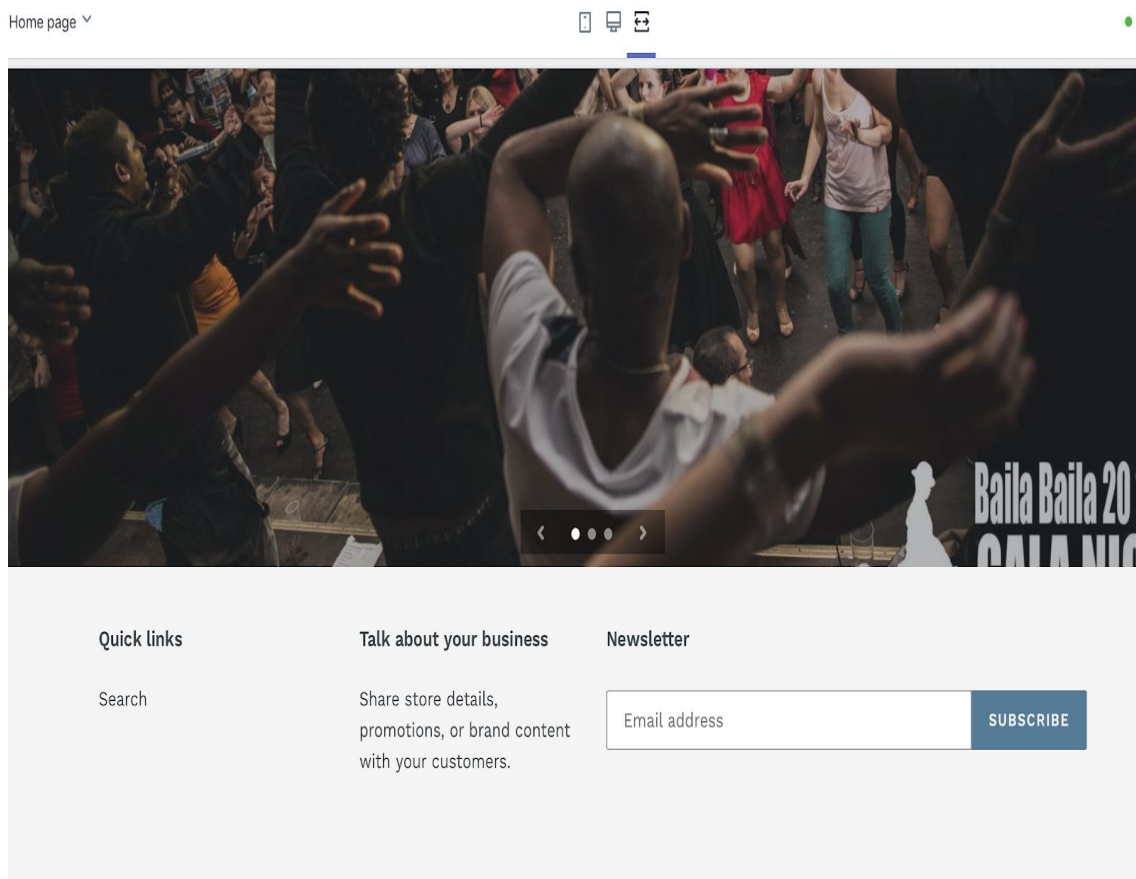


Figure 21. Customers can subscribe here

After they subscribe, automated mail will be sent to customers (Figure 22). A lead is created. Baila Baila now does not need to use too much effort. As a result, this can help the case company reduce workload for its employees.

Leads can also be created anytime and anywhere. Weekdays or weekends, morning or evening, working day or holiday can create leads. Even when the company is closed, leads can also be produced.

Baila Baila will just need to build good contents. Content will educate people like Saara, who has never danced. She would like to know, such as How many Latin American dances are there? What are the differences among them? What are the most popular? How to know which one is fit for her?

Good content using the right keywords is not just to educate audiences, but it helps to boost SEO, which means that there will be more chances to appear in relevant searches, and this will help to increase more traffic to their website.

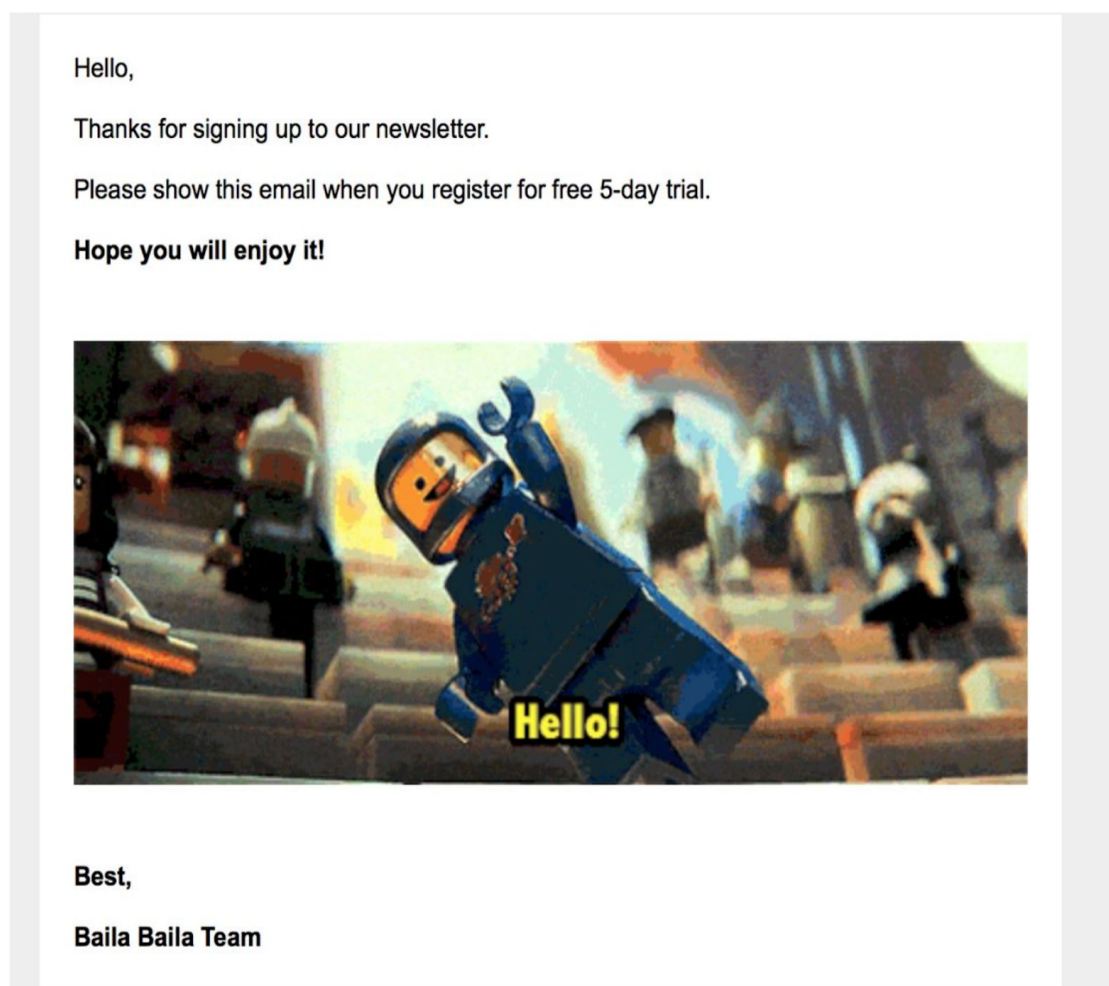


Figure 22. An automated email is sent to visitors after subscribing

Good content can also engage their followers more on social media. Baila Baila's social media has not value content at this moment. There is not much interaction between them and their followers. Most of the posts are about class schedules, and nothing else. As a consequence, it is critical to build quality content.



#### 5.4. Lead management

The evolution of technology has made lead management much more manageable, and inbound marketing will not work without technology. To manage and convert strangers to happy customers, and hopefully turn them into promoters of the case company, these below suggestions need to be done so that success can be accomplished:

- Staff training

A lack of competency was found during the current state analysis. Related employees need to upgrade their technical skills, such as email management skills or database skills. They also need to know how to follow every lead efficiently. Besides, they need to know how to use the tools that can help them in managing their work, and save plenty of time for more important tasks.

- Marketing automation

Marketing automation makes it easier for the case company to communicate with customers automatically. By applying marketing automation, the case company can replace slow and repetitive manual processes with automated flows, such as send emails, send SMS, add leads to lists, send notifications and much more. Additionally, it helps the marketing team to convey tailored and personalized content to every lead they are interacting.

An example of email marketing automation:

Let us get back to Saara (the buyer persona, which has been created for the case company). After seeing the CTA on the website, she wants to get a five days free trial. she will give up her email address in exchange for it. After the trial period, Saara will receive an automated email telling about the style of Latin American dancing. Saara has never danced before, nor does she know much about Latin American dance.

The email will inspire her and nurture her to become a paid customer. The email size is so large that it cannot be included in this section, but it will be shown to the case company for the best demonstration as well as the demo website at the validation.

- Response actively to lead's questions

The case company needs to be more active in responding to lead's questions. It is discovered that it takes time for potential customers to get answers from the company. To make it easier, the staff can use marketing automation to reduce the waiting time of customers.

- Following leads

Leads need to be followed to turn them to paid customers. The current practices show that the case company does not do the "Follow" task. Thus, they may lose plenty of potential customers to their competitors such as Helsinki Salsa Academy. As mentioned earlier, marketing automation can help the case company solve many problems, and it can also help to follow leads effectively.

## 5.5. Implementation plan

This section will present an implementation plan for the case company. The timeline plan is developed based on the inbound marketing methodology (Figure 23). There are four steps, and each step the case company needs to complete its tasks to move forward. There is also a time period for each step. However, it is flexible and changeable:

1. Attract strangers: This step will take an approximation of 3-4 months. These steps there are plenty of tasks to do. As this is the first inbound plan for Baila Baila, it will take some time to finish.

2. Convert strangers to leads: This step will last about 2-4 weeks. At this moment, a good website is important. CTO and chatbot should be already available.
3. Turn leads to customers: This stage will take around 4-6 weeks. Marketing automation should be ready to engage with its leads and complete the task successfully.
4. Transform customers to promoters: Another 3-6 weeks may take as customers need time to evaluate the case company's services. However, at this step, marketing automation plays an important role in supporting the business.

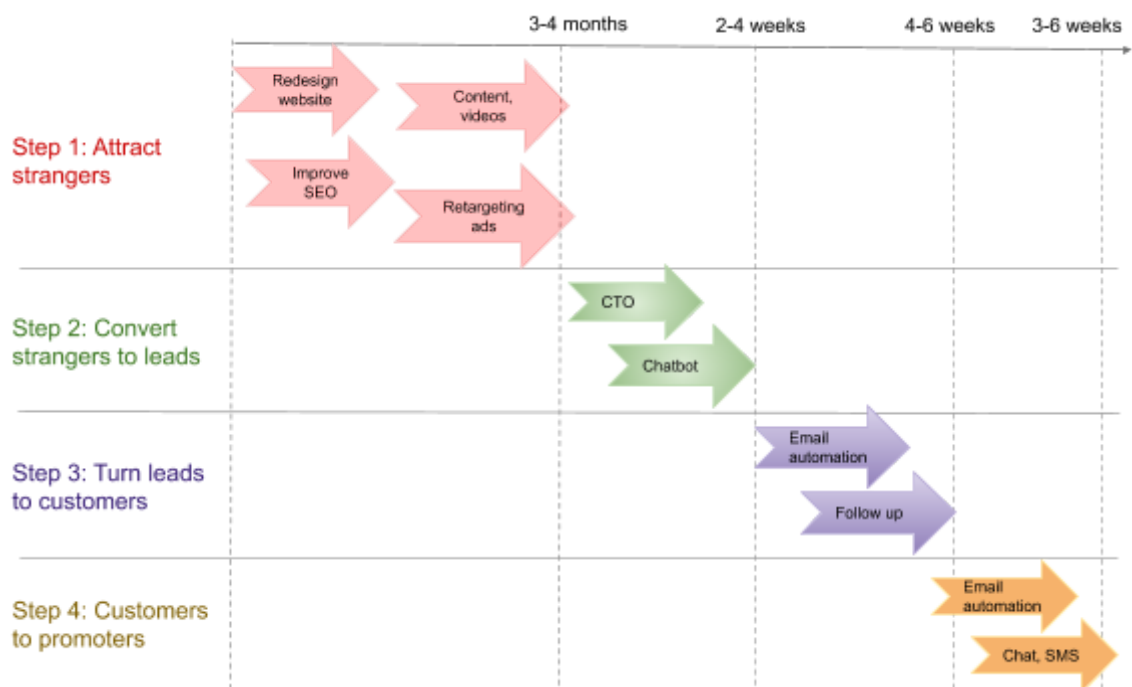


Figure 23. Implementation plan

The proposal timeline can be changed according to the case company and how its customers respond to the plan. Processes can be accelerated or slowed down to ensure each step is conducted conscientiously.

## 5.6. Tools and budget

Tools are essential in carrying inbound marketing strategy. Tools are selected based on the needs and demands of the case company. Tools are selected thoroughly to ensure that the people can use them easily and efficiently. Besides, the budget is important for the case company because they are a small business. Thus, tools are chosen carefully to ensure the low cost.

Below are suggested tools that the case company will need:

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Monthly Budget</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Hubspot	Free version	For lead management
Mail Chimp	Free version	For email automation
Retargeting ads on Facebook	100€/month	To generate leads
Retargeting ads on Instagram	100€/month	To generate leads
Google search ads	100€/month	To generate leads
<b>Total</b>	<b>300€/month</b>	

Figure 24. Tools and budget

According to the suggested budget, the case company can use the free version (Hubspot and Mail Chimp) for lead management and email automation. These tools help to reduce workload and time for its employees.

The case business will need to pay for retargeting ads on Facebook and Instagram. Depending on the budget, the ads can appear more often or less often on the user's screen.

The last fee is using google search ads. The case company will target keywords that will increase the chance to appear on the first pages of search results.

It will cost the case company just 300 euros per month. However, it can be increased if the business wants to invest more to generate more leads.

## 6. Validation of The Proposal

Validation of the proposal is the last gate of the research design. This gate presents the validation process from initial proposal to the final proposal. The proposal is a solution for the current issue of the case company.

### 6.1. Validation overview

Due to Coronavirus disease, validation processes are conducted through a Skype meeting. The validation of the inbound marketing plan for the case company is divided into two steps. Each step is the validation of different management levels. The first step is the validation of the marketing team, and the second step is the validation of the founder. The responses are collected to make modifications of the initial proposal and develop the final proposal, which helps Baila Baila to spread its brand to more people and gain more customers.

### 6.2. Marketing team validation

The marketing team gave first feedback about the inbound marketing plan. The plan received several comments after it was presented. They agreed with the plan, especially the email automation. They are also willing to learn new tools that will help them improve their work.

However, they expressed concerns about creating content. Their current workload stops them from producing quality content. Thus, they are not sure the new task can be done correctly.

During the discussion, a possible solution is proposed. The case company can hire freelance content writers, although it can increase costs. The issue will be discussed with the owner for final decision.

### 6.3. Founder validation

The second and also the last validation was carried out with the founder, who is also the owner of the case company.

The plan was presented through a skype meeting. The concern from the marketing team about creating quality content was also mentioned. Suggestion for a solution was to hire a freelance writer, and the cost is from 50 euro to 100 euro per post or article. The founder agreed with the plan as well as approved an additional cost for the content writer if the marketing team can not have time for it.

At the beginning, the founder was concerned about the time limit. It seems to him there is plenty of work to do. After the explanation that once the staff get familiar with the tools, all the work will go smoothly. In case of necessity, the company can also consider requesting technical consulting service (the technical consultant will support the marketing team in implementing new systems and tools).

However, the author will not recommend it because it is costly. Moreover, the tools are easy to use, and the marketing team showed that they could handle it. In the end, the founder agreed with the clarification.

The founder also expressed his worry about the coronavirus (COVID-19). The situation affected the business badly. As a consequence, the company's cash flow is very less, compared to before the pandemic. However, he will try to invest in the plan, and hopes the new plan can help to fight with the situation and bring more customers.

#### 6.4. Final proposal

The initial proposal received approval and acceptance from the marketing team and the founder. As a result, the final proposal is similar to the initial one. There will be an additional cost of a content writer will be included in case of need when the plan is carried out.

Once the inbound marketing plan is deployed, it will increase the case company's competitive advantage, and achieve the market share.

### 7. Discussion and Conclusions

This section is the summary of the thesis, which starts from defining business challenges and objectives to building the proposal and validation. The author recommendation and thesis evaluation are also included.

#### 7.1. Summary

Baila Baila, the 20 years of history company, is trying to survive in the competitive market. The company's current marketing strategy shows less effective results as it used to be. Two of the reasons are the evolution of digitalisation in the last decades, and customer's behaviors have changed significantly. It is recognised that the company needs to change its tactics to adapt to the new environment.

In order for Baila Baila to maintain its position in the market, the objective of this thesis is presented, that is to develop an inbound marketing plan for Baila Baila. The case company is looking for new ways to attract more customers and retain them.

The inbound marketing plan is a new reformation for Baila Baila to transfer from traditional marketing to marketing automation. The statement does not mean that traditional marketing does not work anymore, but it is not suitable for small and medium-sized businesses at the moment. The main reason is that it is too costly for them.

The research started with a conceptual framework where existing knowledge was examined. The purpose was to find out the best practices or tools that can apply to the case company.

Once the best practice was chosen, the current marketing activities of the case company were studied by using SWOT analysis and its competitors were also explored. The motivations were to determine strengths and weaknesses so that critical issues were indicated.

The inbound marketing plan was built following an inbound marketing methodology. There are four steps: attract, convert, close and delight. In order to achieve these steps, there are several actions that need to be processed. It is essential for the case company to follow each step, and none of them should be eliminated.

Challenges in applying the plan were also addressed. Necessary skills and roles are lacking, and it can affect the success of the plan. Staff should be able to use new tools, and also one person can not finish all the tasks. Therefore, the tasks need to be divided equally. However, the pressure of conducting a new marketing plan is just a temporary situation, and it will only occur at the acquiring step of the plan. The following steps are mostly automatic.

The proposal was validated by the marketing team and the founder. There was a minimal adjustment after discussions. The adjustment will be needed if the staff has no time for creating quality content.

The final proposal is mostly the same as the initial proposal. The expenditure to develop the plan is tiny. Once the plan is conducted, it will help Baila Baila to increase visitors to their website, more subscribers and followers on Facebook/Twitter. When lead generation is managed successfully, it will improve the lead management process and boost conversion rate. In the end, the company will have more customers and its objective can finally be achieved.



## 7.2. Author recommendation

The inbound marketing plan is developed to generate more leads, turn them to paid customers and improve sales of the case company. One advantage of the plan is that it is cost effective. Nevertheless, it does require time and the business needs to budget their time to make it productive.

In order to make the plan work, the case company needs to consider below recommendations when they are implementing the inbound marketing.

- Redesign the website, CTA and chatbot should be included as well
- Staff need to learn how to use the tools
- Creating valuable content which has many keywords
- Update content, articles, pictures and videos regularly
- Set up email automation
- Leads should be followed gradually
- Review customer journey and update if there is changes in customer's behaviors
- Divide roles and responsibilities clearly
- Hire more staff if needed
- Long-term commitment to the plan and execution

Despite proven success, inbound marketing does take months to see results. The company may need to put all resources at the beginning. They also need to make sure that everyone is on the same page. By doing that the plan can be launched and runned smoothly.

The inbound marketing will change the current marketing strategy of the case company. This transition from manual to automation marketing will help the company reduce unnecessary resources and enhance its brand awareness, attract more customers, and generate more profit.

### 7.3. Thesis evaluation

This section is a general evaluation of the thesis where it is discussed if the outcome of the thesis is a solution for the objective. Own reflection on the study of the author is also included in this section.

#### 7.3.1. Outcome and objective

The objective was to develop inbound marketing for the case company, Baila Baila. The purpose was to improve brand awareness, boost competitiveness, reach an enormous audience, and bring more customers to the company. Based on qualitative research and observation, the inbound marketing was designed to fit with the company. Inbound marketing will reduce a lot of work that is usually required in traditional marketing. As a result, it saves time, money, and the Baila Baila team can focus on more important tasks.

#### 7.3.2. Reflection and afterword

Inbound marketing is known widely for years. Many companies have adopted the method to improve their sales and profits. Thus, there are still many companies that stick with traditional marketing. One of the main reasons is time. Almost small and medium-sized business owners are responsible for everything. Thus, they do not have time to learn or do something new. On the other hand, applying inbound marketing requires several steps to do to see results.

In order to pursue the inbound marketing strategy, having a proper plan is not just enough; businesses need to understand different types of customers so that they can create content that is right for them. Also, an inbound marketer must have solid writing and editing skills to ensure the message engages with customers.

One of the most challenges when carrying the research was to build the most suitable marketing plan for the case company. Even though inbound marketing is much cheaper than traditional marketing, it still comes with a cost. As a small business, the company

does not want to invest or pay too much on marketing. Thus, it took quite a while to figure out which one should be included in the plan and which one should not.

The success of the plan depends on the resources of the company. It is recognised that there are several barriers, and the company needs to find a way to overcome in order to conduct the plan in a proper way.

Before carrying out the research, I had a chance to work for the case company for a few months. Even though it was a short time, it gave many useful and valuable insights that provided a broad overview of the company's current situation. As a consequence, it helped me to find the inbound marketing methodology from existing knowledge.

The marketing plan is the first inbound marketing for the company, and there are many works to do to succeed in the new marketing method. Thus, obstacles and challenges exist. I believe the company can get them under control.

I learned many things while conducting the research. It gave me a full picture of how running a small-sized business is like. It is a 24-hour job, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. Every change or revision requires additional effort from the business's owners to make it work. Thus, it is easy to understand why there are still many small and medium-sized businesses that stay with traditional marketing or why they easily give up the chance to transform to something new.

Furthermore, the research helped me to know more about the tools used in inbound marketing and the importance of data analysis. As we may know that knowing the tools and analysing data will enhance the success of inbound marketing.

The knowledge that I learned from this research will not only help me advance in my career path. It also gives me the ability to help people around me who are owners of small and medium-sized businesses to find a new way of marketing that will not cost so much but bring much result to their businesses.

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Appendix 1: Questions for Interviewing with The Case Company's Stakeholders

1. What are your current marketing problems?
2. What do you think can be done better?
3. How many customers do you have at the moment?
4. How many of them have a yearly membership?
5. How many of them have a season membership or hours membership?
6. How many of them are repeat customers?
7. What is the average age of the customers?
8. How many percent are male?
9. How many percent are female?
10. Where do these customers mostly come from? (direct sale, phone, website, word of mouth)
11. Who are the main competitors?
12. What do you think about you and your competitors having the same instructors?
13. How is the current marketing process?
14. Do you send newsletter by email to customers often? How often?
15. Do you have an automated welcome letter? Who registers their email on a website through an email newsletter?
16. How much budget would you pay for marketing per month?
17. What would convince customers to switch to your place?
18. What might convince your current customers to switch to one of your competitors?
19. What are your users talking about on social media?
20. What types of support requests or complaints are coming in?

Appendix 2. Questions for Interviewing with The Case Company's Current Customers

1. How did you learn about the company?
2. Why did you choose Baila Baila?
3. Have you learned to dance before Baila Baila?
4. Why did you decide to dance?
5. How long did it take for you before becoming a customer of the company?
6. Do you think Baila Baila's service meets your expectations?
7. Which elements do you like the most?
8. How do you compare Baila Baila and their competitors?
9. Are the schedules suitable to you?
10. Do you get fast responses from the staff?
11. Do you have problems with the service?
12. How would you like to solve the problems?
13. Can you find information you need on the website?
14. Are you following the company on social media and which channel?
15. What information do you want to know more?
16. Are you happy with the service?
17. Will you continue using their service?
18. How do you want to be contacted by the company?
19. Will you recommend the place to your friends?
20. Do you have any feedback on the company?

Appendix 3. Questions for Interviewing with The Case Company's Potential Customer

1. How did you know about Baila Baila?
2. Have you danced before?
3. Why do you want to learn dancing?
4. What elements do you consider before becoming a member?
5. Do you consider the importance of reviews on the internet about the company?
6. Are you able to find information you need on the website?
7. Is the website easy to navigate?
8. What do you think about the current website?
9. Have you looked for other dance studios and how do you compare their website with Baila Baila?
10. Do you want to know some knowledge about latin american dance?
11. Will you read blogs from the company if there is?
12. Are you interested in watching a dance video on the company's website?
13. What do you want to know more about the product?
14. Do you get fast responses from the company?
15. How do you want to be contacted by the company?
16. Would you like to have a free trial before making a purchasing decision?