LUT School of Business and Management
International Business
Bachelor's Thesis

Shaping corporate brand perceptions through content marketing in the social media: Case Eilakaisla Oy

Sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinointi yritysten keinona muokata kohderyhmän näkemyksiä yritysbrändistä: Case Eilakaisla Oy

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ABSTRACT

Title:	Shaping corporate brand perceptions through content marketing in the social media: Case Eilakaisla Oy
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The aim of this bachelor's thesis is to explore the ways in which content marketing can be used in the social media to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand. The theoretical part of the study introduces content marketing as a concept and investigates the relation of this marketing approach to the corporate brand, with a special interest on social media as a channel for content marketing. The empirical research is carried out by semi-structured interviews, investigating the corporate brand-related social media content marketing objectives of the staffing service company Eilakaisla Oy, along with the company's job seekers' and employees' perceptions of the social media content in relation to the corporate brand. In addition, the empirical part presents ways of enhancing the social media content of the case company in the future.

The study showed that companies can shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand through social media content marketing in various ways. Main factors in defining the corporate brand are organizational associations, so creation of positive associations in the minds of target group members contributes to a positive brand image. By communicating the right values and atmosphere along with the nature and heritage of the organization through high-quality, relevant and consistent content, companies can shape target group perceptions of the brand in a positive way, creating brand recognition, loyalty and trust. In general, entertaining the target group with this content is an effective way of generating stakeholder engagement with the brand. Many of the social media content marketing objectives and tactics of the case company were found to resemble the ones described in the previous literature, applied to the specific target group of job seekers and employees. However, the study showed that job announcement sharing is a specific part of the social media content marketing of staffing service companies.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Otsikko:	Sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinointi yritysten keinona muokata kohderyhmän näkemyksiä yritysbrändistä: Case Eilakaisla Oy
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Avainsanat:	sisältömarkkinointi, sosiaalinen media, yritysbrändi, henkilöstöpalveluyritys

Tämän kandidaatintutkielman tavoitteena on selvittää tapoja, joilla sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinoinnin avulla voidaan muokata kohderyhmän näkemyksiä yritysbrändistä. Tutkimuksen teoriaosa esittelee sisältömarkkinoinnin käsitteenä ja tarkastelee tämän markkinointimenetelmän suhdetta yritysbrändiin, erityisenä kiinnostuksen kohteena sosiaalinen media sisältömarkkinoinnin kanavana. Empiirinen tutkimus toteutetaan puolistrukturoiduilla haastatteluilla, joiden avulla selvitetään henkilöstöpalveluyritys Eilakaisla Oy:n yritysbrändiin liittyviä sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinoinnin tavoitteita sekä yrityksen työnhakijoiden ja työntekijöiden näkemyksiä sosiaalisen median sisällöstä suhteessa yritysbrändiin. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa esitetään ideoita case-yrityksen sosiaalisen median sisällön parantamiseksi tulevaisuudessa.

Tutkimus osoitti, että sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinoinnin avulla voidaan muokata kohderyhmän näkemyksiä brändistä monella tavalla. Organisaation liittyvät assosiaatiot ovat keskeinen yritysbrändiä määrittävä tekijä, joten positiivisten assosiaatioiden luominen kohderyhmän jäsenten mielissä vahvistaa positiivista brändikuvaa. Viestimällä oikeita arvoja ja ilmapiiriä sekä yrityksen luonnetta ja alkuperää laadukkaan, relevantin ja yhtenäisen sisällön avulla voidaan kohderyhmän brändinäkemyksiä muokata positiiviseen suuntaan, luoden bränditietoisuutta, lojaliteettia ja luottamusta. Kohderyhmän viihdyttäminen kyseisen sisällön avulla on yleisesti ottaen tehokas brändiin sitouttamisen keino. Case-yrityksen sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinoinnin tavoitteiden ja keinojen havaittiin suurelta osin muistuttavan aiemmassa kirjallisuudessa esitettyjä, työnhakijoiden ja työntekijöiden kohderyhmään sovellettuina. Tutkimus kuitenkin osoitti, että työpaikkailmoitusten jakaminen on erityinen osa henkilöstöpalvelualan yritysten sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinointia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Content marketing is a relatively new concept, which has been constantly gaining interest and importance during the past years. Due to the novelty of the concept, a universally accepted definition does not yet exist, which makes investigation of this topic highly relevant. Content marketing in the social media is particularly relevant due to the constantly growing importance of the social media as a marketing channel. The corporate brand is another interesting topic, because the concept of brand is often associated with products and services of the company, instead of seeing the company itself as a brand as well. This study examines the ways in which content marketing can be used in the social media to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand, with a staffing service company as the case company. This perspective is particularly interesting due to the lack of academic study of the content marketing and corporate branding of staffing service companies.

1.1. Background

Marketing communications have previously involved mostly traditional media, but a clear shift towards an online-orientation has taken place in the past decade (Kitchen & Proctor, 2015). In this new era of marketing, online marketing has become crucial in order to meet the new needs of consumers (Sharma, 2011). Consumers are increasingly online, which means that companies must be present in this environment, in order to reach the consumers with marketing communications. Thus, the traditional framework of marketing communications has been supplemented with online and social media marketing as well as mobile marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 478; 2016, 582). The online environment has enhanced interactions, expanded choices and created global distribution channels, and social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, have gained phenomenal interest among consumers (Kitchen & Proctor, 2015).

In the social media, companies are not fully in charge of the marketing communications, as this environment offers various opportunities for user-generated communications (Bruhn, Schwarz, Schäfer, Ahlers, 2011). On the other hand, companies can more easily connect directly with their customers in the social media than in the traditional marketing channels (Kitchen & Procter, 2015). Thus, use of social media as a marketing channel contributes to

lasting relationships and effective interactions with customers and helps companies to define consumer needs more effectively (Mohammadian & Mohammedreza, 2012). Therefore, social media marketing communications have significantly gained importance in the marketing strategies of companies.

1.2. Research problems, objectives and limitations

The academic objective of the study is to define content marketing and explore the ways it can be used in the social media to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand. The managerial objective is to provide the case company Eilakaisla Oy information about the alignment of the corporate brand-related social media content marketing objectives with target group perceptions of the content in relation to the corporate brand, along with ideas for enhancing the social media content in the future. The study has one main research question:

"How can social media content marketing be used to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand?"

This question is supported by four sub-questions:

"What is content marketing and how is it related to the corporate brand?"

"*How does Eilakaisla use content marketing in the social media to enhance the corporate brand image of its job seekers and employees?".*

The answer for the first supportive question is based on the theoretical research and the second question is covered in the empirical part. These two questions are related to the academic objective of defining content marketing and exploring the ways it can be used in the social media to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand

"How is the social media content perceived in relation to the corporate brand by the target group?"

"How do the corporate brand-related strategic objectives of the social media content marketing align with the target group perceptions and how can the social media content be enhanced in the future?"

Answers for the last two supportive questions are sought in the empirical part of the study, fulfilling the managerial objective of providing the case company information about the

alignment of its social media content marketing objectives and target group perceptions, along with ideas for enhancing the content in the future.

The empirical study is limited on the case company's content marketing in the social media channels Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Content marketing channels outside the social media are left out due to the special interest on social media as a channel. In addition, social media channels apart from the three channels mentioned are ruled out, because Eilakaisla does not perform content marketing in these channels. The research sample is limited on the job seekers and current employees of Eilakaisla, leaving B2B customers out of the study. This is because exploring B2B customer perceptions would require a much more extensive study, which would not fit in the frame of a bachelor's thesis.

1.3. Research methodology

This study is based on qualitative research, as this research method enables an in-depth examination of the case company's social media content marketing objectives and target group perceptions of the content in relation to the corporate brand. A case study is an examination of a specific company and the goal is not to provide highly generalizable data but to provide in-depth data for the case company (Saldana, 2011, 8). The case company of the study is a Finnish staffing service company Eilakaisla Oy. The empirical data was collected via semi-structured interviews, which enable a detailed expression of the views of the participants. Semi-structured interviews enable use of prompts, which makes it possible to get more in-depth answers for the questions (Olsen, 2012, 2-3).

The participants include a sample of Eilakaisla's job seekers and employees, along with the marketing team of the company. The marketing team was first interviewed about their corporate brand-related social media content marketing objectives, followed by interviewing the selected job seekers and employees about their perceptions about the social media content marketing in relation to the corporate brand. The interviewed job seekers and employees were selected via convenience sampling, as some of them were previously known to the researcher and the rest were searched through her contacts. Convenience sampling refers to selecting the sample in a non-probabilistic way, and the participants are often easily accessible to the researcher (Sueng, Huan, Lee, 2014). As the researcher has done temporary work for the case company herself, four of the participating job seekers were previously known to the researcher through temporary jobs at Eilakaisla's customer companies. The other two participating job seekers consisted of a closer friend of the

researcher and a friend of this participant. In the case of the participating employees, all four were searched by the marketing team of the company. In order to enable balanced consideration of the views of the job seekers and employees, the goal was to find a balanced amount of participants from these groups.

The interviews were conducted within the time period of 16.11-9.12.2016. The interview with the marketing team was carried out in person, lasting around 30 minutes. Seven of the job seeker and employee interviews were conducted via skype or phone, lasting around 10-15 minutes each. In addition, one of the interviews was carried out in person and two via e-mail. All of the interviews were carried out individually.

1.4. Literature review

There are lots of existing literature discussing marketing communications in the social media, highlighting the shift of marketing communications from traditional towards online-oriented. The amount of literature discussing content marketing is smaller, as the concept is relatively new. According to Baltes (2015), there is no universally accepted definition for content marketing, and therefore the way content marketing is understood varies. Koiso-Kanttila (2004) defines digital content simply as bit-based objects distributed in the digital channels. Using this definition, digital content marketing would be seen as marketing in the online channels in general. However, this is not the way content marketing is seen in this study, as the study examines content marketing as a special marketing approach, which differs from selling-oriented marketing practices, such as advertising. Definition of content marketing in this study is based on views of authors such as Pulizzi (i.e. 2012; 2014), Lieb (2011), Harad (2013) and Baltes (2015). Pulizzi is also an important influencer in the Content Marketing Institute, which offers a broadly used definition for content marketing.

The amount of literature concentrating on content marketing in the social media is very limited. However, Pulizzi (2014) and Lieb (2011) offer some perspectives of how to perform content marketing in the different social media channels. Corporate branding, in turn, is prominent in the literature, even though the concepts of corporate branding, company branding and branding in general are not always well distinguished. In this study, focusing on corporate branding is important due to the nature of the case company. Corporate brands are examined by authors such as Aaker (2004), Hatch and Schultz (2003; 2008), Kay (2006) and Keller (1999; 2009). The concepts of corporate branding and managing or building the corporate brand are often used interchangeably in the literature, so no clear distinction

between these concepts is made in this study. For example, Aaker (2004) does not use the concept of branding at all when talking about corporate brands, and authors such as Hatch and Schultz (i.e. 2008) do not clearly distinguish corporate branding from corporate brand building and management.

The amount of literature straightly addressing the relation of content marketing and the corporate brand is small, so in this study the examination of the relation is partly based on the separate definitions and nature of content marketing and the corporate brand. However, the strong relationship of content marketing and branding in general is often described in the existing literature, and this is utilized when exploring the relation of content marketing to the corporate brand. Content marketing and corporate brands of staffing service companies have not been examined in previous literature, which leaves a research gap to be filled in the empirical part of this study.

1.5. Theoretical framework

This study explores the ways in which content marketing can be used in the social media to shape corporate brand perceptions of the target group. Therefore, the core of the theoretical framework includes the relation of content marketing to the corporate brand. Content marketing is a part of marketing communications and the social media platforms Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are channels for content marketing. The theoretical part provides a general understanding of content marketing as a part of marketing communications, and describes the ways this marketing approach can be used in the social media. The concept of a corporate brand is also investigated in depth, to enable understanding of the relationship of content marketing with the corporate brand. Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework, illustrating relations of the concepts in the study.
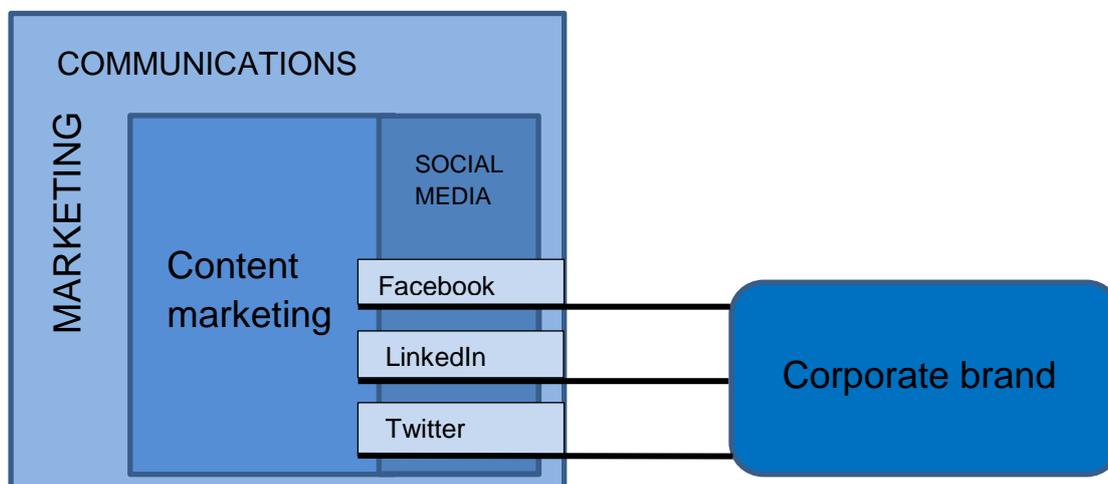

Figure 1: Theoretical framework

1.6. Key concepts of the study

Content marketing

Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach, which intends to create valuable and relevant content by the brand itself, in order to engage a certain target group without actual selling of the brand (Content Marketing Institute, 2016; Harad, 2013).

Marketing communications

Marketing communications are used to directly or indirectly inform, persuade and remind the target group about the company's offer, which can be a product, service or the company itself building its reputation (Fill, 2009, 5; Kotler & Keller, 2016, 560).

Social media

Social media refers to online communities, where users share information and opinions through different kinds of communication tools (Mohammadian & Mohammedreza, 2012). Social media is based on Web 2.0-applications, which allow multidirectional interactions between users in the online environment (Obar & Wildman, 2015). Examples of common social media channels are Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Corporate brand and branding

The corporate brand defines the company behind its offer to the customer, having access to organizational and product associations (Aaker, 2004). Corporate branding refers to branding the whole company and it is used to differentiate the organization and to engage stakeholders by creating images of the company in the minds of the various target audiences (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; 2008, 22).

Brand perceptions

Brand perceptions refer to stakeholder opinions of the brand of the company. These perceptions are a central part of brand equity and they can be divided into various attributes (Culotta & Cutler, 2016).

1.7. Structure of the study

The two following chapters cover the theoretical research of the study. Chapter 2 introduces content marketing and its nature as a part of marketing communications in the social media, and chapter 3 describes the corporate brand and its relation to content marketing. The empirical research of the case company Eilakaisla Oy is presented in the 4. chapter. This chapter describes the corporate brand-related content marketing objectives of the case company and the participants' perceptions of the content in relation to the corporate brand, concluding the research with an analysis of the alignment of the objectives and participant perceptions. In addition, ways to improve the social media content in the future are presented in the 4. chapter. Finally, chapter 5 presents the summary and conclusions of the study, based on the theoretical and empirical research.

2. CONTENT MARKETING IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA

This chapter discusses content marketing and its nature as a part of the social media marketing communications. According to a study of the Content Marketing Institute in the USA in 2016, 88 % of B2B marketers and 76 % of B2C marketers use content marketing in their marketing strategy. These days, content marketing is a crucial in order to achieve well-functioning marketing communications, and use of social media is critical for creating an effective content marketing strategy (Lieb, 2011; Pulizzi, 2014, 8).

2.1. Definition of content marketing

The practice of content marketing is not actually new, because brands have offered education for customers already hundreds of years (Pulizzi, 2012). However, the concept of content marketing is relatively new and constantly gaining interest. When investigating the amounts of Google searches related to content marketing, an upward trend can be seen within the time period of years 2011-2016 (Google Trends, 2016). Content is becoming an important factor in the buying decisions of customers, so in order to stay in the game, companies must make sure their content is available for the customers (Pulizzi, 2012).

The Content Marketing Institute (2016) defines content marketing as a strategic marketing approach, which intends to create valuable and relevant content by the brand itself, in order to engage a certain target group. Instead of selling the brand directly, content marketing aims to strengthen the brand by sharing valuable information with the target audience (Harad, 2013). According to Pulizzi (2012), content marketing can be seen as storytelling, which is used to attract and keep customers. This marketing approach can be used to offer the target group education, editorial material and entertainment, which eventually contribute to getting loyal customers (Harad, 2013). The education-part involves teaching complex concepts in understandable terms, whereas the editorial material includes sharing own perspectives with the audience, and finally the entertainment-part offers the target group enjoyment, which will make them continue their involvement with the brand (Harad, 2013). According to Pulizzi (2014), content used in content marketing differs from the general concept of content through its nature as compelling content, which informs, engages or amuses and contributes to accomplishment of the business goals.

The goal of content marketing is to change and optimize target group behavior, making it ultimately profitable to the company by creating trust among the target group members (Content Marketing Institute, 2016). In general, content marketing aims to establish brand recognition, trust, authority, credibility, loyalty and authenticity (Lieb, 2011, 2). Creating visibility by frequent content sharing and enhancing expertise by high-quality content attracts the target groups and creates trust among them (Harad, 2013). The benefits of content marketing can not only be achieved among customers, but also among the organization itself including its employees (Lieb, 2011, 2). Including members of the organization in the target audience contributes to a strong brand recognized also in the organization.

The lack of actual selling distinguishes content marketing from selling-oriented online marketing practices. One of these is advertising, which intends to directly stimulate the consumer to make a purchase (Baltes, 2015). Media can be divided into paid media, owned media and earned media, and advertising focuses on the paid media (Stephen & Galak (2012). Content marketing involves owning the media instead of renting it, which means that this marketing approach is about publishing in the own media instead of advertising in bought media (Content Marketing Institute, 2016; Lieb, 2011). Thus, content marketing involves acting like a publisher (Holliman & Rowley, 2014, 272). The idea is to offer content by the brand itself, instead of distributing the message through content owned by others (Pulizzi, 2012). Baltes (2015) also distinguishes content marketing from copywriting by pointing out, that copywriting aims to drive the consumer to perform an action, such as a product purchase, whereas content marketing aims to educate and inform the target group about the brand, creating loyalty automatically.

In general, content marketing can be seen as the opposite of "interruption marketing", which refers to pitching of products and services (Odden, 2012, 53; Content Marketing Institute, 2016). Instead of pitching, content marketing seeks to offer the customer relevant information, ideas and entertainment, which will educate them and potentially build an emotional connection to the brand (Jutkowitz, 2014; Pulizzi, 2014, 6). Pulizzi and Barrett (2008) point out, that the key to success in content marketing is "less content and more marketing", which means that before creating more content, companies should focus on creating a well-functioning marketing strategy for the content. Large amounts of content even with a high quality do not create customer engagement, if the right customers are not found.

2.2. Forms and channels

There are various forms of content marketing. Didner (2015) presents ten examples of possible types of content: videos, blogs, posts, images, webinars, tweets, white papers, e-books, coupons and pieces of music. In addition, Pulizzi (2012) mentions corporate magazines, newsletters, podcasts and fully functional media sites as forms of content marketing. The forms and channels of content marketing are often referred to as tactics, because there is often no clear distinction between a form and a channel.

Use of social media has strongly gained importance as a content marketing tactic in the past years: in 2012 the most popular content marketing tactic was publishing articles, but in 2016 use of social media was most popular (Pulizzi, 2012; Content Marketing Institute & Marketing Profs, 2016). According to studies of Content Marketing Institute and Marketing Profs in the USA in 2016, 93 % of B2B and 90 % of B2C content marketers use the social media as a tactic. In the case of B2B content marketers, this tactic is followed by case studies (82 %), blogs (81 %), e-newsletters (81 %) and in-person events (81 %). In the case of B2C content marketers, the most popular tactics after social media are illustrations or photos (87 %), e-newsletters (83 %), videos (82 %) and articles on the own website (81 %). Examples of other tactics used by the B2B and BC2 companies participating in the studies are white papers, infographics, webinars or webcasts, online presentations, mobile apps and printed magazines.

Search engine marketing, such as Google AdWords and Yahoo Search Marketing, plays an important role in marketing the content, and search engine optimization, which refers to optimizing the ranking in search engines, is often used to ensure visibility of the content (Pulizzi & Barrett, 2008, 59; Odden, 2012, 162). Social signals are commonly seen as growingly important for the search engine optimization strategy (BrightEdge, 2014), and in the context of content marketing, this means that performing content marketing in the social media contributes to the search engine optimization. In other words, social promotion of optimized content offers various opportunities for companies to attract and engage customers (Odden, 2012, 162). The next sub-chapters focus on social media as a channel for content marketing.

2.3. Marketing communications in the social media

The basic idea of marketing communications (previously known as promotion) is to directly or indirectly inform, persuade and remind the target group about the company's offer, which

can be a product, service or the company itself building its reputation (Fill, 2009, 5; Kotler & Keller, 2016, 560). Kotler's marketing communications traditionally include advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth marketing and personal selling (Kotler & Keller, 2012, 478). Marketing communications can be divided into planned and unplanned marketing communications, of which the latter refers to non-anticipated communications, such as comments of third-party experts and word-of-mouth (Fill, 2009, 8).

The traditional framework of marketing communications involves mostly traditional media, but in today's online-oriented world marketing communications are increasingly performed online. Thus, Kotler's new marketing communications mix includes the following elements: advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, online and social media marketing, mobile marketing, direct and database marketing and personal selling (Kotler & Keller, 2016, 582). The online environment offers an opportunity for effective interactions, expanded choices and global distribution channels, and social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are enormously popular among consumers these days (Kitchen & Proctor, 2015). A special form of online marketing communications is mobile marketing, which responds to the consumers' way of communicating with their modern devices such as smart phones and tablets (Kotler & Keller, 2016, 582; Kitchen & Proctor, 2015).

In the digital environment, consumers can not only get lots of information about products and brands, but can also discuss their experiences of the companies with other consumers (Kitchen & Proctor, 2015). Marketing communications are increasingly shaped by consumer experiences, as the influence of social media is strengthening (Smith & Zook, 2011, 5). In the social media, companies are not fully in charge of the marketing communications, as this environment offers various opportunities for user-generated communications (Bruhn, Schwarz, Schäfer, Ahlers, 2011). On the other hand, companies can more easily connect directly with their customers in the social media than in the traditional marketing channels (Kitchen & Procter, 2015). Therefore, use of social media as a marketing channel contributes to lasting relationships and effective interactions with customers and helps companies to define consumer needs more effectively (Mohammadian & Mohammedreza, 2012). In general, both the company- and user-generated social media marketing communications have a significant impact on the popularity and image of brands, as well as on the purchase decisions of customers (Bruhn et. al., 2011).

2.4. Special features of content marketing in the social media

According to recent studies, the most popular social media content marketing channels are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. LinkedIn is used by 94 % of B2B content marketers, Facebook by 87 % and Twitter by 84 % of them (Content Marketing Institute & Marketing Profs, 2016). This sub-chapter focuses on these three channels.

Facebook has 1.71 billion active users per month (Statista, 2016a), so this marketing channel has a high potential in reaching customers with content marketing. In Facebook, it is possible to post content in the form of status updates up to 60 000 characters, along with the form of photos and videos (Odden, 2012, 164). In addition, companies can share links in the news feed, such as links to blog posts and tweets (Lieb, 2012, 63). In general, link sharing offers endless opportunities for sharing content published by the company itself or by other parties in external channels.

In Facebook, interesting content is not enough, but execution of the content is highly important, and offering consistent quality is much more important than offering large amounts of content (Pulizzi, 2014, 232). When it comes to the layout of the content, brief posts gain attention easily, but Facebook also offers the opportunity to post longer posts, which can be highly successful if compelling enough (Pulizzi, 2014, 232-233). Link sharing can also be a very successful tactic in Facebook due to the popularity of this channel. Sharing links to the content of the company in other marketing channels can have significant contributions to the visibility of this content (Lieb, 2012, 63). In addition, Facebook offers the Graph Search-function, which enables users to find content through different combinations of phrases related to "people, photos, places and interest", such as "photos of my friends in Los Angeles" (Peters, 2013). In order to stand out with their content in these searches, companies should publish content often, include various keywords in the posts, share locations of photos and videos, establish local Facebook pages, organize contests or promotions and keep the information on the brand page optimized (Peters, 2013). A successful Graph Search strategy can increase the visibility of a company's content significantly.

LinkedIn is a professional network, which offers companies opportunities for recruiting and building a professional network, enabling also content marketing (Lieb, 2012, 65; Pulizzi, 2014, 237). The search function of LinkedIn enables searching for potential customer companies and connecting with their members step by step through common contacts

(Odden, 2012, 171). LinkedIn has 450 million active monthly users (Statista, 2016b), which makes it a huge social network. Joining groups is an effective way of gaining audience for the content and establishing relationships, and members of the organization can also contribute to the visibility of the content of the company by publishing content related to the brand on their own accounts and this way utilizing their own networks (Pulizzi, 2014, 237).

In LinkedIn, marketers can create a company profile page, where they can share various kinds of content and information about the company, positioning the organization and enhancing the brand (Pulizzi, 2014, 237; Lieb, 2012, 65). Examples of possible content shared on the company page are news feeds, tweets, blog posts along with multimedia content, if a premium account is activated (Lieb, 2012, 65). Company-generated content can be complemented with user-generated content, such as customer recommendations (Pulizzi, 2014, 237), which can be an effective way of creating positive associations of the company. Quality and right amount of the content is important also in this social media channel, and oversaturation of the target audience should be avoided (Pulizzi, 2014, 237).

Twitter offers the opportunity to share tweets up to 140 characters, which can be referred to as microblogging, as publishing in Twitter resembles blogging with short messages (Odden, 2012, 168; Lieb, 2012, 80). Twitter has about 131 million active users per month (Statista, 2016c), so also this channel has potential in reaching customers, even though it is not as popular as Facebook and LinkedIn. In Twitter, the content must be very compact due to the limited length of tweets, and the key to success is to create a cumulative effect with the tweets, making the audience curious for more (Lieb, 2012, 80; Odden, 2012, 168). The content should also be consistent, telling the story of the industry and brand through posts fitting well together (Pulizzi, 2014, 233).

Twitter Search enables effective targeting of potential customer along with searching for competitors and observing their actions and connections (Odden, 2012, 168). Adding hashtags to tweets promotes the content by enabling users to find it even if they are not followers of the account, and placing unique hashtags to specific campaigns is an effective way of seeking visibility (Pulizzi, 2014, 233, 235). Twitter also offers the opportunity to share content from the company's other channels and retweet previous tweets to gain additional attention for this content (Lieb, 2012, 80). In general, Twitter is a fast channel in generating visibility for the content and an effective tool in monitoring success of the content though examination of the amounts of shares (Lieb, 2012, 81; Pulizzi, 2014, 233).

3. CONTENT MARKETING AND THE CORPORATE BRAND

This chapter introduces the concept of a corporate brand and describes the relation of content marketing to the corporate brand. In general, a well-managed corporate brand is crucial for gaining competitive advantage, and the importance of corporate brands is still growing (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). As content marketing can be seen as corporate storytelling in nature, this marketing approach has various possible contributions to the corporate brand.

3.1. Corporate brand and branding

In general, the concept of branding involves the ideas and products of the company combined with the advertising and marketing activities executed in order to gain attention for the ideas and products (Mallik, 2009, 54). Corporate branding can be confused with product branding, because both involve image-creation (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 7). These two concepts are, however, quite different from each other, because corporate branding involves a much more holistic approach (Aaker, 2004; Kay, 2006; Hatch & Schultz 2008, 9).

The corporate brand defines the company behind its offer to the customer, and it has access to organizational and product associations (Aaker, 2004). Corporate branding refers to branding the whole company and it is used to differentiate the organization and to engage stakeholders by creating images of the company in the minds of the various target audiences (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; 2008, 22). A strong corporate brand has a central role in creating stakeholder attention, interest and actions by drawing the target groups around the values and unique symbols of the company (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). As the corporate brand represents the organization, the main factors in defining the corporate brand are organizational associations (Aaker, 2004).

The target audiences of the corporate brand include various stakeholders, such as employees and managers along with customers, investors, suppliers, non-governmental organizations, partners and politicians (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 9; 2003). Corporate branding contributes to integration between the internal and external stakeholders of the company (Schultz, Antorini & Csaba, 2005, 24). According to a framework introduced by Hatch and Schultz (2003), the corporate brand shapes decisions made by top management, organization members and external constituencies. Top management decisions involve drawing business lines, choosing partners and alliances, establishing locations, creating corporate symbols and changing initiatives (Hatch & Schultz 2003). Possible decisions of

organization members are to work hard, be loyal, seek challenge, resist influence and to represent the organization in a positive or negative way (Hatch & Schultz 2003). The external constituencies, in turn, might decide to buy the product or service, apply for a job, praise or criticize the company, invest in it, agree to be a supplier for the company or seek to regulate the company (Hatch & Schultz 2003). These stakeholder decisions shape the way the company is built in the end (Hatch & Schultz 2003). In general, branding a company requires involving everyone important to the company (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 10).

Corporate brands are relatively different from product and service brands, and the process of building a strong corporate brand differs fundamentally from building strong product and service brands, because the goals of corporate branding and identity creation are significantly different from those of product and service branding (Kay, 2006). The corporate brand involves the whole company and it originates from the heritage, values and beliefs of the organization, whereas a product or service brand involves one specific product or service and originates from the efforts of the advertisers (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 9). Usually the corporate brand does not have a straight short-term effect on consumers, so it does not necessarily affect their purchase decisions (Kay, 2006). In the case of corporate brands, market share is not gained by short-term advertising campaigns, like in the case of product and service brands (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 10), but the goals and efforts of corporate branding are much more long-term and holistic. The time perspective of corporate branding involves the whole lifecycle of the organization (Schultz, 2005, 27), instead of the lifecycle of a specific product or service.

The corporate brand and -branding have various dimensions. Aaker (2004) mentions the heritage, assets and capabilities, people, values and priorities, local or global orientation, citizenship programs and performance records as parts of the corporate brand. The citizenship programs refer to creation of positive perceptions of the people and values behind the corporate brand (e.g. social and environmental aspects), and the performance records determine the firm's success; success creates positive attitudes and confidence within the stakeholders (Aaker, 2004). The central dimensions of corporate branding can also be defined as creation of unique names, symbols and experiences, owning central ideas, standing behind the whole offer as one organization, communicating promises of quality, substance, emotion, style or experience and differentiating the company from others (Schultz, 2005, 26).

The corporate brand can have various effects on the success of the company. Through the corporate brand, the organization can differentiate itself, energize product brands with corporate programs and achieve credibility (Aaker, 2004). The corporate brand can also enhance management of the brand portfolio, support internal branding and supplement product brands, along with communicating with the various stakeholders of the company (Aaker, 2004). Successful corporate branding attracts stakeholders and makes them feel a strong connection to the company by communicating the right values and sources of desire to them (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Moreover, a successful corporate brand aligns the strategy, culture and vision of the company (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Finally, the corporate brand can establish an ultimate branded house, uniting all branding efforts of the company (Aaker, 2004).

Brand equity is a central concept in corporate branding (Kay, 2006). The customer-based brand equity model is based on the fact that consumers' brand knowledge created by marketing efforts shapes their response to the marketing of the brand and therefore determines brand equity (Keller, 2009). The brand knowledge is mainly based on the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images and experiences instead of facts of the brand (Keller, 2009). Therefore, corporate branding should concentrate on creating the former instead of highlighting the latter. Consistency is also crucial in corporate branding: creating consistency through marketing activities is central in building brand equity (Keller, 1999).

The challenges in managing the corporate brand are maintaining relevance, creating value propositions, preventing and addressing negative perceptions, staying consistent in all contexts and creating a visible brand identity (Aaker, 2004). In order to establish a successful corporate brand, a consistency is needed between the strategic vision of the company, the organizational culture and the stakeholder images (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 12). The lack of consistency in these three fields results in corporate branding gaps, which are also known as vision-culture-image gaps (Schultz, 2005, 52; Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 18). A vision-culture gap occurs, when employees do not comply to the strategic direction, a vision-image gap involves a conflict between the images of the outsiders and strategic vision of the management and an image-culture gap is a result of the company failing to fulfill its promises (Schultz, 2005, 52).

3.2. Role of content marketing in corporate branding

In general, content marketing has a strong relationship with branding. Content marketing can be used to strengthen the brand by sharing valuable information with the target audience (Harad, 2013), and this applies to corporate branding as well as product and service branding.

Content marketing is about educating and entertaining the target group along with offering them editorial material, which expresses the organization's own perspectives (Harad, 2013). Corporate branding aims to communicate the right values to the stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2003), and the editorial content can be used in this communication. The education-part of content marketing contributes to an image of expertise in the minds of the target groups, and this expertise can act as a source of desire. According to Hatch and Schultz (2003), communicating sources of desire to the stakeholders can engage them with the corporate brand. Content marketing also offers entertainment to the target group (Harad, 2013), which can be an effective way of creating positive associations and interest in the corporate brand. Instead of facts, the target groups' reactions to the corporate brand are based on the thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images and experiences of the brand (Keller, 2009), and entertaining the target groups can increase positivity in these fields. Content marketing offers the possibility to connect the target groups emotionally to the brand (Jutkowitz, 2014; Pulizzi, 2014, 6), so this marketing approach can work as an effective way of creating strong relationships between the corporate brand and the stakeholders of the company. In the case of corporate branding, market share is not gained by short-term advertising campaigns (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 10), but the goals and are much more long-term and holistic, which aligns with the time perspective of the goals of content marketing.

Content marketing can not only the be used to engage customers, but also members of the organization to the brand (Lieb, 2011, 2), which makes this marketing approach particularly suitable for corporate branding. The target audiences of corporate branding include both external and internal stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 9), and content marketing can be used to communicate the corporate brand to both of these audiences. The aim of content marketing is to increase brand recognition, trust, authority, credibility and loyalty among customers along with the organization itself with its employees (Lieb, 2011, 2), which contributes to the corporate brand, because engaging all of these target groups is central in corporate branding. Content can be created for various stakeholders within and outside the

company. The target audiences of corporate branding include employees and managers along with customers, investors, non-governmental organizations, partners and politicians (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 9). Unlike advertising, content marketing applies to all of these stakeholders, and contributes to a strong brand recognition also in the organization.

Content marketing can be seen as storytelling in nature (Pulizzi, 2012), which refers to telling the story of the brand through the content. Therefore, storytelling is an important strategical concept in corporate branding (Fog, Budtz, Munch, Blanchette 2010, 51). The main factors defining the corporate brand are organizational associations (Aaker, 2004), and corporate storytelling contributes to creation of these associations in the minds of the target groups. According to Fog et. al. (2010, 51), the core story of a company is strongly connected to the corporate brand and unites all brand communications of the company. The corporate brand originates from the heritage, values and beliefs of the organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 9), and storytelling can be used to communicate the origin of the brand to the stakeholders.

Fog et. al. (2010, 57) introduce the "brand tree", which consists of internal and external stories originating from the core story of the company. Media coverage, advertising, customer stories and stories from partners are external stories, and internal stories consist of employee stories, company newsletter articles, management stories and stories about the product of the company (Fog et. al., 2010, 57). Content marketing can be used to share both the internal and external stories in various channels. Consistency of marketing activities is central in building brand equity (Keller, 1999), so all content should be aligned with the core story of the corporate brand. Offering content by the brand itself is the key in content marketing (Pulizzi, 2012), and the corporate brand should be visible behind the content. In other words, stakeholders should be able to recognize the central dimensions of the corporate brand through the content shared by the company.

4. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This empirical part of the study explores the ways the case company Eilakaisla Oy aims to enhance the corporate brand image of its job seekers and employees through content marketing in social media and the ways the target group perceives the content in relation to the corporate brand. Based on this research, the chapter analyses the alignment of these objectives and target group perceptions. In addition, ways of further developing the social media content are presented in this chapter. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the topic, the corporate brand of Eilakaisla is described in detail before moving on to exploring the corporate brand-related content marketing objectives of the company. The chapter starts by introducing the participants of the study.

4.1. Participants

Participants of the study include a sample of job seekers and current employees of Eilakaisla, along with the marketing team of the company. The target group sample consists of ten participants, of which six are job seekers and four are employees. As the researcher has done temporary work for the case company herself, four of the participating job seekers were previously known to the researcher through temporary jobs at Eilakaisla's customer companies. The remaining two participating job seekers consist of a closer friend of the researcher and a friend of this participant. In the case of the participating employees, all four were searched by the marketing team of the company. In order to enable balanced consideration of the views of the job seekers and employees, the goal was to find a balanced amount of participants from these groups. Table 1 presents background information of these target group members.

Table 1: Participants

		Job seeking status	Job type seeking/current job type	Channels following
Participant 1	Employee		Permanent at Eilakaisla	Facebook
Participant 2	Job seeker	Passive/active	Temporary/permanent	LinkedIn
Participant 3	Job seeker	More passive	Temporary	Facebook, Twitter
Participant 4	Employee		Permanent at Eilakaisla	Facebook, LinkedIn
Participant 5	Job seeker	Passive	Temporary	Facebook
Participant 6	Job seeker	More passive	Temporary	Facebook
Participant 7	Job seeker	Passive	Temporary	Facebook
Participant 8	Emplyee		Permanent at Eilakaisla	Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter
Participant 9	Job seeker	Passive	Temporary	Facebook
Participant 10	Employee		Permanent at Eilakaisla	Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter

Participants 1, 4, 8 and 10 are permanent employees working directly for Eilakaisla. Participants 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9 are job seekers, most of them more passive than active in the job seeking. Most of the job seekers also seek for temporary jobs rather than permanent employment. All members apart from participant 2 follow Eilakaisla in Facebook, and three of these participants are also followers in Twitter and two in LinkedIn. Participant 2 follows Eilakaisla only in LinkedIn. Participants 1, 5, 6, 7 and 9 are followers only in Facebook and participants 8 and 10 follow Eilakaisla in all of the three channels. In addition, participant 3 follows Eilakaisla in Facebook and Twitter and participant 4 in Facebook and LinkedIn.

The interviews were conducted within the time period of 16.11-8.12.2016. The interview with the marketing team was carried out in person, lasting around 30 minutes. Seven of the job seeker and employee interviews were conducted via skype or phone, lasting around 10-15 minutes each. In addition, one of the interviews was carried out in person and two via e-mail. All of the interviews were carried out individually.

All members of the target group sample live in Finland, and apart from one participant, in the capital area. The marketing team also works in in the main office of Eilakaisla in Helsinki. Lack of diversity in geographical locations could potentially have an impact on the diversity of participant perceptions of Eilakaisla's corporate brand, because a large portion of Eilakaisla's job offer is located in the capital area. However, social media content investigated in this study is independent of geographical locations, so lack of geographical diversity should not have a significant effect on the target group perceptions created by the content.

4.2. Introduction of Eilakaisla Oy

Eilakaisla Oy is a nationally well-known Finnish staffing service company, which offers companies staffing services such as recruiting, staff leasing, employee repositioning, consulting, holistic service solutions and employee assessment (Eilakaisla, 2016a). The service sectors of Eilakaisla are office and customer service, finance and insurance, sales and marketing, IT, financial administration and human resources, industry and logistics along with pharmaceuticals (Eilakaisla, 2016b). The organization consists of 258 own employees and the turnover of Eilakaisla was 8 732 000 € in 2015 (Kauppalehti, 2016), so Eilakaisla can be defined as a large company. The company is a family business, and the CEO is Tom Kaisla, the son of the founder of the company, Eila Kaisla (Eilakaisla, 2016c). The company was founded in 1971 and today Eilakaisla is among the leading staffing

service companies in Finland (Eilakaisla, 2016b). The main office of Eilakaisla is located in Helsinki and the company operates also in Kuopio, Mikkeli, Jyväskylä, Lahti, Tampere, Turku and Oulu (Eilakaisla, 2016d).

4.3. Corporate brand

Eilakaisla is known for its strong brand (Eilakaisla, 2016b). A significant part of the corporate brand is based on the strong background of the company as a pioneer in the industry (Piehl, 2016). Eilakaisla has long traditions in the industry, with 45 years of experience in providing staffing services (Piehl, 2016). Today, Eilakaisla is a multifunctional staffing house offering a wide variety of services, including not only staff leasing but also other staffing services, and this multifunctionality stands in the core of the corporate brand (Piehl, 2016).

Marketing manager: "We've been on the market since 1971, so the very long 45 years have been completed in the staffing service industry. Even though Eilakaisla is nationally maybe the best known for staff leasing, […], today we're this kind of a multifunctional staffing house [...]. It's, in a way, in the core of the brand what we do."

The name of the company consists of the first and last name of the company's founder Eila Kaisla, who was a Finnish business woman and one of the pioneers in the industry in Finland (Eilakaisla, 2016c). Eilakaisla's heritage as a family business is visible in the operations of the organization, and the entrepreneurial mindset of Eila Kaisla can be seen in the way her son Tom Kaisla leads the company (Eilakaisla, 2016c; Piehl, 2016). The values of Eila Kaisla are an essential part of Eilakaisla's brand, and Tom Kaisla has lead the development of the company to meet the requirements of the changing business environment (Piehl, 2016; Eilakaisla, 2016c). In general, Eilakaisla is the nationally best-known multifunctional staffing house (Piehl, 2016).

The central values of Eilakaisla include responsibility, entrepreneurship, quality, caring, safety, economic efficiency, customer orientation and constant development (Piehl, 2016; Eilakaisla, 2016c). Responsibility is the basis for all the values of Eilakaisla and it is clearly visible in both employee and customer relationships (Eilakaisla, 2016c). Ensuring that customers are always provided with the right employees with right skills reflects the value of responsibility in the customers' point of view (Eilakaisla, 2016c; Piehl, 2016). Moreover, Eilakaisla is the first Finnish staffing service company to get the "Investors In People (IIP)" - quality certificate for their efforts in developing employee skills and maintaining a high

working motivation (Eilakaisla, 2016e). This certificate reflects the way Eilakaisla shows responsibility for the employees, cares for them and seeks constant development as an organization. (Piehl, 2016; Eilakaisla, 2016e).

Entrepreneurship as a value originates from the way Eila Kaisla founded her own business as an entrepreneur and her entrepreneurial attitude is visible in the company's operations (Piehl, 2016). Eila Kaisla appreciated independent initiatives along with entrepreneurial diligence, and despite her nature as a strong business woman, she was always considerate with her employees, giving them space (Eilakaisla, 2016c). In order to achieve excellent performance, Eilakaisla gives its employees freedom and responsibility through wide job scopes (Piehl, 2016). This motivates the employees and contributes to the quality of customer service. The principle of the company is that despite of a relaxed working environment and a courageous attitude, quality is never compromised (Eilakaisla, 2016e).

As this study concentrates on Eilakaisla's employees and job seekers as a target group for the brand communication, the brand image sought to transmit to this specific target group is now described in detail. The central employee welfare-related values communicated to the job seekers and employees are responsibility, caring and safety (Piehl, 2016). Service quality is also communicated to this target group, because great employees achieve great quality, leading to customer satisfaction, which is the basis of good job opportunities (Piehl, 2016). Eilakaisla's slogan for the job seekers and employees is "Hyväntyöntekijä" (Piehl, 2016), which refers to the valuable and high-quality work the employees do for the customer companies. Eilakaisla wants to make their employees feel secure, confident and satisfied with the work, regardless of whether they work directly for Eilakaisla or in a customer company (Piehl, 2016). This is emphasized in the brand communication for this target group.

The company wants to transmit their employees and job seekers the image of a safe, high-quality employer, who always takes care of their employees. Eilakaisla emphasizes that contracts are always made according to regulations and decrees, applying the right collective agreement for each contract. When it comes to supporting the employees, the personal staffing consultant is always in contact with the employee and the recruiting department is ready to help. Job descriptions are also carefully made to make sure employee expectations match reality of the job, and new employees are well informed about the training process. An important message transmitted to the employees and jobseekers is that employees of the company are always part of Eilakaisla, even though they work in

different customer companies and are integrated in their community. Employee satisfaction is very important for the company, and Eilakaisla has managed to maintain a high employee satisfaction level. This satisfaction level is regularly measured and communicated to the target group. (Piehl, 2016)

Eilakaisla emphasizes its nature as an excellent staffing house in the era of change in the working life. These days, carrier paths are often more complicated than before, and Eilakaisla responds to this change through a combination of permanent jobs and temporary jobs with shorter and longer durations. Eilakaisla highlights the great variety of carrier opportunities it offers for people of different ages and in different stages of life and education. The company also emphasizes the opportunity for employees to start in a temporary job and to get adjacent tasks, later becoming a permanent employee in the customer company. (Piehl, 2016)

4.4. Corporate brand-related social media content marketing objectives

Eilakaisla performs social media content marketing in Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter (Piehl, 2016). There are some differences between the primary target groups of the content marketing in these channels. Facebook content is targeted to current employees but also to job seekers, Twitter as a channel is mainly for job seekers but also for current employees and LinkedIn is mainly for B2B customers but also for job seekers along with employees to some extent (Piehl, 2016). This sub-chapter concentrates on Eilakaisla's objectives of social media content marketing, job seekers and current employees as the target group. Through social media content marketing, Eilakaisla aims to communicate its nature as a multifunctional staffing house with wide job opportunities, its central employee welfare-related values (caring, responsibility and safety), quality and positive organizational atmosphere. To some extent, the long history of the company is also communicated to the target group. In general, high-quality content with clear objectives is used in this communication. This sub-chapter describes these objectives in detail.

All of Eilakaisla's three social media channels are used for strategical sharing of job announcements. All jobs are listed on Eilakaisla's websites for job seekers, but social media content marketing of the company includes sharing links to the announcements. This differs from paid advertisement of the jobs, which Eilakaisla also performs in the social media. Different jobs are shared in different channels, according to the nature and primary target group of the channel. Cooperation with educational institutions is also highlighted to remind

younger job seekers of the carrier opportunities for them. By sharing a variety of jobs in different branches, with different expertise level requirements and with longer and shorter durations, Eilakaisla highlights its wide range of job opportunities, getting the right applicants for the available jobs more effectively. (Piehl, 2016)

Blog posts and articles with various themes are shared a lot in the social media, and through this content Eilakaisla aims to develop their corporate brand image in various ways. Content often shared by the company are tips for the application process, such as tips for finding the right jobs to apply for, making a good CV, writing a good application and succeeding in the job interview. With these tips Eilakaisla aims to communicate its value of caring to the jobseekers and to simultaneously enhance their behavior, encouraging them to make good applications for Eilakaisla's jobs. Another way of highlighting the values of caring and responsibility is posting content related to welfare at work and free-time, involving themes such as recovering, staying energetic at work and maintaining good health. In addition, Eilakaisla shares information about legal issues, such as publications from external experts involving current working life legislation topics. The aim is to strengthen the image of Eilakaisla as a responsible, safe employer who has a wide knowledge about legal issues in working life and always follows regulations. (Piehl & Tiitta, 2016)

Employee stories are another type of content, which Eilakaisla often shares in the social media. These are personal stories describing carrier paths of Eilakaisla's employees in various positions. The objective of sharing these stories is to highlight the variety of carrier opportunities and to communicate the level of satisfaction of the employees to the job seekers. In addition to stories from employees working in customer companies, Eilakaisla shares stories from employees working directly for Eilakaisla at their offices. For example, stories describing the work of Eilakaisla's staffing consultants are shared to communicate the target group the way Eilakaisla works as an organization, creating an image of openness and trust. Eilakaisla also publishes stories from trainees, highlighting the possibilities for gaining work experience in various ways. (Tiitta & Piehl, 2016)

To some extent, the long history of Eilakaisla is also communicated to the job seekers and employees through the social media. The slogan "asenteella ja ajassa" describes Eilakaisla as an experienced company with a long history, still being a very relevant, modern organization constantly developing and working with a positive attitude. For example, posts about development, such as illustrations of old versus new technology, have been recently

shared due to the 45th celebration year. The idea is to highlight the long experience of the company and therefore its deep knowledge of the industry; Eilakaisla has had an impact on the carrier of more than 100 000 people. This experience is communicated more explicitly to the B2B customers, but also to the job seekers and employees, because customers bring jobs, and Eilakaisla's wide knowledge and experience contributes to high-quality services for the customers and makes the company a safe employer. (Piehl, 2016)

In Facebook, Eilakaisla shares more "light" content than in the other channels. This content is more entertaining and the objective is to communicate the atmosphere and working style of the organization to the target group "between the lines". In Facebook, Eilakaisla publishes more content targeted to the employees than in the other channels, such employee events and celebrations. Daily life in the company is presented by introducing work places and daily routines in the organization. The goal is to be perceived as an organization standing close to its the employees and to enhance employee participation, giving the employees a feeling of belonging to the organization. Some of the content is purely entertaining, such as fun pictures, which are posted to bring good mood to the viewers. By creating these positive feelings of belonging to the organization, Eilakaisla aims to enhance target group commitment to the corporate brand. (Piehl & Tiitta, 2016)

The value of quality transmitted in the social media in various ways. Feedback from customers and employees is shared in the social media in the form of pictures and citations. The aim is to transmit the target group Eilakaisla's service quality along with quality as an employer. Employee feedback is shared to communicate the level of employee satisfaction to the target group, and sharing positive customer feedback can also positively affect job seeker and employee perceptions, because a company with satisfied customers can offer good job opportunities. The quality thinking is also visible in the layout of the content itself: Eilakaisla only shares content with high quality and every post in the social media is well planned and has a clear purpose. Along with informative content, entertaining content is used to engage the target group, and this content also has clear objectives. (Piehl & Tiitta, 2016)

Marketing manager: "For us, it is very important to try to keep bringing value with the content. Of course, the value can be that we want to entertain: if we've had the dog Hannibal in the reception and it's funny sitting on a chair, we share it because it has an entertainment purpose and we want it to bring good mood. […] So our fundamental thought is that the

content we share is well checked, not just putting something there. […] Because we want it to be possible to commit to us, we don't do it carelessly."

In general, Eilakaisla never shares content with poor quality, mistakes or no actual purpose. The content is always thoroughly checked before publishing it in the social media. By using easily accessible, high-quality content, Eilakaisla wants to enable target group engagement with the brand. (Piehl, 2016)

4.5. Participant perceptions of the content in relation to the corporate brand

In order to distinguish the overall brand image from the perceptions created by Eilakaisla's social media content marketing and to enable assessment of the consistency of these images, the participants were first asked about their overall perceptions about Eilakaisla as an organization, including its values, beliefs and heritage. Table 2 presents general values and characteristics of Eilakaisla perceived by the participants.

Table 2: General values and characteristics perceived

	Caring/related	Quality/expertise/professionality	Responsibility/reliability/honesty	Traditionality	Wide job opportunities
Participant 1			x		
Participant 2	x		x	x	x
Participant 3	x	x			x
Participant 4		x		x	
Participant 5					
Participant 6			x	x	
Participant 7	x		x		
Participant 8		x	x		
Participant 9	x		x		
Participant 10			x	x	

Reliability, responsilitity or honesty was mentioned as a characteristic of Eilakaisla by most of the interviewees. Eilakaisla was also often described as a traditional company, and some participants mentioned its nature as a family company.

Participant 6: "Well, in my opinion that kind of traditional, like it has existed for a long time, and reliable, I could say. I do appreciate as a company."

Caring for employees or related values such as employee/customer friendliness or -interest and equality were brought out by many participants. Values such as quality, expertise and professionality were also mentioned some interviewees, and the wide carrier opportunities were brought out by two participants.

In general, appreciation of Eilakaisla was visible among the interviewees, as some of them told they appreciate Eilakaisla as a company or even perceive it as the best recruiting company. When considering Eilakaisla's renewability, the participants expressed some conflicting opinions. Participants 1 and 4 described Eilakaisla as a modern/renewable company, which conforms well to the changing environment. Participant 2, however, perceived Eilakaisla as a little stuck in the 90's, even though trying to keep on the current century. According to the participant, this is partly due to the fact that the name of the company sounds a little old-fashioned. Views related to being old-fashioned were present also among the answers of participant 10, who expressed that Eilakaisla is well known among older people and that the company was very well known in the past.

The corporate brand image transmitted by the social media content was first investigated by asking the interviewees, what kind of an image Eilakaisla gives of itself as an organization in the social media and whether this image differs from the overall image. In general, consistency of the overall corporate brand image and the image transmitted through the social media content was prominent within the interviewees' answers. Many participants told that not much difference can be seen between the overall image and the image transmitted in the social media. The consistency and truthfulness of the images given in the social media and in other channels were also described by the interviewees, and the social media content was seen as supporting the overall image. Participant 6 was the only one to mention a slight difference, related to Eilakaisla's activity level. This participant perceived Eilakaisla as more active in the social media than in other channels in general, because Eilakaisla posts a lot in the social media.

Many participants expressed that Eilakaisla gives a good image of itself in the social media in general, even though participant 10 perceived the image as a little too neat and conservative for this relaxed environment. Participant 2 saw that a concentration on white-collar jobs instead of lower-level jobs is prominent in the social media, and this lifts the status of the company. This participant saw Eilakaisla as better than competitors, but also as a little pompous in the social media, seeing itself as better than competitors.

Participant 2: "Yes, I would say that in many things it feels like they are, like also in my own opinion, better than competitors and I believe they have themselves that kind of like, maybe a little nasty to say, but somehow a little pompous impression".

Some participants described Eilakaisla as more relaxed and warm in Facebook than in Twitter and especially LinkedIn, where the company is very professional and matter-of-fact. Two participants, however, perceived the company as very matter-of-fact also in Facebook. The rest of the participants did not express any views of the atmosphere transmitted in this channel. Table 3 presents the interviewees' views of the atmosphere through Facebook content.

Table 3: Atmosphere transmitted through Facebook content

ATMOSPHERE	Relaxed/warm	Matter-of-fact/formal
Participant 1	x	
Participant 2		
Participant 3	x	
Participant 4		
Participant 5	x	
Participant 6		
Participant 7		x
Participant 8	x	
Participant 9		
Participant 10		x

By some participants, Eilakaisla was perceived as warm and easily approachable in Facebook, as a company who wants to make applying as easy as possible for the job seekers and stands near to its employees. For example, participant 3 perceived Eilakaisla as a company with a personality, showing the characters behind the organization instead of staying distant.

Participant 3: "It does give a good image of itself. So I think it's a company with a personality, because they put pictures of employees and so on. […] So it's not just a soulless corporation."

On the other hand, participant 10 described Eilakaisla's style in the social media as conservative and lacking relaxed and explorative posts with humor. Participant 7 also expressed the lack of light, humoristic content in Facebook.

Participant 7:"Well, I have always perceived Eilakaisla as like publicly very formal, I think this is transmitted in Facebook, so they don't have any very humoristic posts but stick to factual posts."

A modern, up-to-date image of Eilakaisla was perceived by a couple of participants in the social media. Participant 6 mentioned that Eilakaisla keeps well up with time and participant 1 highlighted the modern image transmitted in the social media. On the other hand, participant 10 saw that Eilakaisla used to be ahead of competitors in the social media, but these days competitors have gained advantage with their more relaxed content conforming better to the requirements of the social media environment.

The values Eilakaisla transmits through the social media content were investigated in detail in the interviews. Eight of the participants were able to identify values through the content. Table 4 illustrates prominence of the values of caring, quality and responsibility/reliability in the social media, based on the interviewees' descriptions of the values transmitted.

Table 4: Values transmitted through social media content

VALUE	Caring/related values	Responsibility/reliability	Quality
Participant 1	x	x	x
Participant 2		x	
Participant 3	x		
Participant 4	x		x
Participant 5			
Participant 6	x	x	
Participant 7	x		
Participant 8	x		x
Participant 9			x
Participant 10			

Eilakaisla's value of caring for the employees and job seekers was often perceived as prominent in the social media, and some participants also saw the value of responsibility or reliability through the content. Eilakaisla's application tips and advice in the social media were seen as transmitting Eilakaisla's employee welfare-related values such as caring and responsibility as an employer. Sharing events for employees was also seen as bringing out the organizational idea of caring for coworkers. Participant 6 expressed that the content actively posted in the social media shows that job seekers are served, and participant 7 highlighted that the customer focus related to employees and B2B customers is transmitted by showing interest in these target groups through the social media content. Sharing articles about well-being at work were also mentioned as a sign of caring for employees. According to participant 3, the large amount of well-being-related articles shared in Twitter, involving themes such as maintaining energy at work, communicates Eilakaisla's value of caring for

employees and their health. Eilakaisla's social media content was also seen as people-related and therefore reflecting the idea of standing near to people.

The value of striving for quality was seen by many interviewees through the social media content. Four participants perceived the quality thinking of Eilakaisla as prominent in the social media, expressing ideas such as everything Eilakaisla does in this environment is done as well as well as possible, always maintaining high quality. When straightly asked about the quality and relevancy of the content, all of the participants expressed that the quality of the content is high or quite high. Participant 2 mentioned consistency of the quality: the quality is in relation to the company and consistent in different communication channels. The content was also seen as relevant in general. Participant 3 mentioned that the thread can be seen in the content, and the different social media channels are not copies of each other. The themes of the posts were also perceived as current and important and related to what the company does, serving the organization and its target groups. According to multiple participants, Eilakaisla does not post unnecessary content, but they consider well what they share.

Participant 7: "I believe they consider quite well what they put and what kind of an outer image they want of Eilakaisla, so there is nothing like 'Do this test!', like that kind of an intelligence test or something."

However, one participant saw the elaborate consideration of what to post in the social media as decreasing the appeal of the content. According to participant 10, lack of lightness and humor in the content makes it dull and not suitable for the relaxed environment of the social media. This participant saw that the extreme professionality in the social media environment does not contribute to value creation through the content.

As interesting, entertaining content is important for the success of content marketing, the participants were asked, how interesting Eilakaisla's content is in general and what kind of content they find entertaining in the social media. Many participants perceived the content as quite interesting in general, and posts apart from job announcement sharing were generally seen as increasing attractiveness of the content. However, participant 10 saw the content as generally boring, giving no thrills. In addition, participant 5 saw the content as quite ordinary for a staffing company, even though Eilakaisla has a lot of content in Facebook. A misfit of the content with the current life situation also decreased interest in the content. When investigating the most entertaining content, tips for applying, texts about well-

being at work along with events and celebrations were generally seen as most entertaining. Participant 1 also considered posts about the daily life in the company as entertaining, and participant 4 mentioned posts about traditions and history, because they were new information for this participant. In addition, participant 8 expressed that content sharing joy of people, such posts about celebrations of employees and customers, is always entertaining and brings good mood.

Participant 8: "It always brings me good mood somehow when I see people, for example that someone has had a birthday or something good has happened to someone and it is shared. Like shared joy is always a multiple joy."

Heritage of Eilakaisla was not perceived as visible in the social media as the values, for example, but some of the participants were able to see some traditions and history of the company through the social media content. Table 5 illustrates he participants' views of the visibility of Eilakaisla's heritage in the social media.

Table 5: Visibility of Eilakaisla's heritage in the social media

HERITAGE	Not visible	Slightly visible	Visible
Participant 1		x	
Participant 2	x		
Participant 3		x	
Participant 4			x
Participant 5		x	
Participant 6	x		
Participant 7		x	
Participant 8			x
Participant 9	x		
Participant 10		x	

According to three participants, traditions and history cannot really be seen through the social media content. However, two participants expressed that Eilakaisla does remind the readers about their heritage in the social media. Most of the participants saw that the heritage does not really stand out in the social media, but some content about the history has been shared in the channels. Some participants remembered one or two posts about the founding of Eilakaisla, describing how everything started. Content related to the 45th celebration year of the company was mentioned by a couple of the participants. Examples of this content included an article describing the history of Aikatalo, where Eilakaisla's office

has been located for a long time, along with posts comparing how everything was done before versus these days. In general, employees of Eilakaisla seemed to perceive the heritage of the organization as more visible in the social media than the job seekers.

Eilakaisla's wide job opportunities were noticed by most of the participants. When investigating content best recalled in the social media, job announcement sharing was mentioned as an important part of the content by almost all of the participants, and Eilakaisla was said to post a significant amount of jobs in the social media. When exploring straight effects of the content marketing on the behavior of the target group, increase of interest in jobs was prominent among the job seekers. Four of the six job seekers expressed that job announcement sharing in the social media channels has encouraged them to apply for the jobs more actively. When comparing the general perceptions of the organization and the perceptions formed through the social media content, the wide job opportunities were noticed more often when considering the image transmitted in the social media.

Finally, the way Eilakaisla differentiates itself from competitors in the social media was investigated in the interviews. Five of the participants were able to assess the differentiation, as they followed other staffing service companies in the social media. Participant 2 mentioned Eilakaisla's prominent concentration on white collar jobs as a differentiating factor, because the offer of competitors is more mixed, including also lower level jobs. This participant did not see other ways in which Eilakaisla differentiates itself in the social media. However, participant 3 mentioned that Eilakaisla's open and personal style in Facebook differentiates it from competitors and that the company is also particularly active in posting. In addition, participant 5 told that the story in the background information on the Facebook page makes the company more personal, even though it does not really differentiate through the posts. The rest of the participants did not see any differentiation. Participant 10 expressed that Eilakaisla does not differentiate through its content at all, because the social media is full of similar studio-level pictures with photoshopped texts, and competitors have succeeded better in creating relaxed content suitable for this environment. Participant 8 also followed other staffing companies in the social media, but did not see any clear differences between Eilakaisla and these companies in this environment.

4.6. Alignment of participant perceptions with strategic objectives

Considering the overall corporate brand image formed through all brand communication in general, many of the values Eilakaisla wants to communicate to the target group are well

transmitted. Values of responsibility, reliability, caring and quality were prominent in the answers of the interviewees. Values related to expertise and professionality were also highlighted by some participants. To some extent, Eilakaisla's long traditions and wide offer, which form an essential part of the corporate brand, were also prominent when considering the overall brand image. In general, appreciation of the company was visible within the participants. Eilakaisla was also described as a renewable and modern company by some participants, which aligns with the general value of constant development. However, some participants perceived Eilakaisla as slightly old-fashioned, which does not contribute to the image of a renewable organization.

The image given in the social media was perceived as good in general, so Eilakaisla's content marketing seems to generally contribute to a positive image of the organization. On the other hand, some slightly negative perceptions were also expressed, such as Eilakaisla's awareness of its own excellence makes the company a little pompous, and that Eilakaisla's conservative approach does not work in the social media environment. These perceptions do not contribute to a positive corporate brand image. However, the amount of negative perceptions expressed was marginal, so the image given in the social media seems to have mostly positive contributions to the brand.

Consistency is an important factor in creating brand equity, and a consistency between the overall corporate brand image and the image transmitted in the social media was prominent in the views of the participants. When comparing the perceptions of the general values and characteristics of Eilakaisla to the ones formed through the social media content, these perceptions were aligned, even though some values and characteristics were perceived more explicitly when considering the general image and some of them when examining the image transmitted through the social media content. When asked about differences in the images, almost all of the participants expressed that the image given in the social media does not differ from the overall image or that the images are consistent in all communication channels.

Many of the values Eilakaisla aimed to transmit through the social media content were successfully transmitted, which contributes to the brand image of the target group, enhancing their perceptions of the corporate brand. Most of the participants could detect at least some employee welfare-related values through the social media content. Values related to caring were explicitly perceived through content involving themes such as

application tips and well-being at work. Some interviewees also saw this kind of content as a sign of being a responsible employer, which was another value Eilakaisla aims to communicate in the social media.

On the other hand, value of safety was not mentioned by any of the interviewees, and content involving legal issues in working life was not brought out. The objective of this content was to strengthen the image as a safe and responsible employer, who has a deep knowledge of legal issues and who always follows regulations. This image seems not to be transmitted to the target group particularly explicitly, so it should be communicated more clearly in order to enhance the target group's brand perceptions in this field. However, related values, such as responsibility and reliability, were prominent within the answers of the interviewees, so this image seems to be partially transmitted in other ways in the social media. On the other hand, these values were more prominent when investigating the general image of Eilakaisla than the specific image transmitted by the social media content. Therefore, the target group seems to have a strong general image of Eilakaisla as a responsible and reliable employer, and it is hard to assess, how much the social media content marketing contributes to this image.

Eilakaisla's value of quality was perceived by many participants through the social media content. The quality thinking of Eilakaisla was seen as prominent in the social media, and the participants expressed views such as everything Eilakaisla does in this environment is done as well as well as possible, always maintaining high quality. The general relevancy and quality of the content were perceived as good by all of the participants, and the content was considered as well planned and serving actual purposes. In addition, Eilakaisla was described as a professional, high-level employer. These perceptions align well with the objectives of the company, as Eilakaisla wants to be seen as a high-quality employee striving for an excellent performance.

Eilakaisla's active sharing of job announcements in the social media seems to work well as a way of highlighting the nature of the company as a multifunctional staffing house with various job opportunities and increasing interest in the jobs. The image seems to be transmitted particularly well through the social media content, as this was perceived more explicitly through the social media content than when considering the overall image of the organization transmitted in other ways. Many participants saw that Eilakaisla offers lots of different jobs and the posting had increased interest in the jobs in the case of four out of six

job seekers. Employee carrier stories were not, however, mentioned by the participants, even though Eilakaisla publishes these stories in order to highlight the wide carrier opportunities.

Heritage of Eilakaisla was partially transmitted to the participants in the social media. According to some of the participants, roots and traditions of Eilakaisla cannot really be seen in the social media. Some of the participants, however, could detect the heritage to some extent, remembering some posts involving the history of the company. In order to tell the story of the company more clearly in the social media and to highlight the long experience in the industry, heritage of Eilakaisla could be brought out more in the social media. However, highlighting the heritage was not a primary goal of the content marketing for this target group, so there is no misalignment with the objectives of the company.

In Facebook, one of Eilakaisla's objectives was to communicate the positive atmosphere of the organization by lighter content, emphasizing the image of Eilakaisla as a company standing near to its employees. This was perceived my multiple participants, as Eilakaisla was described as more relaxed in Facebook than in other social media channels. Eilakaisla was describes as a warm company with a personality, who cares for coworkers and respects humanity. However, a few participants saw Eilakaisla as very formal or matter-of-fact also in Facebook, with not much relaxed content. These participants were longing for more light, entertaining content instead of formal or conservative content. Therefore, Eilakaisla's lighter content seems to be partially successful in creating positive associations of the organization's warm atmosphere, but this content does not have an effect on all target group members.

Interesting, entertaining content is essential in engaging the target audience and enhancing the brand image with content marketing. Many of the participants found Eilakaisla's content interesting in general and were able to give examples of Eilakaisla's entertaining content. On the other hand, one participant had clearly negative perceptions of the nature of the content, perceiving the content as generally quite dull and boring. However, as only one participant had this kind of perceptions, and the other participants had more positive views, the nature of Eilakaisla's content seems to mostly apply to the target group.

Differentiation from competitors in the social media in was not explicitly perceived by most of the participants. However, some perceptions about a slight differentiation through Eilakaisla's open and personal style and active posting were mentioned by the interviewees.

In addition, one participant mentioned concentration on white collar jobs instead of offering a larger scale of jobs as a differentiation factor. This does not align with the objective of highlighting the wide scale of jobs offered, but this participant perceived concentration on white collar jobs as a positive feature, because it lifts the status of the company. Based on these participant perceptions about differentiation, Eilakaisla's content marketing seems to have a very slight contribution to differentiation from competitors, which is an important goal in corporate branding. However, as only a portion of the interviewees followed Eilakaisla's competitors in the social media, not all participants were able to assess the differentiation. Therefore, perceptions of differentiation could not be elaborately investigated.

4.7. Ways to enhance the social media content in the future

Along with investigating the current success of the social media content marketing of Eilakaisla, the study examined ways in which the content could be improved in the future. The participants expressed some ideas for adding value to the social media content, and by applying these ideas, Eilakaisla could possibly strengthen the positive effects of social media content marketing on the target group engagement with the corporate brand.

The participants were asked, what kind of content they mostly appreciate in the social media and what content could be added in this environment. Three of the job seekers appreciated job announcement sharing very much, because it makes applying easier. On the other hand, many interviewees appreciated content apart from job sharing the most. For example, content related to welfare of employees and job seekers was highly appreciated among the participants. A few participants also described the layout of content they mostly appreciate: the content should be compact, informative and clear, with a clear focus on the target group. In addition, content should not be posted too often; too many posts reduce appreciation of the content. For example, too many posts describing the daily life of the organization decrease the value of the content, because this content is very often shared by staffing service companies.

Some participants were longing for more light, entertaining content in the social media. Participant 7 expressed that carrier path stories and employee introductions are an interesting way to describe the characters behind the organization, and this content could be posted more. Participant 8 would also like to see family stories, which describe how a mother or father has been working for Eilakaisla and how the next generation is now entering working life. Participant 10 had particularly strong opinions about the need for improvement

of the content, expressing that the content should be less conservative and more relaxed and adventurous, including more humoristic posts. According to this participant, more attitude is needed in the social media in order to stand out and entertain with the content.

Participant 10: "Of course, job announcements have to be put there, but otherwise it's a little bit so that Christmas tree decorations are photographed and midsummer stake and Christmas tree are photographed, so they should strive to be more interesting."

According to participant 10, Eilakaisla needs to bring out new ideas and add explorative, stimulating content, putting itself more out there. For example, campaigns connecting real world and the social media could work as a way of bringing more attitude in the social media. Carrying out entertaining campaigns in the real world and highlighting them in the social media could contribute to the attractiveness of the social media content. This kind of campaigns have been successfully carried out by competitors, adding value to the content.

Ideas for informative content educating the target group about the current working life situation were also brought out. Participant 8 expressed that Eilakaisla could add more posts about the industry and changing working life, describing also how the company conforms to these changes. More targeted tips for different personal working life situations could also be posted, such as tips for carrier changing or returning from family leave. Participant 8 also suggested that content related to the current challenging economic situation could be added, encouraging applicants to keep on applying even if they would not succeed right away.

When considering the appearance of the content, pictures were perceived as standing out well in the feed, making the viewer to stop to read the post. According to participant 3, pictures could be included even more in the posts. However, the picture should be different every time, avoiding use of the same picture multiple times.

Participant 3: "Yes they could be added even more. Because they are always a little like that they jump in a way to the attention of the viewer, for example if the feed is in Twitter, you stop to read it more easily. But then they use the same picture quite many times, that is a little annoying."

In addition, planning the content according to the current season was seen as a good way of bringing additional value with the content. Participant 8 expressed that it depends on the season what kind of content works best. The content should be cheering in the gray autumn,

goal-oriented after new year, lighter at vacation times and it should help to bring back the working mood after vacations.

Participant 8: "It depends a little on the current situation, so in the gray November somehow cheering, positive or encouraging, like you will get through it, this maybe carries forward. And then again like after new year […] things related to new year themes or goals, or more informative content. […]"

Summing up the results, content apart from job sharing is highly appreciated by the target group members, even though job sharing is essential for a staffing service company and also appreciated by the target group. Lighter content involving various themes could be added even more, as this content seems to attract and entertain the target group. By adding lighter content, the warm organizational atmosphere could also be transmitted more effectively to the target group. In order to entertain more in the social media, too conservative content should be avoided and explorative and humoristic content could be shared more. For example, campaigns connecting real world and the social media could bring more attitude in the social media. Informative content involving the current working life situation could also be added in the social media, educating the target group about ways of succeeding in challenging situations. In addition, planning the content according to the current season could add value to the content and the posts could be complemented with pictures even more, because they stand out well in the social media feed. When considering habits to avoid in the social media, too much content describing the daily life of the organization should not be shared, and the same picture should not be used multiple times.

5. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

The main research question of the study was *"How can social media content marketing be used to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand?".* The main research question is now addressed by first answering the four supporting questions of the study.

The first supportive research question was *"What is content marketing and how is it related to the corporate brand?"* In the theoretical part of the study, content marketing was defined as a strategic marketing approach, which aims to engage the target group without actual selling, but by offering the target audience education, entertainment and editorial material. This marketing approach aims to establish brand recognition, trust, authority, authenticity, credibility and loyalty, and it can be seen as storytelling in nature, communicating the story of the organization to the target group. Therefore, content marketing has a strong relationship with the corporate brand, which is based on organizational associations. Instead of pitching products and services in the paid media, content marketing involves sharing content in owned media to target audiences including both internal and external stakeholders of the company, and the goal of this marketing approach is to create a connection to the brand in the minds of these target groups, engaging them with the brand.

The empirical part of the study first addressed the supportive question *"How does Eilakaisla use content marketing in the social media to enhance the corporate brand image of its job seekers and employees?".* In the social media, Eilakaisla aims to create positive organizational associations through different types of content involving various themes. Values such as responsibility, caring, safety and quality are communicated through content with related themes and right layout, and the heritage of the company is also communicated to some extent through posts involving the history of the company. The organizational atmosphere is transmitted through lighter, entertaining content in Facebook, and the variety of jobs shared highlights the wide variety of carrier opportunities, attracting the target group to apply for the jobs. Through well-planned content with a high quality and clear objectives, Eilakaisla aims to establish commitment to the corporate brand.

Next, the study addressed the supporting questions *"How is the social media content perceived in relation to the corporate brand by the target group? and "How do the corporate brand-related strategic objectives of the social media content marketing align with the target group perceptions and how can the social media content be enhanced in the future?".* The next paragraphs summarize the answers for these research questions.

It was found out, that the corporate brand image of the target group seemed to be good in general, even though some slightly negative perceptions of Eilakaisla as an organization were also expressed. Many of the values Eilakaisla aimed to transmit through the social media content were successfully transmitted to the target group. However, the value of safety could be transmitted even more explicitly. The warm atmosphere of the organization was partially transmitted through the Facebook content, and heritage of Eilakaisla was also partially visible social media. Eilakaisla's wide carrier opportunities were well noticed by the target group in the social media. Consistency of the overall brand image and the image transmitted in the social media was prominent within the target group perceptions, which is an important factor in creating brand equity.

Quality and relevance of Eilakaisla's content were perceived as good by all of the participants, and the content was mostly perceived as relatively interesting. Differentiation from competitors in the social media was not explicitly perceived by most the participants, even though some slight differentiation could be detected. However, only a few of the participants followed other staffing service companies in the social media, so perceptions of differentiation could not be elaborately investigated. Therefore, more research would be required in order to determine, whether Eilakaisla's content marketing contributes to differentiation in the social media. In the future, Eilakaisla could bring even more light, entertaining content. Too conservative content should be avoided and explorative, humoristic content could be added. Educating content with new themes could also be added and more pictures could be included in the posts. In addition, planning the content according to the current season could bring additional value in the social media.

As an answer to the main research question, the study showed that companies can shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand through social media content marketing in various ways. Main factors in defining the corporate brand are organizational associations, so creation of positive associations in the minds of target group members contributes to a positive brand image. Content marketing can be seen as organizational storytelling and this marketing approach has a strong relationship with the corporate brand. By communicating the right values and atmosphere along with the nature and heritage of the organization through high-quality, relevant and consistent content, companies can shape target group perceptions of the brand in a positive way, creating brand recognition, loyalty and trust. When it comes to the level of factuality of the content, professional, factual content can be used to highlight the expertise and knowledge of the company and lighter, entertaining

content can be used to transmit the positive organizational atmosphere to the target audiences. In general, entertaining the target group with this content is an effective way of generating stakeholder engagement with the brand.

The content marketing of staffing service companies had not been examined in the previous literature. This study provided a view of the ways in which a staffing service company uses content marketing in the social media to engage the job seekers and employees of the company with the corporate brand. Many of the objectives and tactics the case company has for content marketing were found to resemble the ones described in the previous literature in many ways, applied to the specific target group of job seekers and employees. Eilakaisla offers education, entertainment and editorial material to the target audience in the social media, aiming to enhance its corporate brand image. However, links to job announcements were found to be a specific type of content used by staffing service companies in the social media. Along with straight short-term contributions to getting more job applications, job announcement sharing can be seen to have contributions to the corporate brand image of the case company, because it highlights the nature of the company as multifunctional staffing house. As the multifunctionality of Eilakaisla stands in the core of the corporate brand, highlighting the wide carrier opportunities is an essential part of the brand communications. Job announcement sharing could easily be confused with advertising, but this content differs from paid advertisements, which are also used by the case company. Advertising involves publishing in the paid media, but content marketing of the company includes linking jobs on the company website to the own social media feed.

Due to the nature of the empirical research as a case study focusing on one company, generalizability of the results of this study is relatively limited. However, this study provides a general view of the possible ways of using content marketing in the social media to shape target group perceptions of the corporate brand. In order to provide a wider view of the social media content marketing of staffing service companies, it would be interesting to explore the effects of content marketing on the brand perceptions of the B2B customers of these companies. To provide a more geographically comprehensive view of the topic, international staffing service companies could be included in the research. In addition, exploration of content marketing in social media channels apart from Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter could be worth including in the future research. For example, staffing service companies performing content marketing in Instagram or Snapchat could be an interesting subject of future study.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Interview questions for Eilakaisla's marketing team

1. How would you describe the corporate brand of Eilakaisla in general? What kinds of values and beliefs and what kind of a heritage does Eilakaisla have as an organization?

2. What kind of an image does Eilakaisla want to give of itself as an organization to its job seekers and employees?

3. What kinds of content do you publish in the social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)?

4. How is the brand communicated to the target audience in the social media through content marketing? How are, e.g., the values, beliefs and heritage transmitted in this environment?

Appendix 2: Interview questions for the target group members

Background questions

Which of these social media channels do you follow: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter?

Are you a job seeker or a current employee of Eilakaisla?

> *1) Employee → Permanent or temporary? At Eilakaisla or at a customer company?*

> *2) Job seeker → Do you actively seek work at Eilakaisla? Are you seeking permanent or temporary employment?*

Interview

1. How would you generally describe Eilakaisla as a company? What kinds of values, beliefs and traditions does Eilakaisla have?

2. What kinds of content do you think Eilakaisla mostly shares in this/these social media channel/s?

3. What kind of an image does Eilakaisla give of itself in the social media? Does this image differ from the overall image?

4. How has Eilakaisla's social media content affected your perceptions of the company?

5. How are the values and beliefs of Eilakaisla transmitted through the social media content?

6. How do the traditions and history show through the social media content?

7. What kind of content from Eilakaisla do you find entertaining in the social media?

8. What kind of content do you mostly appreciate in the social media?

9. What kind of content could Eilakaisla add in the social media? Can you think of content Eilakaisla does not yet have?

10. How would you assess the quality and relevance of the current content of Eilakaisla? How interesting is the content?

11. Has the social media content of Eilakaisla affected your decisions of applying for jobs or your working motivation/attitudes?

12. Do you follow other staffing service companies in this/these channel/s? How does Eilakaisla differentiate itself from these other companies in the social media?