

Social Media Marketing Strategy in a Small Company

Anna FLANDERKOVÁ

Technical University of Liberec, Liberec, Czech Republic; anna.flanderkova@tul.cz

Abstract: The social media is growing rapidly, and it is therefore necessary to mention their impact on marketing. Promoting a company on social media is important not only for international companies but also for small and family businesses. Posting content to social media must have a clear concept and strategy to be successful. The main aim of this paper is to present and create a social media marketing strategy for a small company. Communication in social media is a big opportunity for any company. It is a tool for PR communication, brand building or image improvement. This paper describes the procedure of making the marketing strategy to increase brand awareness. The strategy is applied to social media in a small company manufacturing custom goods. If this strategy is successful, the whole strategy could be applied to other small companies manufacturing custom goods. The main steps of suggested marketing strategy consist of self-determination of the company, the aim of marketing strategy, content marketing and the evaluation of these activities. The paper focuses especially on online marketing on Facebook and Instagram. The data used in the paper was collected for a period of five months.

Keywords: social media; marketing; strategy; small company, SWOT analysis, insights

JEL Classification: M31; M37

1. Introduction

A social network is a service on the Internet that usually allows registered members to create a private or public profile. These users make virtual relationships with other users, with whom they want to be connected in the selected network. This internet service allows them to communicate with each other, share videos, links, information, photos, plan events and activities. The users themselves mostly create the content. Social media connect institutions and people with the same working interests, friendly relations, or interested in the same activities (Havlová, 2014). The data available from social media provide a large amount of information about user behaviour, their opinions, relationships and attitudes. Based on this data, it is possible to predict the human characteristics of users, predict their behaviour and then use this data to set up a marketing strategy (Lima & Castro, 2014).

Social networks ensure the rapid extension of posts on the Internet. There are billions of active users on these media every month (Chen et al., 2019). Hundreds of thousands of photos are uploaded to the Internet every minute through these platforms (Ding et al., 2019). The potential of social networks for marketing is clear from the number of their users (Svobodová & Hedvičáková, 2018). The largest social network, according to the number of active users, is Facebook, which has 2,603 million active users. Twitter closes the top 15 most used networks with 326 million active users. Tsur and Rappoport (2012) showed that that hashtags play an

important role in this network. The other most used social networks can be seen in Figure 1. All numbers of active users are valid for July 2020 (Statista, 2020).

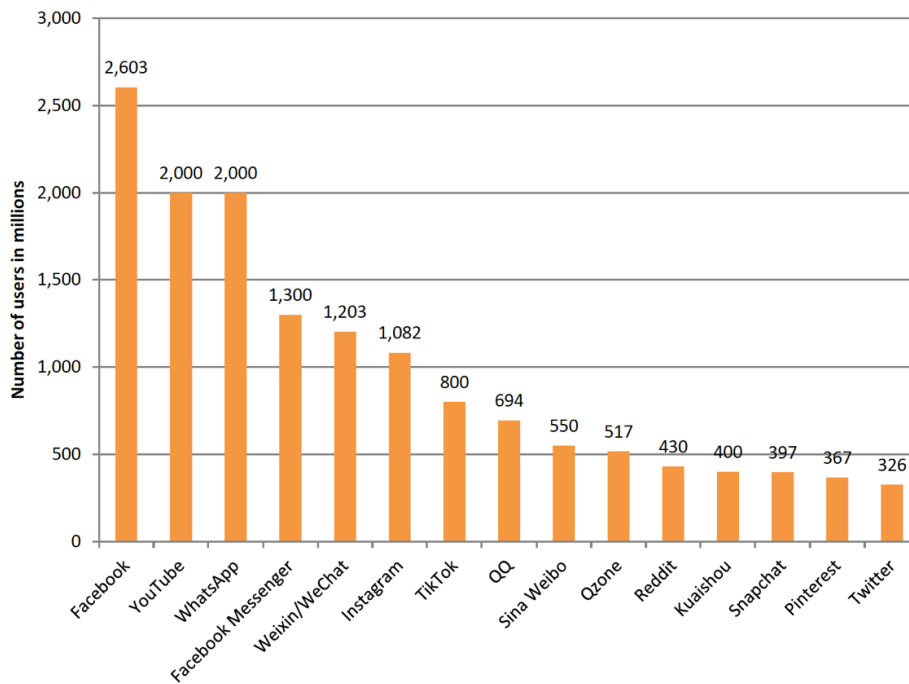


Figure 1. Active users of social media in July 2020 worldwide in millions. Own processing based on (Statista, 2020)

In the Czech Republic, the order of social networks, i.e. according to the number of users, is different from the world. Most users are on Youtube, specifically 5.7 million, followed by Facebook with 5.3 million users and Instagram, which has 2.3 million users. Other social networks are LinkedIn, Pinterest, TikTok, Snapchat and Twitter. The number of users of social networks in the Czech Republic is summarized in Figure 2 (Michl, 2019).

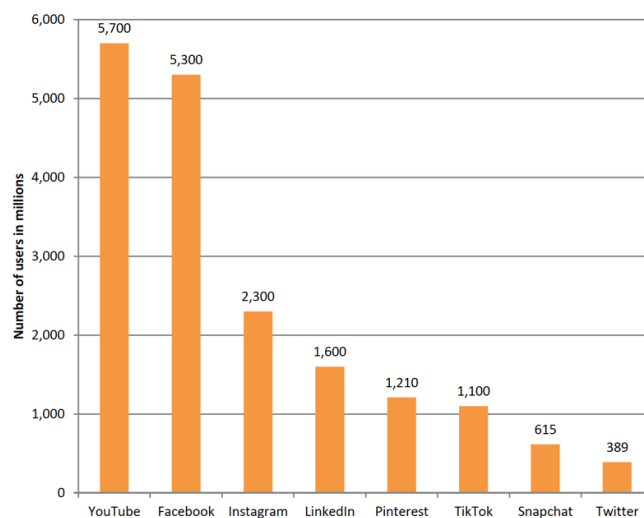


Figure 2. Users of social media in Czech Republic in 2019 in thousands. Own processing based on (Michl, 2019)

The main aim of this paper is to present the case study of a marketing strategy for a small company manufacturing custom furniture goods. This strategy could be generalized to all companies manufacturing custom furniture goods. For the strategy to be successful in other small businesses, manufacturing different custom goods, factors that affect a small company need to be considered. Factors such as product, price, market segmentation, location and sales channel and others. After considering all these factors, it should be possible to apply the strategy with small changes to all small companies manufacturing custom goods.

2. Methodology

The paper describes the creation of the strategy and its subsequent application on Facebook and Instagram. Primary and secondary data were used for the paper. Secondary data from professional literature and professional papers were used to introduce current users of social media in the Czech Republic and the world. These data were also used in the literature review to summarize current knowledge in the field of marketing on social media and the creation of strategies for them. To implement the strategy, company profiles of a small company were established on Facebook and Instagram, on which theoretical knowledge was applied. Then the strategy was evaluated with metrics of social media. This primary data was obtained from the outputs of social networks, which provide the reach of post, geographic and demographic data, if the account is set as corporate.

3. Literature Review

Marketing on social media is a form of marketing that is presented on social platforms. This marketing model can take many forms, from formal advertising to informal user involvement. As number of users grows on social media, so does the importance of this marketing. When social media marketing is successful, it leads to increased sales, building a WOM (word of mouth) reputation, improved customer support, improved customer awareness of products, events and discounts, or increased website traffic (Bandari et al., 2012). Social networks become the most important channel for communication with clients (Szabo & Huberman, 2008). The following steps need to be completed to succeed in social media (Severa & Krška, 2013):

- Find the ideal customer,
- bring the customer to the company profile,
- convince of the remarkability of the product or service,
- eliminate buying doubts,
- invite to purchase,
- make a deal,
- keep a satisfied customer.

3.1. Creating a Marketing Strategy on Social Media

The first step is to think about who the company is and what it does. The second step is to clarify the company's goals and the third is to plan a strategy for social networks. Each strategy takes a certain amount of time, but the result is saving money, saving time. The

company clarifies the strategy, what the company does, what the main aim is. Finally yet importantly, company will have more customers, the company will have something to evaluate and improve, and the whole team will know what to do. The ideal strategy for communication on social networks should follow the higher company levels. The first level is the company's strategy, the second is the business and marketing strategy and these strategies must be followed by the strategy on social networks (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019). A good strategy helps to achieve goals, control social activities and maximize the benefits of the chosen social network (Ballings et al., 2016).

Self-Determination of the Company

Before a company creates content on social networks, it should realize who it is, what it produces or what services it provides, what gap on the market it fills with its products, what benefits brings to customers. The company also needs to determine what future plans are, how customers know the company, what they say about it and what they think. The company must gather as much information as possible about the current situation. This is the starting point of the whole strategy. It will also show the strengths and weaknesses (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019). It is advisable to use SWOT analysis for this step. (Sinha, 2020)

The definition of the brand needs to be thought from the beginning. A good brand is characterized by being consistent. The company needs to determine what people want to imagine under its name. The strategy should start with a definition of what the brand contains and how it affects the public. The survey can also reveal weaknesses. The company can find out people's opinion of itself from employees or from social networks. First, employees should be asked to describe the company, and next, customers should be asked to do that. However, this marketing research is challenging and should be carried out by a professional agency. In addition to data collection, monitoring tools can also be used. The agency is able to obtain clear information about how the company is being talked about. Another option is to explore hashtags that relate to the category, or even the company itself. Google Alerts, BrandMentions or Talkwalker Alerts can be used if the company is mentioned in the online environment. This is also related to where the company is talked about. The company should find out how and where their products are talked about, on which social networks, discussion forums, where the target group is. For social media to be successful, the company must know who it is talking to. The company must determine: who the target group is, what the definition of the person is, what the relationship between customers is, what groups it needs to reach, where it is possible to reach customers, where they are potential customers on social networks, what customers and influencers publish on social networks, where conversions are currently taking place (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019).

Aim of Marketing Strategy

An important point of the strategy is what the company is trying to achieve through social media, what their goal is. The business goals that the company wants to achieve can be as follows (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019): increase brand awareness, build a community, increase website traffic, increase sales, get to download an application or program,

implement successful fundraising, increase voting preferences, improve customer support, get customers to events, increase fan engagement, give them a reason to program registration.

The objectives listed above are general. Each company can have completely different and individual goals. It is necessary to make the goal according to the SMART rule, which means that the goal should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time framed. If the company's self-determination is defined and the goals are set, then the strategy can be determined. It is a sketch of the path to the goal. If the previous information is correctly described and there is a sufficient amount of it, it should not be difficult to compile a specific strategy. The steps that need to be completed are the following: selection of social networks, establishment of a profile, selection of a network administrator, security of social networks, determination of the financial amount and schedule (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019).

Content Marketing

Zeman, 2019, claims that the definition of content marketing is a form of marketing focused on the systematic creation, publishing and distribution of such content that satisfies the user's intention and fulfils the set goals. Content marketing is based on sharing information, know-how through websites, social networks or other tools on the Internet (Zeman, 2019). The content is shared for free and the primary goal is to attract and engage the target audience with quality content. The company tries to keep the attention of its target groups and create a confidential relationship with them. Quality social media content is the intersection between what people want to hear and what the company wants to tell them. Posts should be well designed, grammatically correct, accurate, fresh, playful, funny and different for each social network, and the same posts should never be added to different social networks. Each social network has its own specifics and it is necessary to think about them separately. Posts can be illustrations, videos, summaries, tutorials, studies, reviews, memes, articles, photo galleries and others. (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019). As for social media, the rule is that posts should be added so often that it is enough for fans, but not bothering them. Spams and floods are not desirable. The frequency of posts differs from the industry in which the company operates. If the content is annoying for followers, they unfollow the profile. It is also important to add posts at the part of the day where there are the most fans online. Each user uses the social network at a different time. In general, most users are online in the early evening. It is important that the company has something to publish. Company must have something to say to the fans (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019).

Content planning is also important. Excel or Google Tabs can be used to schedule social network posts. The point is to specify the time, hour, label or hashtags for each post. The advantage of planning is gaining enough time to create the content itself, gaining an overview with regard to the following post and budget allocation. This also save time for the person who adding the posts on social media. When the content is created, the best option is to categorize all the topics, determining what is appropriate for which social network. The social network administrator must also decide whether to use graphics, a photographer, a copywriter, etc. for the proposed posts or to create the posts himself. Publishing the same posts on all social networks does not have much effect (Losekoot & Vyhnánková, 2019).

4. Results

The design of the marketing strategy was implemented at XY Joinery. The company has 8 employees and is located in the Liberec region in the Czech Republic. The company has been engaged in the custom production of furniture since 1992. The company belongs to the category of small businesses. Joinery has no profile on social networks. To apply the strategy, the company decided to create a company profile on Instagram and Facebook. Reasons why the profiles were created:

- The company wants to get more orders in periods when it has few orders. These are mainly the months of February, June and July.
- The company wants people to know that custom furniture is better than mass-produced furniture.

This should be achieved by raising brand awareness. The strategy for this company consists of several steps:

- Self-determination of the company,
 - The company's self-determination was performed based on a SWOT analysis, which is shown in Figure 3.

Table 1. SWOT analysis of the small company

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Tradition and experience	Website
Quality products	Long production time
Individual approach to customers	Absence of social media
Established contacts with customers and suppliers	Limited access to capital
Almost zero complaints	Maximum utilization of production (most months)
Modern machines	Graphic designs
Own production space	Absence of a marketing expert
Cooperation with residential architects	Location of the company in an unfrequented place
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Higher savings of people during a pandemic	Lack of quality carpenters
EU grant programs	A decrease in pupils' interest in the craft
Rapid development of technologies and machines for joinery production	Introduction of anti-noise measures in the municipality
Sustainability trend	Closure of production in the event of an infection of COVID-19 employees
Support for regional companies	Requirement for fast delivery by customers
Trade fairs for craftsmen	Rising energy prices
Procurement	Competition
Low mortgage rates	Chains with cheap furniture

- Aim of the marketing strategy,
 - The aim of marketing on social networks of a small company is to increase brand awareness in the Liberec, Středočeský Region and Prague in the Czech Republic. The increase in brand awareness on social networks should be achieved within one year.

- Content marketing,
 - Content marketing was set up individually for each social network. The posts are mainly in the form of photographs of already made furniture. Aesthetic and inspiration posts would bring greater awareness of the brand. Social network administrator follows rules by Losekoot and Vyhnánková (2019) about content marketing that states what a post on social media should look like. Company respected knowledge gained by this literature review.
- Evaluation of marketing activities.
 - Specific metrics provided by social networks will be used to evaluate the company's activities on company profiles.

4.1. Evaluation of Marketing Activities

This chapter shows all overviews and evaluations of marketing activities on Facebook and Instagram. The goal of social media marketing was to raise brand awareness. It was evaluated based on metrics and reports whether the goal was achieved. The following metrics were monitored the marketing activity on both company profiles:

- page reach,
- content interactions,
- users,
- number of followers,
- media specific metrics.

To understand the evaluation, it is necessary to show the goal of marketing for the company:

- The goal of social media marketing is to increase brand awareness in the Liberec, Středočeský Region and Prague. To increase brand awareness in the form of reach and interaction on social networks should be achieved within 1 year. The measurement was performed by evaluating marketing on social networks. Network reach, content interactions, users, number of followers and other specific metrics were monitored. The first evaluation was carried out five months after the creation of the company profiles. Interim evaluations were monitored every month.

The above metrics were observed for five months from 1 November 2020 to 1 April 2021. An ongoing evaluation of the activity on social networks was carried out each month. Just after five months, a comprehensive evaluation of Joinery XY's activities on the social networks Facebook and Instagram was carried out. This evaluation is given below for each social network separately.

Evolution of Facebook activities

The company profile on Facebook was created on October 19, 2020 by publishing the first post with the introduction of the company. The following posts are aesthetic, inspiring and show the finished furniture. The evaluation took place on April 1, 2020. During this period, the profile received a total of 88 likes. Number of followers is 91. Demographic data in the

reports can be displayed from up to 100 followers. For this reason, demographic indicators such as age and gender and capitals are not available. For clarity and demonstration of development, the metrics will be shown on a monthly basis. All metrics are observed from November 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021.

The first metric to track is page reach. This metric shows the number of people who viewed the content on the company profile. The individual impacts from November 2020 to March 2021 are summarized by months in Figure 3.

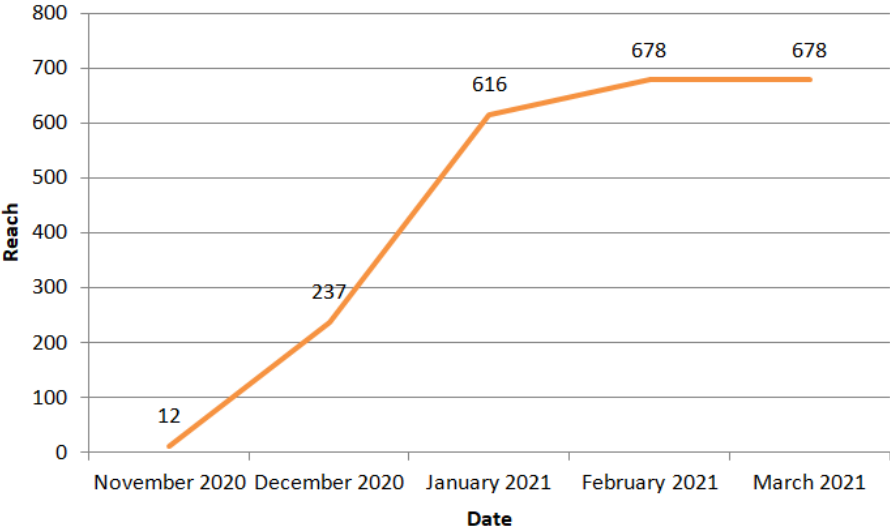


Figure 3. Reach of the company profile on Facebook in November 2020 – March 2021.

Another indicator is the interaction with the content. This is the number of likes and comments. Points measured success. Like is rated 1 point and the comment is rated two points. The comment takes more time for the user, so it has a higher score. The most successful post is a photo of the table from January 1, 2021. Post received a total of 27 likes and one comment. The second most successful post is a photo of the interior, where XY Joinery made the table, stairs and kitchen. The photo was published on February 5. This post received 20 likes. The number of comments was three. These photos are in Figure 4. The least successful post is the photo of the built-in wardrobe, which received only 4 likes and no comment. This post was published on December 14, 2020. The least successful post was the introduction of the company from November 2021. This post received three likes and no comments. Therefore, earlier posts have a lower number of interactions. The interactions show that users are most interested in photos of products, especially kitchens and modern furniture. The description is not important. It is obvious that users mainly watch photos. The number of content interactions also grew with increasing reach. The conclusion is that the most interactions with the content are in the posts of the product (especially kitchen type) with a short description.



Figure 4. Photos of the most successful posts on Facebook business page

Evaluation of Instagram activities

Instagram profile of XY's company was established on November 2, 2020. All metrics are observed from November 1 to April 1. For this given period, the XY Joinery profile gained 1,013 followers. The composition of followers on Instagram by gender is 57% women and 43% men. The age composition varies according to gender, as can be seen in Figure 5.

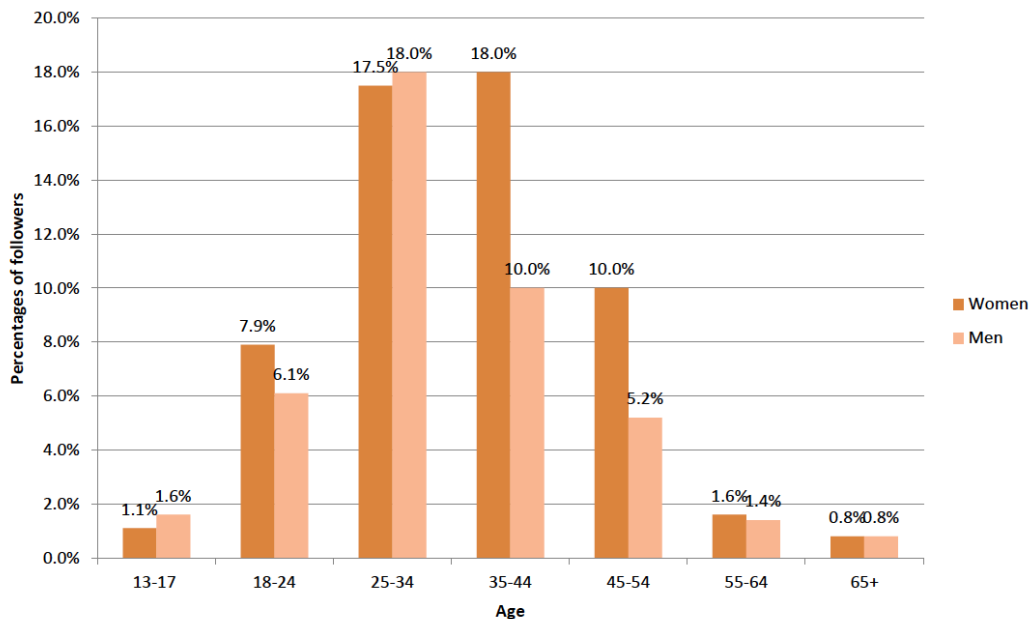


Figure 5. Reach of the company profile on Facebook in the period of November 2020 - March 2021.

Followers can also be divided according to the location where the highest concentration of followers can be found. Followers are the most concentrated in Prague, specifically 8.4% of total users. There are 6% of followers coming from Turnov, 3.9% from Liberec, 2.4% from Brno and 1.6% from Mladá Boleslav. The remaining users are from other cities, or their location is not allowed to be shared. If it is possible to find out the location from users, it is also possible to determine which country they are from. The highest number of followers of Joinery XY on Instagram is from the Czech Republic, it is 63.3%. It is followed by the Slovak Republic with 3.9%, the USA with 1%, Germany with 0.5% and Poland with 0.4%. Another metric is reach that shows the number of people who have viewed the content on the

company profile. The profile reach from November 2020 to March 2021 is summarized by months in Figure 6.

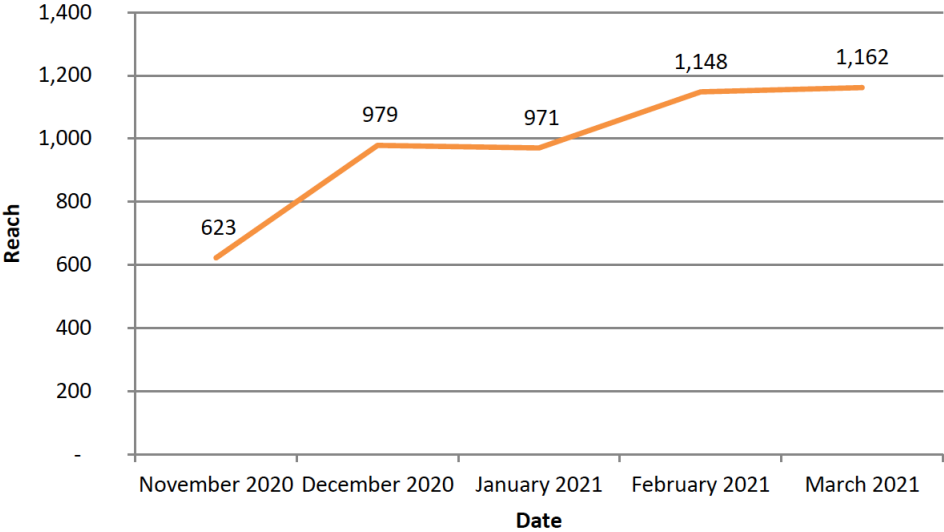


Figure 6. Reach of the company profile on Instagram in the period November 2020 - March 2021.

Another indicator is the interaction with the content. For content interactions, the number of likes and comments judges success. A sample of the content is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Sample of the content on Instagram.

Like is rated one point and the comment is rated two points. Out of 44 posts on Instagram, the most successful photo is grey furniture that was published on January 27, 2021. The post had no comment, but it got 94 likes. The second most successful post is a photo of the furnished interior. This post received 82 likes and one comment. The post was published on February 3. On the other hand, photos of white wardrobe are the least

successful posts published on the XY Joinery company profile. In penultimate place was the post of a low white wardrobe with 35 likes, and no comments. This post was published on January 7. The least successful post is a photo of a large white closet that got 34 likes and no comments. The interaction with the content on the Instagram shows that users prefer posts with photos of furniture and products. Posts showing the operation of Joinery XY did not place at the top of the table of interaction with content. The most successful posts were in warm and cosy tones. The least successful were photographs of white furniture.

5. Discussion

The established theoretical procedure is described on Facebook and on Instagram. The same metrics are evaluated, including page reach, content interactions, user audiences, followers, and network-specific metrics. Applying the above strategy to the corporate profile of a small business, it turned out that the company profile on Instagram achieved better results than on Facebook. Therefore, an identical strategy for different social networks does not work the same way. In their article, Chawla and Chodak (2021) prove that the increase profitability and greater clicks under a link in a post can be achieved by the link in the comment below the post, not in the post description. Zhang and Yamasaki (2021) also state that 90% of people buy from companies they follow on social media. They claim that the most important is the image, its quality, location, promotion and style for marketing on social media. The company tried to adhere to the knowledge above gained in literature research when publishing posts. Above all, the company follows all the knowledge of Losekoot and Vyhnančková (2019).

6. Conclusions

Social media are playing an increasingly important role in marketing. The number of users on social networks is constantly growing and it can be assumed that they will be an important tool for corporate communication with customers in the future. The article describes how to plan a successful strategy and content marketing for social networks for a small business. Subsequently, this strategy was applied to the small company manufacturing custom goods. Criteria such as reach, number of followers, demographics of followers, and user interactions with content were assessed. Facebook profile received 91 followers in five months. The reach of this profile increased up to 678 after five months. The company profile on Instagram was evaluated as more successful than the Facebook profile. In five months, it gained 1,013 followers and the range in the last evaluated month reached 1,162. The company could increase its reach on Facebook by connecting with influencers in the form of cooperation or sponsored posts. After the evaluation, the profiles were handed over to the XY Joinery. Through profiles on social networks, during the five months period, customers requested five orders. The presented strategy on social networks is also applicable to other small businesses manufacturing custom goods.

Conflict of interest: none

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