



JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY
International Business School

The Content Marketing Process

A study on shopping centre's content marketing process

BACHELOR THESIS WITHIN: *Business Administration*

NUMBER OF CREDITS: *15 ECTS*

PROGRAMME OF STUDY: *Marketing Management*

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JÖNKÖPING May 1016

Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to thank the management of a6 for all the help and support throughout the research process. Your nice treatment of us as students was highly appreciated.

Additionally we would like to acknowledge our tutor Imoh Antai for his support and guidance throughout our thesis writing process.

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May 2016

Bachelor Thesis within Business Administration

Title: The Content Marketing Process
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Date: May 2016
Keywords: Content marketing, content marketing process, shopping centre, online channels, website, Facebook, Instagram

Abstract

Background: Content marketing is an important marketing strategy; it involves pulling the consumers towards a brand instead of pushing marketing on the consumers. The online presence among people is growing; therefore, it is important for business to market themselves online, via online channels.

Problem: A shopping centre with several different stores and concepts also has several different audiences to keep track of. Delivering valuable content towards the audience is not an easy task. This can also be harder when dealing with different types of audiences, just like in the case of a shopping centre.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the content marketing process of a shopping centre towards suggestions and recommendations from literature in order to find how they relate to each other. This thesis also aim to establish how a chosen shopping centre segment perceive content being distributed to them.

Method: This research was based on a case study of a6 shopping centre. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected for the purpose of this research. Interviews and observations were conducted in order to establish how a6 works with content marketing and a survey was carried out in order to establish how a chosen shopping centre segment perceive content being distributed to them.

Conclusion: Shopping centres can follow the overall content marketing process structure suggested by literature. However, due to scarce resources, they might not be able to follow every suggestion and recommendation made. The chosen consumer segment found inspiring content to be most interesting and educational to be the least.

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1 Introduction

The first section consists of a short background about content marketing and shopping centre followed by a problem discussion. The problem discussion is followed by the purpose, which presents the focus of this thesis. The specific research questions are presented and finally a couple of definitions are defined in order to make some key words clear.

1.1 Background

Content marketing is providing information that gains consumer attention rather than buying the attention with advertising or trying to affect them with one at the time traditional sales techniques (Ryan, 2014). Content marketing is not a new phenomenon, today content marketing is a must-have strategy for companies. The content has to be relevant, high quality and add value to the consumers (Lieb, 2011). Content marketing is all contents that add value and can both directly or indirectly market a business (Gunelius, 2011). A brand voice and identity can be shaped and created through content marketing. There are several types of content such as; digital newsletters, emails, images, videos and social content that is created exclusively for social networks. Content is aimed to market a company's product or service by entertaining and helping the consumer (Odden, 2012).

Content marketing is a pull-strategy, where consumers seek you out rather than you pushing marketing on them. As a business, it is an advantage to have consumers coming to you because it means that they are interested and curious (Lieb, 2011). Content marketing can be used both offline and online. Businesses do not want to interrupt the consumers but rather engage them through their content marketing in order to achieve success (Gunelius, 2011). According to Odden (2012), consumers do not care for interruption marketing, they want to be entertained and educated. Consumers expect value of some kind from brands, such as easy discovered content that they can interact with and share with others. Content creates customer engagement and it could help educate prospects about services or products and guide them through the buying process.

The online presence among people is growing, comparing the annual statistics of internet use from Statistics Sweden (2013 and 2014) one can see an increase in using the internet for posting messages to social network sites, chat sites, and blogs from 2013 to 2014. According to the statistics, the increase among private persons was noticeable in every age group examined. Statistics Sweden also releases an annual statistics report with focus on enterprises and their Internet usage. The report from Statistics Sweden (2013) research the usage of social media amongst enterprises and it shows that almost

half of the enterprises in Sweden have a social media presence (Statistics Sweden, ICT usage in enterprises 2013).

There is not much to be found on trends, statistics and research when it comes to content marketing in Sweden. In matter of fact, the amount of research, statistics and trends on content marketing is scarce in a global context as well. However, the two marketing education organization's Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and MarketingProfs has in collaboration since 2013 released an annual B2C benchmark, budget and trends report on content marketers in North America.

Every annual report, first tries to establish the most common tactics used by content marketers. The most popular tactic, social media, has been the same since the first report in 2013. There are several tactics used by content marketers, some of the most popular ones are providing articles on websites, e-Newsletters, illustrations/photos, videos and blogs (Pulizzi & Handley, 2013).

Focusing on the most used tactic, one must consider that there are various social media sites to use when distributing content. Facebook is clearly the most popular site to use in comparison to its competitors. The percentage of content marketers who use Facebook decreased from 90 per cent to 89 per cent between 2013 and 2014, however the percentage increased again to 94 per cent in 2015 and remained the same in 2016. Only Twitter has been close with its 84 per cent usage in 2015. However, whilst the percentage of Facebook usage was the same between 2015 and 2016, Twitter decreased by two percentage points to an 82 per cent usage in 2016 (Pulizzi & Handley, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

Instagram, with its 20 per cent increase, was the social media site that took the biggest jump between 2013 and 2014. Since 2014, Instagram has been the social media site that as shown the greatest usage increase amongst content marketers. The report from 2015, showed an increase of 17 percentage points for Instagram. In addition, the 2016 report further established Instagram as the site increasing the most with its 13 percentage points change from the year before. In conclusion, according to the content marketing institution report, the percentage points of content marketers using Instagram has increased over the last four years with 12 in 2013, 32 in 2014, 49 in 2015 and 62 in 2016 (Pulizzi & Handley, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016).

The annual reports also looks at the spending patterns and trends of North American content marketers. In 2013, 45 per cent of the content marketers said that they would increase their content marketing spending and 10 per cent said that they would increase it significantly. An even higher percentage of content marketers said that they would increase their spending in 201 when 45 per cent said that they would increase and 15 per cent said that they would increase significantly. This adds up to 60 per cent of content marketers who would increase their content marketing spending in 2014 in comparison

to 55 per cent in 2013. In 2015, the amount of content marketers increasing their spending increased from 45 to 50 per cent, however the amount of marketers increasing significantly dropped from 15 to 9 per cent. In 2016, the report did not supply the same alternatives, thus changing the percentage quota. In conclusion, content marketers have been eager to increase spending on content marketing over the last four years (Pulizzi & Handley, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016).

This thesis will investigate content marketing through online channels for shopping centres. Content marketing could be carried out through a wide range of online channels, however this thesis will be focusing on the online channels of social media and website. The main focus will be towards Facebook and Instagram since Facebook is the most popular social media site for content marketers to use and that Instagram has shown the biggest increase in the field over the last years (Pulizzi & Handley, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016).

A shopping centre is a cluster of retail stores in a close geographical environment under the same roof (Vitorino, 2012). A shopping centre usually has a variety of different retail stores, from clothing to furnishing to toy stores. A consumer should expect to be able to do all errands under the same roof (Micu, 2013). According to Scott (1970) and Brown (1992), shopping centres are usually single-owned. The tenant mix is important for the attractiveness of the shopping centre, although as of today there is no perfect tenant mix strategy (Yim, Yui & Xu, 2012). Shopping centres are a brand themselves and all the individual stores within a shopping centre have their own brands. And therefore, it is important for the shopping centre to market and advertise the centre as a whole instead of the marketing and advertising only coming from the individual stores within the shopping centre. The online presence amongst private persons is growing (Statistics Sweden, 2013 and 2014) therefore in order to reach those people shopping centres also need to have a presence online.

In Sweden, shopping centres and trade areas keep expanding in size, number and revenue. In 2014, nine new shopping centres and trade areas were built in Sweden, this led to a total of 358 shopping centres and trade areas and this number is growing every year (HUI research, 2014). One key element for shopping centres is the attractiveness and one measurement of the attractiveness is the number customers' (Micu, 2013).

The rapid development of digital technology and new marketing opportunities due to use of social media and mobile devices creates great potential for businesses to reach consumers in a fast and individualized way. However, this potential is unexploited or not yet satisfactory utilized for many offline retail businesses (Ryan, 2014).

1.2 Problem

According to Ryan (2014) every business that has an audience online or that is going to be online needs to embrace some kind of online or digital marketing to retain and

engage with them. Content marketing is providing information that gain consumer attention rather than buying the attention with advertising or trying to affect them with one at the time traditional sales techniques. One of the purposes of content marketing is to not disturb the consumers with pushing sales offers but rather pull the consumer in with valuable content that they find interesting. Being sought out by an audience that wants you to provide them with content is great, but being able to deliver that content in the right way is what really makes a content marketing strategy successful (Jefferson & Tanton 2015). Delivering valuable content to a target audience consistently requires work, originality, thought, strategy, experimentation and persistence. A surfeit of potential outlets add complexity to the decision on what content to provide, in what form to provide it, how to display it and finally how to measure its effectiveness (Lieb, 2011). Since a shopping centre is a cluster of retail stores in a close geographical environment under the same roof (Vitorino, 2012), they have a wide range of consumers to satisfy. Having to satisfy such a wide audience might make the content marketing process more complicated.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the content marketing process of a shopping centre towards suggestions and recommendations from literature in order to find how they relate to each other. This thesis also aim to establish how a chosen shopping centre segment perceive content being distributed to them.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions are guidance in order to achieve the purpose of this thesis:

1. How is the content marketing process of a shopping centre implemented in relation to what literature suggests and recommends?
2. How does a chosen shopping centre segment perceive content being distributed to them?

1.6 Delimitations

This thesis has some delimitation in order to narrow down the topic of content marketing. One delimitation is the online channels that will be observed and investigated. When it comes to online channels, this thesis will focus on three different channels; website, Facebook and Instagram. Another delimitation is that the focus will be on one single shopping centre instead of several ones. Due to lack of time and resources, this thesis will only to research one shopping centre rather than several ones. In the primary data collection of the survey, this thesis will focus on consumer perception of content marketing rather than the effects and consequences.

1.7 Definitions

Content Marketing: “Content marketing encompasses all forms of content that add value to consumers, thereby directly or indirectly promoting a business, brand, products, or services.” (Gunelius, 2011)

Content Marketing Institute (CMI): “Content Marketing Institute is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multi-channel storytelling.” (Content Marketing Institute, 2016)

Digital newsletters: These online newsletters are often published according to a schedule and regularly provide a source of useful information, promotion, and links to web pages that further engage readers (Odden, 2012).

Online Channels: Interaction platforms where companies can interact and keep a constant dialogue with consumers online (Jespersen, 2011).

Shopping centre: “...a large cluster of retail stores in a close geographical proximity to one another.” (Vitorino, 2012)

Social content: Content created exclusively for social networks like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn have significant impact on awareness and engagement (Odden, 2012).

Social media: Applications used online that get consumers to share experiences, opinions, reviews and insights (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009).

Valuable content: Valuable content is supercharged content with a purpose. In distinction from just being content, valuable content is words, knowledge and information that is shaped and shared to customers and clients with the aim of being educational, helpful or inspiring. (Jefferson & Tanton 2015)

2 Frame of Reference

The second section consists of a frame of reference dealing with the content marketing process. A few strategy frameworks are introduced. After this, for simplicity, steps of one framework are chosen as a structure. To gain a deeper understanding of the content marketing process, additional literature complements every step.

2.1 Content marketing process

According to Jefferson & Tanton (2015), it is important to have a documented content strategy process and plan in order to have a clear picture of what should be achieved and how to actually achieve it. Odden (2012) states that the content marketing strategy is a plan to deliver thoughtful and valuable content with certain outcomes in mind to a chosen audience.

Odden (2012), provides six steps for a better content marketing strategy.

1. *Objectives.* Set to identify overall business goals for the content marketing.
2. *Audience.* Develop profiles that represent characteristics of a customer segment.
3. *Content plan.* Determine a content mix, topics and desired outcomes based on customer needs and business goals.
4. *Promotion.* The promotion of content to end users and influence further sharing and conversations.
5. *Engagement.* Grow social networks through listening and participating that helps creation of future content.
6. *Measurement.* Find out if the content marketing is being helpful for customers and if the content marketing strategy is fulfilling its objectives and goals.

Jefferson & Tanton (2015) provides ten steps for a successful valuable content marketing strategy.

1. *Be clear on your goals.* Setting objectives and goals for what areas of the business the content marketing should improve.
2. *Know your business.* Asking questions to the own business to determine who you are as a business, what you are selling and to whom, and what you want to be known for in the future.
3. *Know your customers.* Determine the ideal customer and their wants and needs. Research and create persona profiles of the ideal customer.
4. *Find your story.* Decide the business purpose and its mission. A hashtag could be used to communicate the story in short.
5. *Your content sweet spot and vision.* Find out what your business knows better than anyone else. Decide what kind of topics and attributes should define the content.

6. *Content commitment & plan.* Set a content calendar and schedule a distribution and publishing plan.
7. *Platforms & tools* Determine what content should be created and what creation and distribution tools are needed.
8. *Organize.* Consider who should create the content and have the overall responsibility for it. Find out if external skills are needed or if internal human resources need to be trained.
9. *Measurement.* Assess if the strategy is working successfully or not.
10. *Planning the change.* Find out what should be changed in the set out a realistic implementation plan to make it happen.

The steps of objectives, audience, content plan and measurement mentioned by Odden (2012) are similar to the steps mentioned by Jefferson & Tanton (2015) but the promotion and engagement step are not as emphasized. However, the two authors add more steps to the content marketing process with more focus on platforms, tools, and internal issues such as the vision.

According to Joe Pulizzi, founder of the content marketing institute (CMI), there are no one-size-fits-all plans that could be applied to every organization. However, being able to work with several brands to operationalize the process of content marketing, the CMI have been able to spot some interesting patterns (Pulizzi, 2013). Pulizzi & Rose (2013) at the CMI have created a framework in the form of a chain that aim to increase the success likelihood of one's content marketing. It includes the steps of Plan, Audience, Story, Channels, Process, Conversations and Measurement.

The CMI framework is a simplified framework chain of the content marketing process that covers the aspects of the content marketing process provided by both Odden (2012) and Jefferson & Tanton (2015) Since the framework covers the aspects mentioned by both authors in a simplified manner, rather than examine the different suggested collection of steps one by one, the structure of the framework will be used to examine the content marketing process in more literary detail.

2.1.1 The CMI Content marketing framework

The framework developed by Pulizzi & Rose (2013) at the CMI, involves seven different building blocks (see figure 1) that can be used to build up a content marketing strategy. Figure 1 shows the seven building blocks, which are; Plan, Audience, Story, Channels, Process, Conversations and Measurement.

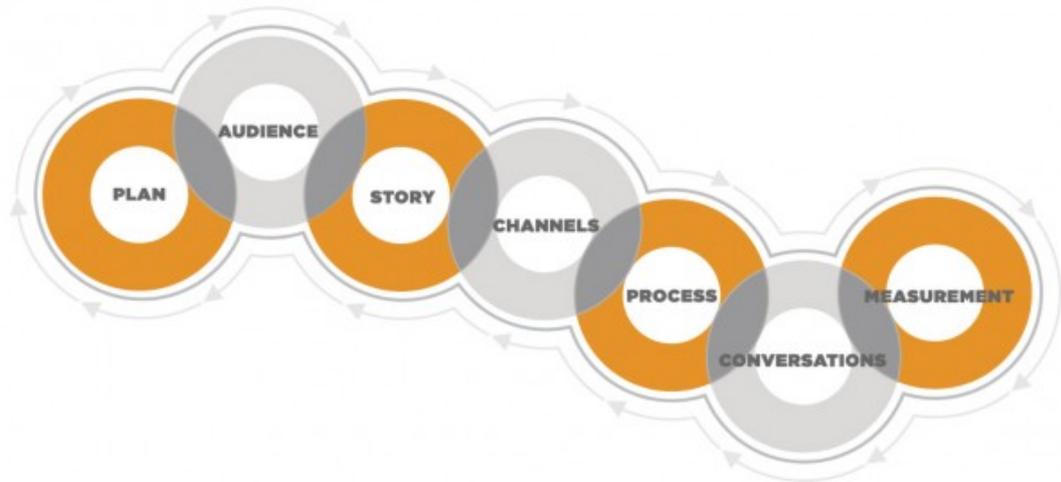


Figure 1. Content Marketing Framework

Source: Pulizzi & Rose,

2013

Plan

The first step of the CMI content marketing framework is plan. The framework states that no matter the marketing department size of one's business, planning is a core part in being successful. A business plan should be a thoughtful and strategic plan that aligns with and strive to meet the broader goals of the business. When developing a plan there are some essential questions the plan should aim to answer such as what the business should try to accomplish, what makes the business unique and what differentiating factors the business holds. The framework further states that the fundamental purpose of planning is to understand who you are, where you are and where you want to be. The framework emphasizes the importance of planning and says that planning should be a continual process that works to optimize the marketing programs (Pulizzi & Rose, 2013).

Garner (2012) provides a strategy for planning that includes creating an editorial plan and publishing calendar that will work as a production framework for the content created. The editorial plan and publishing calendar should include asset types to the published, location of where content should be published and frequency. It is further advised by Garner, that one should maintain a calendar of the content timeline one month in advance in order to avoid creating content on the fly. Jefferson & Tanton (2015) also emphasizes the potential benefits of using a content calendar and to schedule a distribution and publishing plan.

The framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013) states that the business plan should be a strategic plan that aligns with and strives to meet the broader goals of the business. According to Odden (2012), it is essential to tie marketing objectives to the overall organizational goals. When planning, the authors further argues that one should look at

the overall business goals and whether they focus on retention, service or revenue, decide how that should translate to content. It is further provided examples of things one might want to accomplish through content that will ultimately lead to overall business goals. The examples given are; elevate brand perception, establish thought leadership, drive customer engagement, provide better customer service, increase customer retention and build a bigger referral network. Planning such objectives with ties to the overall business goals helps the content marketing program to keep to what is important for the business.

Audience

An audience is whom you want to reach with your content marketing. The framework divides audience into two equally important spokes: internal stakeholders that are involved in the content marketing program, and those that you are trying to reach externally. The audience reached externally helps grow the business. When dealing with those two audiences, one must consider how their content needs change as time passes. The framework states that as with the content marketing plan, one must evaluate the audiences along the content marketing journey. One of the reasons for this is the external audience changing its preferences regarding how and where they like to receive the content. Also, content provided internally could need adjustment as the content marketing strategy evolves and becomes more trusted and accepted internally (Pulizzi & Rose, 2013).

Pulizzi & Rose (2013) states two key questions that needs to be taken into consideration, “Who are we talking to?” and “What is each group's persona?”. After establishing the answers to those two questions, one should know the audience better and that is key. The next step is to consider how every audience needs will change over time. One audience might not be very familiar with the business whilst another audience might be long-time loyalists. Those two audiences have different needs and when providing content, those needs need to be taken into consideration in order to be successful.

With great content marketing, everything starts with getting to know the desired audience. One cannot know every single person individually but by doing research; the audience can be segmented and divided into imaginary characters with distinctive characteristics. Those characters are called personas and they are used to get to know the audience better. Personas are created by gathering similar users, customers or buyers into clusters and assigning them with characteristics that reflects those of the combined cluster. In conclusion, the persona is a fictitious representative of the cluster (Tu, Zhang & Dong, n.d).

Tu, Zhang and Dong (n.d), illustrates a four-step definition model that helps to understand the persona definition and creation process. The model aims to determine how personas should be defined and created. In short, it states that personas are

fictitious representative of a cluster of customers, buyers and users. Also, it goes through the steps of determine that goals, motivations and behaviours of the persona.

The first step determines that personas are fictitious persons that represents an archetypal user and has the characters of a group with similar users. The second step states that personas are defined by their goals and that those goals are important to focus on when creating personas. In addition, the third step emphasizes the importance of analysing those goals. Furthermore, it adds that behaviours and motivations are part of what needs to be analysed. The data may come from user studies or market research including e.g. observations, questionnaires and interviews. The fourth and last step states that there are two processes in the persona creation: abstraction and cluster. First comes the cluster process where cluster of users is based on their similar behaviour, motivations and goals. Once the process of cluster is completed, user profiles are abstracted from characteristics of the users in order to illustrate users behaviours, motivations and goals.

According to Lieb (2011) getting to know the audience and segmenting it into personas helps businesses to develop strategies for reaching that audience in a successful manner. By knowing the wants, interests, desires and goals of the audience, content provided to that audience can be individualized so that it is perceived as valuable.

Story

The third step of the CMI content marketing framework is “story”. The framework states that having a good plan and knowing the audience is useless if a good story is not clearly identified and communicated to that audience. Storytelling is a tool to build strong relationships with customers rather than just being a selling tool. The framework further states that the story identifies the passions of the business and serves as the foundation for all future content. One thing to consider is that the story does not have to follow narrative rules with beginning, middle and end. The purpose of storytelling is just to view the content through a storytelling lens with purpose, passion and heart. Its aim is to establish a strong emotional bond with the audience. Once the story is set, one should build pillars of content that helps ensure that the story echoes through all content shared and provided to the audience (Pulizzi & Rose, 2013).

Brito (2013) states that telling a complex story on several different channels will be challenging. Due to the limited amount of time one has to tell the story, the story should be simple. The author further adds that selling complex services or products will make it more difficult to simplify the story that one wants to tell. Jefferson & Tanton (2015) argues that it is important to communicate an authentic and inspiring story for everyone to get behind and share. Furthermore, the two authors give some examples of attributes of a good story; It should be customer centric rather than company centric, it should not

be a sales pitch, it needs to engage emotionally and be memorable, and it should be a brave and bold promise that starts from the company's own beliefs.

Channels

Channels is the fourth step in the framework, which involves identifying which channels are used to deliver the message. According to Pulizzi & Rose (2013), the channels are as important to consider as the message. The authors state that a “channel plan” should be developed, where some of the key points are to identify all channels and determine which of those channels are more effective. Also, the channel plan needs to decide how the different channels should connect and establish objectives for each of the channels. Editorial and budgeting are other key points of the channel plan. The framework further adds that it is important to remember that channels may change over time so the “channel plan” should not be set in stone. There are both traditional channels and online channels. Traditional channels are newspapers, advertising, posters etc., while online channels are digitally based. Brito (2013) mentions that each of the channels should not have the exact same content, instead they should have a different content narrative or at least another writing style, this is because every community is different.

Online channels are platforms for companies to interact with the customer. It creates a constant dialogue between the company and the potential consumers. The distance between companies and the consumers may become shorter when the interaction of online channels comes into play. This strengthens the user involvement and engagement (Jespersen, 2011). Social media can be used for one person to communicate with hundred or even thousands of other people (Mangold, 2009). As stated in the framework conducted by Pulizzi & Rose (2013), one has to identify all the possible channels and identify which of the channels might be most effective.

According to Jefferson & Tanton (2013), the base of valuable content marketing is the company website and there are four roles for the website. The four roles of the website are to engage the visitors, pull them closer, get their trust, spread the word about your business and buy the products or services that you offer. The authors further states that a lot of companies have a flat website, sort of like a brochures, which means only the basic information about the company is displayed on the website. In order to get the interest from visitors a company needs more than basic information on the website. A valuable website should have a clear message and be consumer focused.

Facebook is considered and ranked the number one social media channel (Shen & Bissell, 2013). Svenskarna och Internet (2015) shows in their statistics that 70 per cent swedes above 12 years are using Facebook. A study conducted by Kaur (2014) researched the usage of social networking sites. The results showed that there was a high usage of networking sites and the most popular was Facebook. According to Shen & Bissell (2013), the social networking platform is not only grown exponentially among

individuals, it has also grown among companies. More and more companies today are looking to brand themselves by getting the word out by using Facebook.

Instagram is a social media tool, founded in 2010, where people take and share photos with the world, in other words it is a photo-sharing application. Two years after the launch, Mark Zuckerberg founder of Facebook, bought up Instagram (Hempel, 2014). According to statistics from Svenskarna och Internet (2015), the amount of people using Instagram is growing rapidly for all ages. Also according to their statistics more women than men are using Instagram, this applies for all age ranges.

Process

Despite the name, the process step is only a part of the whole content marketing process. It deals with how to actually implement the content marketing strategy and together with the other steps it makes up what this thesis has referred to as the content marketing process. The process step involves four stages. The four stages according to Pulizzi & Rose (2013) are: create and manage; optimize, aggregate, and curate; converse and listen; measure and learn. The process step also involves scheduling, writing guidelines, and establishing who will execute the plans and who holds responsibility. This will result in a playbook, where a lot of questions need to be answered. These questions might be: Who does what? What style and writing guidelines do we have? What time slots for posting are most effective for us? Etc. This step is used to operationalize the previous steps in the framework. The framework discusses how to develop a content marketing team, and every step that comes along with creating the team.

An important part of the process step is to decide what content will be distributed, and how. In addition to the importance of knowing the audience stated by Lieb (2011), Jefferson & Tanton (2015) also argues that in order to be valuable, content need to be created for a specific audience that finds it useful and appreciates it. Jefferson & Tanton (2015) states that for content marketing to work really well, content needs to be valuable. The authors also makes the distinction that content is just words, knowledge and information whilst valuable content is supercharged content with a purpose. In distinction from just being content, valuable content is words, knowledge and information that is shaped and shared to customers and clients with the aim of being educational, helpful or inspiring. Lieb (2011) also divides content into categories. Content that educates and informs and content that entertains. Together, both Lieb (2011) and Jefferson & Tanton (2015) establish four characteristics when dividing content, the content should be educational, entertaining, informative and inspiring.

Kissane & Halvorson (2011) states that there are three sources of content. One can get content from dedicated creators such as freelancers and professional communicators. Such sources have the time required to create the content asked for, however one must remember that they might lack the knowledge about complex products or processes and

thus in need of guidance from internal experts. Those internal experts are the second source of content. As previously mentioned, such internal experts will have great knowledge about products, processes and target audiences but may lack time and knowledge to produce content and communicate their expertise. The last source stated is content curation. Content curation is finding relevant information for the audience and communicating it through one's own channels. It could be seen as lazy and simple but it is difficult to find interesting information. One pro of content curation is that the audience one is trying to stimulate can get content that they would otherwise not have the time or ability to find on their own.

As stated by Lieb (2011), it is important to remember that there is user-generated content that one cannot be in total control of. Such content be it reviews, comments, ratings or contests, is generated for you, rather than by you. User generated content should preferable be produced by users that are pleased with you and want to create positive content. Montes de Oca (2011) adds to this by providing a list of user generated websites such as YouTube, Wikipedia and Twitter that could be important to consider when the sources of content is being planned and determined.

According to the framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013), it is important to establish how to execute the previous steps and who will manage it. According to Odden (2012), a business needs a content marketing strategy in order for everyone within the company to have a clear understanding of the goals, also because the different types of channels that exist can be overwhelming. Brito (2013) discusses that a business should have a community manager, who is responsible for the channels. The community manager is suppose to monitor the channels and its content monitor the conversations that are happening on the channels and also analyses the data, but also might be responsible for flagging consumer issues.

Conversations

An important element that also needs to be established is the conversation and connection with the customers. Listening to the consumer is an important aspect that some companies overlook in their content marketing framework, as well as talking to the customers. Establishing listening posts is a way of tracking where the conversations are happening. The conversation between the company and the consumer might be overwhelming for the company. However, the company needs to be active with the response to consumers (Pulizzi & Rose, 2013). Several tools can be used in order to track and measure the conversations that are happening about the brand or its products. Trackur and Radian6 are two tools that can be used to monitor on-going conversations on social channels (Odden, 2012).

According to Gunelius (2011) there are three different forms of content marketing: long-form, short-form and conversations and sharing. The first form, long-form content marketing involves a longer text with quite a few sentences, examples of this are blogs,

articles and press releases. The second form, short-form content marketing involves a short text with just a few sentences, examples of where you can use short-form is Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The third and final form, conversations and sharing content marketing can happen through conversations and sharing of already published content, such as blog comments and twitter updates. The core of content marketing is to understand what consumers need and want in order to create and publish useful and relevant content towards consumers (Gunelius, 2011).

The third type of content marketing stated by Gunelius (2011), conversation and sharing, could be applied to the sixth step of the framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013). The authors discuss conversational content marketing, which involves the conversation between a business and the visitors based on the online content. According to Odden (2012), one needs to discover where the conversations are happening in order to attract, inspire and engage consumers. Brito (2013) emphasize the importance of conversations, and that consumers are having conversations about your brand and product both offline and online. The conversations that are happening are sharing experiences, both positive and negative, in this way they create viral marketing which can be both a pro and a con for your business. The authors also emphasize the importance of business engagement in the conversations.

Measurement

The final step in the content marketing framework is the measurement. Measurement should be included in every part of the content marketing process in order to measure effectiveness. Today, there are many different ways to measure and one can measure almost everything. According to Pulizzi & Rose (2013) defines core questions for measuring the activities; what is and what is not working? How can we improve this until next time?

Garner (2012) discusses the importance of measurement. Businesses need to be patient when it comes to measurement in order to make better long-term decisions. The author points out several key considerations when establishing a measurement strategy, this to make businesses overwhelmed with all the data. The first consideration is to view people as people rather than as data, involves not looking at people as data points, but instead viewing the visitors as people. The second consideration is to remember that real-time data means nothing without a knowledgeable human to translate it into action, involves the right people that is checking the data. The third consideration is to use the best analytics tools of all - your brain, means to use your brain when looking and analysing when analysing the data. The fourth consideration is to remember to spend 10 per cent on the analytic budget on tools and 90 per cent on brains that are used to make sense of what the tools say. The fifth consideration is to distribute your data and insights throughout your organization, involves sending the analysis that was established from the data to everyone inside the business. Finally the sixth consideration is to consider the metrics of *stress on your people* and *time lost* as a fundamental measurement of your

efforts, is considering the time lost and stress of using the wrong metric. Brito (2013), states that one needs to adapt the content marketing measurement when new platforms are introduced and used.

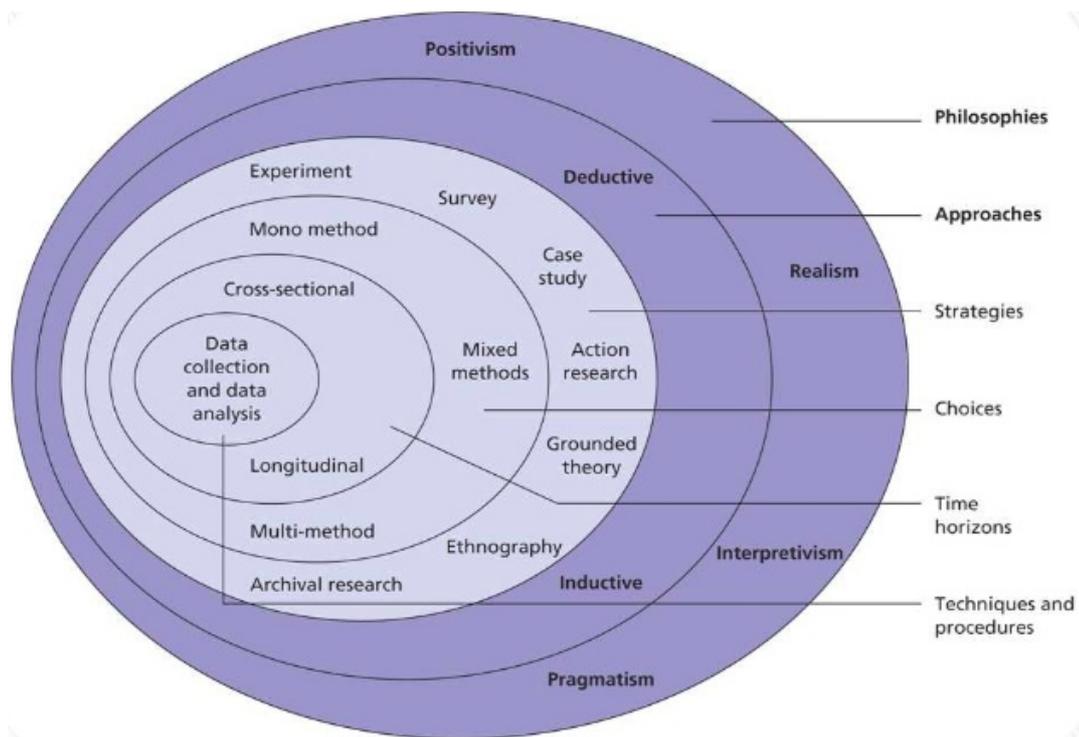
Brito (2013) discusses three different types of measurements; program measurement, performance of individual pieces of content and analysing demographics, as well as psychographics. Program measurement is tracking social channel health, while performance of individual pieces of content involves measuring the engagement from the viewers. The last measurement, analysing demographics and psychographics, involves measuring age, gender etc.

3 Methodology

The third section consists of the research model that was established for the purpose of this research. It also consisted of a description of the case study for A6 shopping centre. This is followed by a description of the method and methodology used in this thesis. How the primary data collected was conducted will be described in detail.

3.1 Research model

When conducting research, various techniques, strategies and approaches can be used to investigate the problem and issues. The research ‘onion’ (see figure 2) is a display of how different stages can be implemented, also, which methods that can be used (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). The research ‘onion’ consists of different layers that need to be investigated and implemented in order to create primary data. There are six different layers of the research ‘onion’ these are; philosophy, approach, strategies, choices, time horizons and techniques and procedures.



*Figure 2. The research ‘onion’
Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012)*

The first layer, philosophy consists of four different philosophies, positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism. The last mentioned, pragmatism, is the most suitable philosophy for this thesis. Pragmatism is focused on the practical consequences of an idea. Several methods can be used in this philosophy; both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Saunders, et al, 2012).

The second layer is the approach, which consists of two different approaches; deduction and induction. The first approach is deductive, which concentrates on testing an existing theory using empirical observation, while the second approach, inductive, involves establishing a theory based on the empirical observation (Collis & Hussey, 2013). For this thesis, a deductive approach means to be more suitable. The deductive approach is suitable because this thesis investigates existing theories within content marketing and implementing them on a real life example. The third layer consists of seven different strategies that can be used in order to conduct the research. These are; experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography and archival research. The strategy chosen for this thesis is a case study. Further details about the case study will be discussed later on in this section. The fourth layer of the research ‘onion’ consists of three different choices, mono method, multi-method and mixed method. For this thesis, a mixed method was chosen. A mixed method means using both quantitative and qualitative data collection (Saunders, et al, 2012). For the purpose of this thesis, interviews and observations were used as qualitative data collection and a survey for quantitative data collection.

The fifth layer looks at two different ways of time horizons, cross-sectional and longitudinal. Cross-sectional design can be used for both quantitative and qualitative data. It involves measuring behaviour or aspect of individuals or groups at a single point in time. The opposite is longitudinal design, which studies behaviours and aspects using samples over a longer period (Saunders, et al, 2012). For this thesis cross-sectional design is the most suitable time horizon, this because of the time constraint of this thesis. The sixth and final layer consists of data collection and data analysis. For the purpose of this thesis, the data collected consisted of interviews, observations and survey. Content analysis method was chosen to analyse the qualitative data.

3.2 Case study

“A case study is methodology that is used to explore a single phenomenon (the case) in a natural setting using a variety of methods to obtain in-depth knowledge” (Collis & Hussey, 2013). A case can be a group of workers, a particular business, event etc. For this thesis, a business is used as a case study, more specifically a shopping centre. For research purposes, a single case study or multiple case studies can be used. According to Yin (2009), a single case study is used to create a more generalized assumption rather than a specified analysis. When research questions are formulated with a “how” and “what” also when the researchers have no control over the events, a single case study can be used.

Yin (1994) has constructed a 2x2 matrix (see figure 3) that describes four different types of case studies, these are (1) single case design, holistic, (2) single case design, embedded, (3) multiple case design, holistic and (4) multiple case design, embedded. For the purpose of this thesis a single case embedded, which means that one single case is used with multiple units of analysis. Ghauri & Gronhaugh (2010) states that one case study often is enough, and that within a single case there can be a richness of detail. A case study can include both quantitative data collection and qualitative data collection (Yin, 2009). This thesis conducts a case study of a6 shopping centre located in Jönköping, Sweden.

	Single Case Study	Multiple Case Study
Holistic	Type 1	Type 2
Embedded	Type 3	Type 4

*Figure 3. Case study types
Source: Yin (1994)*

Since the start up in 1987 Alecta, a company in the pension business has been the owner of a6 shopping centre. The real estate a6 centre is developed, managed and administered by Newsec Asset Management. Today the shopping centre consists of around 78 retail stores and restaurants (A6 centre, 2016). Rental of retail premises is the main source of revenue and as for many shopping centres. A centre that attracts a large customer base provides a better negotiation position for the real estate managers. Although the stores account for much of their own marketing, the shopping centre and the shopping centre brand must still have a marketing presence in order to attract consumers to the centre.

For the purpose of this case study, interviews and observations are used as qualitative data collection and surveys are used as quantitative data collection. The advantage of primary data is that the data collected is for the sole purpose of this particular study. There are also disadvantages to primary data, which are that primary data is costly and time consuming (Ghauri & Gronhaugh, 2010).

3.3 Qualitative research

Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices, which involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. Studies of qualitative sort study things in their natural settings, trying to interpret, or make sense of phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In order to collect

qualitative data, interviews were conducted and observations of the online channels were made.

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews are defined as “A method for collecting primary data in which a sample of interviewees are asked questions to find out what they think, do or feel” (Collis & Hussey, 2013). There are different types of interviews with different types of questions, unstructured or semi-structured interviews and open or closed questions. The first type, unstructured interview are interviews without prepared questions, instead the questions evolve during the interview. The second type, semi-structured interview are interviews where some questions are prepared and some questions are developed during the interview. Closed questions are questions, which can be answered with a yes or a no, while open questions need a longer and more developed answer (Collis & Hussey, 2013). Ghauri & Gronhaugh (2010) states that there are three different ways to conduct an interview; interviews by email, interviews by phone, and personal interviews.

For the research of this thesis, personal interviews were conducted with the management of a6 centre. The interviews were conducted with the centre manager and the centre-marketing manager. The centre manager and the centre-marketing manager are the only two who holds marketing responsibility at A6, thus only two interviews were conducted. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning the questions asked were prepared in advance, with mostly open questions, which gave the interviewee the opportunity to freely answer the question. Since two different interviews were conducted with two people with different positions within the management, different questions were developed for each of the candidates. The interview with the centre manager focused more on the actual structure and development of the company, while the interview with the marketing manager consisted of questions regarding the marketing aspect of a6 centre. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to make it easier to summarize and analyse the interviews.

3.3.2 Observations

Observations is defined by Collin & Hussey (2013), as, “A method for collecting data used in the laboratory or in a natural setting to observe and record people’s actions and behaviour”. Fieldwork is observations of people that take place in a natural environment, in our case the observation will take place on a6 shopping centres online channels; their website, Facebook and Instagram. According to Ghauri & Gronhaugh (2010) observations is a relatively easy tool to use, although it may be hard to translate the information collected into scientifically information. Observations were done on the three online channels, Facebook and Instagram and a6 shopping centre’s website in order to gain a better understanding of how a6 works with content marketing on their online channels. Three different websites were used in order to see the statistics. Facebook's own analytics program was used for Facebook, Iconosquare was used for Instagram and Google analytics was used for the website.

3.4 Quantitative research

Quantitative research comprises the collection of numerical data and displays a view of the relationship between research and theory. Quantitative research must have an indicator in order to measure the variables and hence measure a concept (Bell & Bryman, 2011). The quantitative data collection in this thesis was conducted in form of a survey that was conducted at a6 shopping centre.

3.4.1 Survey

Collis & Hussey (2013) defines a survey as “A method designed to collect primary or secondary data from a sample, with a view to generalizing the results to a population”. According to Ghauri & Gronhaugh (2010), surveys are used to get opinions, attitudes and descriptions from the people taking the survey. The authors also warn about the influence that might affect the respondents, these could be sponsor, appeal, stimulus, the format of the questionnaire and covering letters. Surveys have different lengths, all though according to Ghauri & Gronhaugh (2010) “a common belief is that the shorter the questionnaire, the higher the change that it will be returned fully completed”. This indicates that the survey used for the purpose of this thesis should be relatively short.

A specific target audience was chosen in order to narrow down the survey. This particular audience was decided based on the results of the observations and what the management pointed out during the interviews. The observations conducted on Facebook, Instagram and a6 centre website showed that women 18-40 were the largest target groups that use the online channels. Also, the management of a6 mentioned that this particular target group was also the largest target group that visit the shopping centre and therefore of interest for them. The aim of the survey was to measure the perception that consumers has towards a6’s content marketing. The survey was conducted inside the shopping centre and received 70 responses. A lack of time and resources combined with consumer’s reluctance to interrupt their shopping to answer questions made it difficult to collect more. Also, collecting more could have made the analysis more difficult due to the survey having a couple of open questions.

The tool used to conduct the survey was a website called SurveyMonkey.com. The survey conducted for the purpose of this thesis consisted of 8 questions. The survey was divided into two different parts, the first part focused on the social media channels, Facebook and Instagram, while the second part focused on the website. Pictures of different posts on both Facebook and Instagram, the posts are in this case the content, were showed to the respondents in order to see what kind of posts were more attractive (see appendix 1). Four different categories were used in order to divide the different posts, informative, educational, inspiring and entertaining.

3.5 Data analysis

For the purpose of this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative data was used to collect primary data and therefore two different analysis methods were used in order to analyse

the data that was collected. The interviews and observations were conducted to see how a6 work with the content marketing process, while the survey was established to measure if a6 content marketing strategy is successful. The analysis section is structured as the simplified content marketing process steps provided by the CMI framework that was investigated in the second section, frame of references.

The qualitative data in this research was interviews and observations. Several different methods and techniques can be used to analyse the data that was collected. For the purpose of this thesis, content analysis was the analysis method that was chosen. Content analysis is a systematic approach to analysing the qualitative data that was collected through the interviews and observations. The analysis method involves different steps of analysis. The first step involved to read through the transcript thoroughly, this in order to have an overall understanding of the answers (Collis & Hussey, 2013). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) mention the importance of transcribing the interviews, this might be time-consuming but it is a critical element to do, so that no important data is missed. The interviews were quickly transcribed, from the recorded version into a written form, after the conduct of the interviews. After reading through the transcript the second step, coding process, was implemented. The coding process is finding themes, specific words, themes or patterns in the data collected (Collis & Hussey, 2013). Both similarities and differences in the both the interviews and observations were analysed. The themes and patterns that was found from the interviews and observations were compared to the suggested steps and recommendations provided by literature.

The quantitative data collected was analysed based on the answers of the survey. The survey website, surveymonkey.com, that was used also collected and summarized the results of the survey in form of graphics. The survey results could be divided into different sections, for instance the different age categories were divided and compared to each other. The open questions were not summarized automatically through Surveymonkey.com. Thus, the authors, of this thesis, summarized the questions. The open questions were observed in order to find patterns and similar answers.

4 Empirical Findings

The fourth section consists of the empirical findings from the interviews that were conducted, observations that were made on a6 online channels (Instagram, Facebook and a6 centre website) and the survey that was conducted at a6 shopping centre.

4.1 Interviews

Two interviews were conducted, the first with the centre manager and the second with the centre-marketing manager. The first respondent, the centre manager, was asked to describe his fields of responsibility and connection to the marketing process. The centre manager replied that he has been the centre manager at a6 centre for 13 years and holds the main responsibility for the management of the property a6 centre. He further added that he has been part of marketing processes such as setting the marketing budget and developing the marketing plan (Appendix 2). The second respondent, the centre-marketing manager, was asked to describe herself as a marketer. She replied that she has been the centre-marketing manager at a6 since the 1st of December 2015 and that she has past experience regarding content marketing from being a web editor and creating content for companies social media and websites (Appendix 3).

Having those two different approaches, this interview summary will firstly focus on the centre manager and the bigger picture of a6 shopping centre from a marketing perspective. This will be followed by the more specific information given by the centre-marketing manager regarding the content marketing strategy.

4.1.1 Centre manager

The centre manager was asked to elaborate on a6 marketing strategy and its development. He responded by giving a background to some major changes that have been happening lately. At the opening of a6 centre back in 1987, a business association was formed by the 50 stores that constituted the tenant mix at the time. Since then, it have been the business association's responsibility to market a6. Since January 2016, the business association has been phased out and replaced with a marketing council existing of the members that used to be the board of directors of the business association. The marketing responsibility now lies with Alecta, the property owner, and the new marketing council does not have any government authority but only advisory.

A6 have always had a centre-marketing manager with responsibility for marketing, the difference now is that the centre-marketing manager does not have to answer to the business association, which ultimately gives more control to Newsec who manages the property own by Alecta. The respondent further added that since the organizational structure has been changed, they do not want to make to major changes to the strategy itself. If any big changes will happen, they will do so in the future (Appendix 2).

The centre manager was asked about future changes and improvements and he responded that the new employed centre-marketing manager has good knowledge in the field of digital marketing and social media and that that is an aspect of their marketing that they would like to improve in the future. The respondent also explained that a6 wants to improve in many aspects of their marketing and that one way of doing that is to benchmark against other shopping centres managed by Newsec in order to see what they have been doing that works and what does not. Newsec manages many shopping centres and according to the respondent, the centre managers and the centre-marketing managers keep contact through chat forums and regular meetings where questions related to retail and marketing are discussed (Appendix 2).

The latter part of the interview with the centre manager focused on the expansion process and in what way a6 wants to market the shopping centre during that process.

The centre manager explained that during their last expansion process back in 2003, they increased their revenue and their amount of visitors due to the publicity that the expansion gained. During the upcoming expansion process, a6 wants to showcase the process on Facebook, Instagram and their website. The centre manager said that they want to create interest about the expansion by publishing cliffhanger like content and information through their online channels and media. He also put emphasis on the importance of informing the employees of the shopping centre since they work as word of mouth channels that helps to spread the word about the expansion process even more. Furthermore, the centre manager noted that it is of great importance to them to control where information to the public, regarding the expansion process, is coming from in order to avoid misunderstandings and bad publicity (Appendix 2).

4.1.2 Centre-marketing manager

After giving a short introduction to herself as a marketer, the respondent was asked to describe her own style when it comes to creating content and also elaborate on what she thinks make content successful. She replied with putting emphasis on the importance of making content relevant for the receiver of the content. She defined relevant content as content being interesting to the receiver in some way or even being able to solve an existing problem of the receiver. She further added that when creating and providing her own content she tries to implement a personal touch, which tries to make a6 feel more like a person that one can connect to rather than just a company. Also, she added that sometimes she asks people working in the stores to create content for a6. They are often very creative and entertaining on their own channels when it comes to provide content and she would like them to do that for a6 as well. Such content is very personal and shows the people that are working at a6. Moreover, the centre-marketing manager stated that it is also important to plan ahead and have a calendar where she can keep track of what kind of theme of content are being provided every week. For example, a week in the calendar could be devoted to providing content related to a specific event or holiday such as Easter or a week where a6 are arranging a fashion show. She also states that it is

important to know what kind of content should be provided in the future so that you do not have to make it up the same week as it has to be distributed (Appendix 3).

The centre-marketing manager was asked for how long a6 have been working actively and consciously with content marketing. She replied that before her getting hired, she does not think that a6 have had an active and conscious approach to content marketing. She is working on improving the content marketing for a6, and within a couple of weeks she thinks that one can really see that they are working with it in a more conscious way than before. As a follow up question, she was asked to explain the differences and changes that have been done since she was hired. She replied that they have become more active on their different channels and that they are now, in contrast to before, thinking more about the different audiences and what content they would perceive as valuable and relevant. Furthermore, she adds that they are trying to drive traffic to their shopping centre by connecting content provided on their online channels with events and activities at the shopping centre (Appendix 3).

In order to gain further understanding to a6 content marketing, the centre-marketing manager was asked to describe in what way content marketing is an important aspect of their marketing strategy and also how it differs from their competitors. The respondent started off by explaining that when providing content, they make their channels into an important source of information. Also, instead of just begging potential customers to “come to the shopping centre”, they want to create interest for the shopping centre by providing content that is relevant to the receiver of the content. An example given by the respondent is the content related to fashion. Fashion is something that the shopping centre can provide to those interested. Thus, it is important to create content that makes potential visitors of the shopping centre inspired and interested in those things that the shopping centre can offer. In the case of fashion, such things could be clothing and makeup stores. The respondent further explained that while a6 tries to focus on the wants and needs of consumers by trying to inspire them and make them interested, some of their competitors are very much focused on products and prices. The respondent stated that she thinks that it is up to the stores themselves to market products and prices whilst the shopping centre should focus more on the step of inspiration and creating wants and needs (Appendix 3)

When being asked about their audiences, the respondent answered that they have several audiences since they are a shopping centre. However according to the respondent there are not only many different audiences of visitors but other audiences that needs to be taken into consideration as well, such as tenants and media. She added that, as she sees it, they do not have a clear strategy on how to provide content to tenants or media. However, she explains that media could be important for them since providing interesting content can also result in media gaining interest and writing about the shopping centre in a positive way. As far as content marketing to potential future tenants goes, the respondent answers a later question about tenants by giving some

insights on potential future strategies, such as providing quarterly information and newsletters in order to showcase the shopping centres success (Appendix 3)

A6 content marketing is focused mainly on visitors of the shopping centre and potential future consumers. When being asked about it, the centre-marketing manager elaborated on how they choose what audiences to target when creating content. She explained that as for now, they focus a lot on what kind of content is easy for them to provide. Being a shopping centre with a lot of fashion related stores, fashion related content has been a big part of the content provided. Another reason for this is that they have previously provided content through their own magazine, a6an and the content provided in the magazine was very driven towards fashion. Some of the strategies and tactics from the printed magazine still live on with the online content marketing, thus a large part of the content provided is fashion related. The respondent further added that the audience that they focus mostly on now is a fashion-interested woman in the age of 18-40. They see a lot of that audience following their social media and being a big part of the amounts of visitors at the shopping centre. The respondent explains that in the future, she would like to see a6 having better understanding and knowledge about different types of audiences in order to be able to provide a wider range of content that is perceived as valuable and relevant from several audiences (Appendix 3).

The latter part of the interview was focused on the current content marketing strategy and in particular the channels, the promotion of such channels, the steps of creating content, the story being told through all content, measurement of content success and feedback. In short, the respondent explained that their content marketing channels are their own website, Facebook and Instagram and that they try to promote those channels whenever they can by introducing a shout out about the channels whenever they do any other marketing such as TV commercials and radio commercials. The respondent also said that in the future, they would like to showcase their social media content on display screens within the shopping centre in order to promote the channels and the content even more (Appendix 3)

When being asked if they have a set storyline that they follow every time they create content, the respondent replied that they have been working with a concept called “a6 likes everyone”. The concept should be present in every aspect of their marketing. “a6 likes ” is always the same but the thing that they like differs depending on event, activity or situation. Examples given by the respondent are #a6likesbooks during the book sale, #a6liketheenvironment during an environmental campaign, and a6 likes barncancerfonden during a fundraiser campaign during Easter for kids with cancer. Another example given by the respondent is #a6likesfashion during a fashion show event. During such an event, a hash tag called #a6likesfashion is created so that all the stores and participants of the fashion show can contribute to the content on the hash tag (Appendix 3)

The centre-marketing manager was further asked about what steps they take when actually create content. Replying to that question, the respondent chose to give an example with content related to a fashion show event. The example and the steps were given as follows.

1. Determine the purpose. In this case the purpose is to promote the activity.
2. Determine the audience for the activity.
3. Decide if we like to format the content with text, pictures or videos.
4. Decide who should produce the content and how to distribute it.
5. Decide with what kind of interval the content should be provided before the activity and how many days before the activity the content promotion should start.
6. Decide if we would like any offline channels to promote the activity as well.
7. Decide who should answer questions about the activity.
8. Decide what kind of content should be provided during and after the activity.
9. Measure the success and see if the content was able to fulfil its objectives and purpose (Drive people to the activity) and also measure the success of the activity itself and see if it gave any results on amount of visitors and revenue etc. (Appendix 3)

The centre-marketing manager was later asked to give examples of different types of content that they have created within the categories entertaining, educational, informative and inspiring. The example of entertaining content given by the respondent was a clip where an employee at a jeans store made a backflip standing still, the clip became very popular. The respondent added that they lack such content and that it is something that they are working on to improve. When asked about the educational content, the respondent chose to give the example of the store manager at a bookstore providing book tips. The respondent admitted that it is not the perfect educational content but that she finds it educational. Giving an example of informative content, the respondent stated that those who work at the shopping centre could perceive such content as obvious. However it is important to provide visitors with informative content such as where to park if you have a dog, where you can find wheelchairs, defibrillators, nursing rooms and also how to get to the shopping centre with bus connections. At last, the respondent gave examples of the content that she believes they have the most of, Inspiring content. The examples given were fashion inspiration, interior design tips and how to set your table for different holidays. When providing those examples, she argued that such content could also be educational, thus being both inspiring and educational content (Appendix 3).

In the end of the interview, the centre-marketing manager was asked to elaborate on the final step of the content creation process, feedback and measurement. She was asked how they receive feedback and how they measure the success of their content. She replied that most of their feedback is based on statistics such as likes, shares and comments. In order to track conversations on other channels than their own, they use a

tool called Meltwater. By using Meltwater, the centre-marketing manager can see what consumers are saying about a6 and from that feedback, potentially make changes and adjustment. She adds that, now, they do not have the resources to participate and respond to conversations on other channels than their own. The centre-marketing manager further explained that on their own channels, they could measure if the amount of followers and visitors changes. The respondent added that she would like to receive feedback in a better way in order to measure the content marketing success. She said that in the future she would like to complete more surveys and potentially focus groups as well (Appendix 3).

4.2 Observations

Observations were conducted on three different online channels, more precisely a6 centre's account on Instagram, Facebook and on their website. Observations were made in order to gain a better understanding of how a6 works with content marketing on their online channels.

4.2.1 Instagram

A6 centres Instagram was created in 2015, since then, the Instagram account has been increasingly more active and at the moment of writing there are several posts per week. When looking at the followers that follow a6 centre Instagram one can see that the majority of followers are women. Some companies follow the Instagram account as well. Iconosquare is a website where one can find Instagram statistics for a specific Instagram account, this website was used to find statistics for a6 centre's Instagram. On the website, iconosquare, there are no statistics on the demographics of the followers, which makes it difficult to analyse.

When observing the posts on Instagram, one can see that there are different types of posts. The different posts serve different purposes. They can be categorised by the previously mentioned characteristics inspiring, entertaining, educational, or informative. An observation made was that the posts receiving the most comments were posts that contained some kind of competition. The number of likes per picture ranged from 20 to 50 likes. There are however some exceptions, and according to iconosquare the most liked picture on a6 centre's Instagram is a picture and text about a new restaurant at a6 centre, this particular picture had 86 likes and 8 comments. This particular post can be seen as informative content. The most commented picture of a6 centre's Instagram is a contest to win a cake, this received 62 likes and 32 comments, this would be seen as entertaining content. Another observation made on a6 centre's Instagram is that they occasionally encouraged customers to generate content. This is called user-generated content. For example, during Easter, a6 encouraged visitors to take a selfie with the Easter bunny, use a specific hash tag, and upload the picture to social media.

When observing a6 centre Instagram one can conclude that there are weekly themes, for example during Easter week, a6 posted content related to Easter, there is also a week when a6 centre posted content regarding denim. This would be seen as inspiring

content. Also from what can be observed, a6 centre regularly have competitions of various kinds, for instance in the beginning of February, a6 had several competitions where different types of products, for example nail polish, underwear, baby clothes, candy or knife set, were given to the selected winner. Usually the competitions involve commenting on the post and tagging a friend and give a motivation. Instagram usually has more or less the same content as a6 Facebook page, all though there are some differences. From what can be observed on a6 centre Instagram is that inspiration is the most common category when it comes to posts and the least common category is informative. Another observation made is that a6 uses specific hash tags when posting on Instagram, one of these are the hash tag “a6 likes”. These hash tags are used together with a special theme, for instance “a6 likes books” is for the book theme week that a6 has.

4.2.2 Facebook

A6 shopping centre has had an active Facebook account since the end of 2010. According to the statistics of a6 shopping centre’s Facebook page the majority of people visiting the Facebook page are women, 67 per cent are women and 33 per cent are men. Also, as seen on the Facebook page 18.3 per cent are women in the age range 18-24 while 17.7 per cent are women between 25-34. If looking at the men the most common age range is 18-24, more precisely 10.7 per cent. When observing the Facebook page one can clearly see that the reach is much bigger than the interaction by the visitors. The interaction was highest among women 24-34. Statistics on Facebook divide up posts in two different types, a link or a photo, the statistics show that the posts that has a link attached gives a larger reach and more interaction from the visitors than the photo posts. The post that had the most interaction from the visitors was a post about the renovation that will be done at the shopping centre, this post had the most clicks, comments and shares, in total it was an 11 percentage interaction.

When observing a6 centre Facebook page as a visitor one can notice that there are several posts everyday with different types of content, more or less there is one posts per day. A6 Facebook page almost has the same setup as Instagram, with a theme week, for instance a book week with content regarding the book sale. Also, most holidays or special occasions are acknowledged, for instance, Easter, Valentine’s Day etc. When visitors are looking for more information, a6 centre refers to their website, and there is a link for the website on the Facebook page. When observing the Facebook page on can see that most of the posts are in the category inspiring or entertaining while informative content did not appear as much.

4.2.3 Website

Google analytics is a Google function that is used to track statistics on a specific website and this was used in order to observe the statistics on a6 shopping centre’s website. The statistics shown on Google analytics show that the majority visitors are between 25-34, with 24 per cent, close after comes the age range 18-24 with 23.5 per cent. As on both Facebook and Instagram most visitors are women (68 per cent), men

are the minority (32 per cent). A majority of people visiting the website did so from a location in Sweden, usually with a Swedish version (64 per cent) of the website. Other countries that were on the list of locations, all though a way smaller percentage that Sweden were Denmark, Germany, Norway and Russia. The majority of people visiting the website did so from a mobile device (57 per cent), in which iPhone (52 per cent) was the most popular mobile device to use. When it comes to which visitors that are visiting the statistics show that most visitors are new visitors (68 per cent), so the minority of people are revisiting the website (32 per cent).

When observing the website one can see that the website is more informative. The information that can be found on the website is information about stores, opening hours, parking, restaurants and contact information for the real estate management. The website can be read in three different languages, Swedish, English and German, this makes it easier for international visitors. For entertaining purposes, upcoming events are showcased at the website in order for visitor to see what is going on at the shopping centre. There is also an inspirational section of the website which contains some inspiring posts, these posts are from a6 magazine "A6:an". "A6:an" can be read through the website, all though a free login is necessary. From what can be observed on a6 centre's website is that information is the most common content while content that educates is the least common content on the website, this makes the content of the website different that the account of Instagram and Facebook.

4.3 Survey

This section will first provide the total results of the survey with no consideration to age category. Additionally, the survey results will be categorized into the age categories 18-24, 25-32 and 33-40. When categorized, the results will show only the answers provided by the different age groups separated from the total. The reason for doing so is to see differences between the different age groups.

4.3.1 Total

The survey gained a total number of 70 respondents. A 65.72 per cent majority of the respondents was between 18 and 24 years old. The second largest age category at 20 per cent was respondents between 25 and 32. Finally, 14.29 per cent of the respondents was between 32 and 40 years old.

The respondents were asked if they follow a6 on social medias such as Instagram and Facebook. A majority of 75.71 per cent responded that they do not. Of the remaining respondents, 7.14 per cent follow a6 on both Instagram and Facebook, 11.43 per cent just follows on Facebook and finally 5.71 per cent only follows a6 on Instagram. As a follow up question, the respondents were asked what makes them want to follow companies on social media. This open-ended question generated 50 answers, however 20 of the respondents choose not to answer the question. Out of the 50 answers, some key words trended more than others. Those were "news", "offers", "events" and "inspiration". Following companies on social medias in order to receive news about the

company and its events and offers was the most common answer, moreover a trend amongst respondents was also that inspiration is an important aspect of why they follow companies on social medias.

In order to measure the response of different content, the respondents were asked to rank four different pictures of content uploaded to social medias from 1 to 4, 1 being most interesting and 4 being least interesting. Each of the four pictures either represented inspiring, informative, educational or entertaining content. The pictures were screenshots of either video or picture post actually posted by a6 on their social media channels Facebook and Instagram. The same question was asked twice but with different pictures.

On the first question, a picture providing information about opening hours was ranked the most interesting the most times. It also had the best overall score. The second most interesting content post, a picture post providing inspiring tips for setting tables, was ranked most interesting second most times and also had the second best overall score. At third place in both overall score and times being ranked the most interesting, was an entertaining post providing a funny quote about shopping. The picture being ranked most interesting the least number of times and getting the lowest overall score was a screenshot of an educational video providing tips for lipstick makeup.

On the second question, a screenshot picture of a video providing fashion inspiration was ranked most interesting the most number of times. Furthermore, this picture was ranked least interesting by a, in comparison; very low 4.84 per cent of the respondents. The picture being ranked most interesting the second most times was a picture of a post that provided information about bus connections to a6. However, whilst this post were ranked most interesting second most times it was also ranked the least interesting the most times. That shows that the respondents either rank it as most interesting or not interesting at all. Despite being ranked most interesting second most times, the picture of the bus post was actually ranked least interesting so many times that it received the worst overall score out of the four pictures. Of the remaining two pictures, a picture of an entertaining competition post was ranked most interesting more times than a picture of an educational post providing fun facts. The fun facts post was also ranked least interesting more times than the competition post, resulting in it getting the second worst overall score of the four pictures whilst the competition post got the second best overall score. The entertaining posts with the competition received mixed rankings. The competition post received a good overall score but did not have a high percentage of the respondents ranking it as the most interesting post.

As a follow up on the question ranking pictures of posts, the respondents were asked if there was something that they felt were missing from the mix of different content. 85.29 per cent answered that they did not miss any content; the remaining 14.71 per cent said that they did. If they did, the respondents were asked to comment on what they felt was

missing. Two things were mentioned more than once in the comment section. First, the respondents were asking for more information about food and second, they asked for more offers and sales information about products.

The two last questions in the survey were focused on the website. The respondents were asked whether they visit a6 website or not and later comment on why they do or do not. 57.14 per cent replied that they do visit the a6 website. The comments showed that the main reason for those respondents to visit the website was to check opening hours. Some respondents also responded that they visit the website to check the tenant mix and if there has been any changes. 42.86 per cent responded that they do not visit the website. Looking at the comments, one reason was that the respondents does not visit a6 often enough that they feel like the website interests them. Some respondents also said that they do not feel the need to visit the website and that the website do not provide anything interesting other than opening hours.

4.3.2 Differences between age groups

When looking at the different age groups, one can see both differences and similarities. A difference is that the age group 18-24 follows a6 on Facebook to a higher extent than the two other age groups. When being asked to rank pictures of posts from 1-4 there were some differences. On the first rank question, the age group 18-24 liked the opening hours post best. This was not the case for the age group 25-32, who was more interested in the post providing inspiration for setting a table. The age group 33-40 liked the two posts almost equally much. All age groups least liked the make up video. The age group 25-32 ranked the entertaining post with the shipping quote as more interesting than the other age groups did.

On the second question, all the age groups ranked the fashion trend video as the most interesting one, however the two younger age groups differed to the older one when it came to the least interesting ranked post. Both the two younger age groups found the post with the bus connection information to be least interesting, whilst the older age group ranked the educational post with fun facts as the least interesting.

When being asked if they missed some content after looking at the pictures, the age groups responded differently. 20 per cent of the youngest age group, 18-24, responded that they did miss something. This percentage was lower in the age group 25-32, where only 7.14 per cent responded that they missed something. In the oldest age group, 33-40, no one responded that they missed something. When being asked if they visit the website, the youngest age group was the group with the highest percentage of visitors with 60.87 per cent of the respondents visiting the website. The other two age groups showed the same result at 50 per cent of the respondents visiting the website.

5 Analysis

The fifth section analyses the literature and the empirical findings. The analysis is structured as the seven steps of the CMI framework and it combines and compares the theory with the interviews, observations and the survey.

The CMI framework states planning, audience, story, channels, process, conversations and measurement as important steps of the content marketing process. Those steps are similar to the ones presented by Odden (2012) and Jefferson & Tanton (2015) where the main essence of the steps is the same, however the steps are named differently. Additional authors also elaborate on issues linked to those steps in a similar order. Based on the similarity between the simplified CMI framework and other literature; a well functioning content marketing process should have a good planning phase, structured audience segments, engaging storytelling, suitable channels, a well thought out process, awareness and engagement in conversations and a well suited way of measuring the success of the content marketing. All these steps seem to be important aspects of the content marketing process and should be considered when creating one's content marketing strategy.

5.1 Plan

As stated in the framework developed by Pulizzi & Rose (2013) the plan is an important part in order to be successful in content marketing. Garner (2012) highlights the importance of having an editorial plan in order to have a set schedule of what, how and when content should be distributed. Another reason for having an editorial plan is to avoid having to create content on the fly. Being asked about what makes content marketing successful, the centre-marketing manager responded that the planning phase is important and that she uses an editorial plan. Furthermore, she mentioned that the reason for her to have such a plan is to avoid the risk of hasty creation of content that has not been planned. She adds that she has a couple of weeks planned and those weeks often have a special theme that is based on events, holidays and activities. During the observations one could see that the themes mentioned by the centre-marketing manager was apparent and clear. Those regular weekly themes based on the editorial plan mentioned by the centre-marketing manager are in line with the suggestions made by Garner (2012) on how to plan content marketing successfully.

Comparing literature to the case study of a6, it seems apparent that plan is a very important step in the content marketing process. Both literature and the case study imply that before implementing something, it is important to plan. Thus, it seems appropriate that plan is the first step to consider in the content marketing process.

5.2 Audience

The framework from Pulizzi and Rose (2013) states the importance of getting to know one's audience and mentioned personas as one way of doing that. Personas are further explained by Tu, Zhang and Dong (n.d), as a way to combine a target group's characteristics into one fictitious persona that represents that group. The centre-marketing manager was asked to elaborate on how they work with audiences. She responded that since they are a shopping centre it is difficult to find specific personas or audience types since they houses several stores and concepts under the same roof.

The centre-marketing manager explained that as for now, their focus is towards an audience of fashion-interested women between the ages of 18-40. The reason for targeting that audience is that they have a lot of visitors in that audience group both on online channels and in the shopping centre. The observations made on the online channels proved that a6 is correct to assume that the largest audience online is women 18-40 years old. The centre-marketing manager mentioned that they have been focusing on what kind of content is easy to create and found that since they have a lot of stores with focus on fashion and inspiration for women, that audience is convenient for them to target with content. Thus, a6 has provided mostly inspiring content. According to the centre-marketing manager, a6 want to have more specific audience types similar to personas in the future, however they are not there yet. This implies that they are aware of the importance of audiences but has not yet started to work with them in the way literature argues that one should.

Inspiring and fashionable content is easiest for A6 to provide since they house a lot of stores and concepts within that segment. The survey showed that inspiring content was perceived as most interesting in the consumer segment investigate. This implies that what content A6 is most prone to provide coincides with what the female 18-40 consumer segment finds most valuable. In this case, focusing their content on what they know best, A6 have been able to actually meet the wants of the consumer segment. This indicates that content should be linked to the actual offering of the business since that is why consumers seek the business out.

5.3 Story

The framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013) emphasizes the importance of having a good story when creating and providing content. The story should echo through all content shared and be a reflection of the company's own beliefs that establish a strong emotional bond with the audience. During the interviews, the centre-marketing manager was asked about their content marketing story. She responded that they have been working with a storyline that is based upon the line "a6 likes". A6 likes is being used as a hash tag where the theme that a6 likes differs depending on the occasion. The observations showed some examples such as #a6likesthenvironment, #a6likesyou, and #a6likesbooks.

Brito (2013) states that selling complex services or products will make it more difficult to simplify the story. A6 have tried to work around this problem by having one main storyline that divides into smaller segment so that everyone can get behind and share them. Since a6 is a shopping centre with plenty of stores and concepts, they also have a wide range of customers to reach with their story. By dividing the storyline into smaller segments, they can support causes that needs support and highlight events and activities that are interesting for the consumer. They can do that, whilst keeping to the main storyline of a6 being an open and welcoming place for everyone. A potential threat of having such divided storyline is that every story segment will fall under different hash tags and thus be categorized separately. Some of the story segments may be maintained frequently whilst some of them are not.

Jefferson & Tanton (2015) argues that a good story should be customer centric rather than company centric and should not be a sales pitch. Comparing a6's story to what the two authors argues, one could see that the story is not a sales pitch. However, whilst being customer centric to some extent, the story of a6 still holds a company centric image due to the use of the company's own name in the story campaign. The story is built upon statements of what a6 likes rather than focusing on the consumers. The consumer may like the same things and feel connected to the story, however that is not a certainty.

5.4 Channels

The channel plan, mentioned in the framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013), was also mentioned as one of the content creation steps provided by the centre-marketing manager. Furthermore, the framework mentions that there are both traditionally channels such as newspapers and online channels that are digitally based. During the interviews with both the centre manager and the centre-marketing manager, a6's own magazine A6:an was mentioned as one of their strongest traditionally channels that they have been using for a long period of time. The centre manager explained that they want to improve their marketing presence on online channels and one step of doing that was to hire the current centre-marketing manager who has a lot of previously experience in the field of such online channels. Their magazine can now be found in a digital copy. That is an example of how a traditional channels can expand into a digital form. The observations showed that a6 online channels have been more active since the current centre-marketing manager was hired. During the interview with centre-marketing manager, she mentioned that in previous years, a6 has not been working consciously and actively with content marketing on online channels as they are now.

As Brito (2013) states, online channels should not have the same content since every community is different. Observing the content on a6 online channels Facebook and Instagram, one can see that content is rather similar. A reason for this could be that as previously mentioned, their work with audiences is not yet fully developed. Without great knowledge about the audience, it is difficult to adapt and customize the content.

Another channel of a6 online channels is their website. According to Jefferson & Tanton (2013), the website should engage customers and spread the word about the company. The survey asked respondents whether they visit the website or not and for what reason that is. It was clear that the main reason for visiting the website was to check the opening hours for the shopping centre. The respondents commented that they do not feel like the website has that much more to offer.

5.5 Process

The process step of the framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013) focuses on how to actually execute the content marketing plan and who should be responsible for what. In this step, the content marketing team and each team member's responsibilities should be determined. Brito (2013) argues that companies should have a community manager that is responsible for the channels and conversations on those channels in order to spot issues. Being asked about the organizational structure of their marketing, the centre manager responded that their centre-marketing manager has the total responsibility of the marketing processes with the support of a board that provides assistance and guidance. A6 does not have a content marketing team that the framework recommends, which is a question of resources. That being said, the centre-marketing manager holds all the responsibility that would otherwise be divided amongst the team members.

The process step deals with who does what. Observations of a6 content on social media showed that the content was sourced from all three sources of content (external, internal and curation) stated by Kissane & Halvorson (2011). The content provided by a6 is sourced internally in the form of pictures taken by the centre-marketing manager, externally in the form of stores creating and providing content to a6, and curation in the form of pictures sourced from already published materials. During the interview with the centre-marketing manager, she mentioned that she likes to have the stores provide content because the employees are used to create good content for the channels of the stores they are working in. Also, when the centre-marketing manager was asked to describe their own process of creating content, she mentioned that determine from where the content should be sources is an important step in the process. Lieb (2011) states that encouraging positive user generated content is an important source of content that should not be forgotten. The observations showed that a6 tries to encourage user-generated content by asking visitors to upload pictures during events and activities at the shopping centre.

Another part of the process step is to determine time slots for posting content. During the interviews, the centre-marketing manager mentioned that depending on the content, they have different tactics. If content is related to an event at the shopping centre, content related to that event will be distributed in time for the message to spread. Jefferson & Tanton (2015) provides guidelines for how to create valuable content and not just content. When being asked about valuable content, the centre-marketing

manager responded that her goal is that all content should be perceived as valuable for the consumer.

The educational, inspiring, informative and entertaining categories of content mentioned by Jefferson & Tanton (2015) and Lieb (2011) was apparent during the observations of a6 content. The amount of content within each category differed. The higher amount of inspiring content could be traced back to the statement from the centre-marketing manager that fashionable inspiring content is the easiest for them to provide to the consumer.

5.6 Conversations

In the framework, Pulizzi and Rose (2013) argue the importance of both listening and talking to consumers. Brito (2013) and Odden (2012) also states that engaging in consumer conversations is of great importance. Comparing what literature say about conversation to how a6 works with conversations, one can see both similarities and differences. According to the centre-marketing manager, a6 constantly checks comments on their own channels. Moreover, they use Meltwater, a company that provides a tool for tracking conversations on other external channels. The centre-marketing manager further explained that they lack resources to be active and respond to conversations on external channels. This shows that a6 is aware of and listens to conversations about them, however they somewhat lack engagement and presence in those conversations.

Literature suggests that having a larger marketing workforce, for example a community manager could improve the presence in conversations. As mentioned by the centre-marketing manager, due to a lack of resources, this is not possible for them. One can assume that many businesses would like to follow literature suggestions in this matter. However, in a world of scarce resources, one has to prioritise. The case study of a6 implies that being active and engaging on external channels may be too costly and thus, focus is put on one's own channels first.

5.7 Measurement

Pulizzi & Rose (2013) states that the main reason for measuring the different activities in the content marketing process is to understand what is and what is not working. Moreover, it is important to figure out how one could improve in the areas being measured. During the interviews, the centre-manager explained that they often benchmark towards other shopping centres within the Newsec group in order to see what is working and what is not. Having better insight in the content marketing process, the centre-marketing manager was asked how they measure the content marketing activities. She responded that they tend to use a lot of statistics in order to see how many likes, comments and shares the posts of content gets. As mentioned by Garner (2012), one should view people as people rather than data. In order to measure the

consumer perception of the content in more depth than just looking at statistics, the survey was carried out.

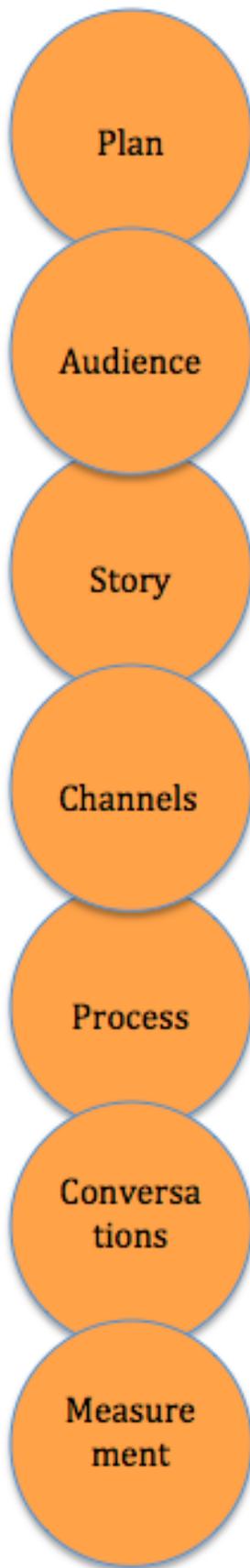
When being asked about what makes them want to follow companies on social media the respondent replied that it is because they want to receive news, offers, events and inspiration. Providing offers is sales oriented rather than a part of content marketing. It could be a part of a social media marketing strategy, however it is not within the boundaries of what is defined as content marketing. One of the purposes of content marketing is to not disturb the consumers with pushing sales offers but rather pull the consumer in with valuable content. That makes consumers asking for offers somewhat confusing from a content marketing perspective. When asking about offers, one can assume that the consumers are asking for offers specifically targeted towards them. One can imagine that, an offer that is targeted towards one consumer may be irrelevant for another and thus somewhat annoying. Hence, a shopping centre that consists of several store concepts will probably provide plenty of offers that the majority of the consumers finds irrelevant and annoying. The fact that the respondents are looking for news, events and inspiration should be positive for a6 since that is what makes up the majority of their content.

Inspiring content seems to be interesting to consumers. The inspiring content posts about table setting and fashion both got high scores in the two the ranking questions. Furthermore, inspiration was mentioned in the question about what the respondents wants to receive from companies social media channels. A6 is mostly distributing inspiring content and that was something that the consumer segment investigated in the survey found valuable and relevant.

The respondents did not mention information as something that they want to receive from companies on social media, however when ranking content posts, the informative post about opening hours was ranked as most interesting on one of the questions. Furthermore, when being asked about their reasons to visit a6 website, opening hours was mentioned frequently. One can draw the assumption that consumers does not specifically want to receive such information in their social media feed, nonetheless, they find the information useful and want it to be easy accessible when needed. The other informative content post that the respondents were asked to rank was related to bus connections. The respondents did rank the bus connection post as most interesting second most time in the ranking question, however it also received least interesting rank scores to a much higher extent than the other posts. That could be explained by not focusing on the informative character of the post but rather the actual message of bus connections. One can assume that for people taking the bus to a6, such information is interesting. However, people that does not, probably perceives the information as irrelevant.

The funny quote post received mixed rankings. However, when comparing the age groups, the 18-24 age group ranked the post as more interesting than the two older age groups did. A potential reason could be that the younger age group is more familiar and fond of popular culture and thus finds it more interesting than an older age group that apparently finds it less interesting.

Overall, the educational posts of lipstick makeup tips and fun facts about coffee received the lowest ranking scores. The two posts were ranked most interesting the least times. A potential reason for the low scores could be that the respondents did not like the specific themes of the educational posts. If you do not find lipstick and coffee relevant, it is difficult to rank an educational post about that as interesting. Disregarding the importance of the specific themes of the educational posts, one could view the negative rankings as a proof that educational content is the content category that the consumers want to receive the least amount of.



5.8 Summary of analysis

Plan: A6 does not appear to be missing any vital parts of the planning step. They use an editorial plan similar to the one introduced by Garner (2012). Their editorial plan is based on themes, events and activities.

Audience: A6 has not yet divided their audience into personas as is suggested by the framework. Audience knowledge is emphasized as an important step in the content marketing process and in this area, a6 still has some work to do.

Story: The story that a6 is welcoming and opened to everyone is a good reflection of the company's own beliefs, however taking form as a6likes makes A6's story more company centric than recommended by Jefferson & Tanton (2015).

Channels: A6 has been more active on online channels since the current centre-marketing manager was hired. One of their traditional channels, their magazine, has been expanded into digital form. A6 tries to find new channels to improve their presence online, however the content on their social media channels is more similar than recommended by Brito (2013).

Process: A6 does not have a content marketing team. Their centre-marketing manager holds the main responsibility. Nonetheless, the centre-marketing manager still works with managing time slots and characteristics for valuable content. A6 works with all of the three sources of content as well as user generated content mentioned by Lieb (2011).

Conversations: A6 is aware of and listens to conversations about them, however they somewhat lack engagement and presence in those conversations. This is due to lack of resources to be active and respond to conversations on external channels.

Measurement: A6 uses a lot of statistics to measure their content marketing success. They lack knowledge about the perception and attitudes consumers have towards a6's content. The survey was able to establish some consumer insights and show, for example, the consumer's positive perception towards inspiring content.

*Figure 4. Rearranged model structure of the CMI framework by Pulizzi & Rose (2013)
Source: Pulizzi & Rose (2013)*

6 Conclusion

The sixth section includes a conclusion. In relation to the purpose and research questions, conclusions were made based on findings from existing theories and the primary data that was collected.

Research question 1: *How is the content marketing process of a shopping centre implemented in relation to what literature suggests and recommends?*

Literature provides a desirable content marketing process that may only be attainable for some businesses with a rigorous marketing budget. The case study showed that a shopping centre may have a similar content marketing process as suggested by literature but due to scarce resources, every step may not be implemented in the same way. Concluding the findings of the case study, working with audiences in the way literature suggests may be too time consuming and costly for shopping centres due to the wide audience. Rather than creating content for a specific audience segment, they may focus more on what content is easy to create. Literature mentions content marketing teams and employees hired specifically to deal with certain process aspects of content marketing. Having researched the case study, we can conclude that even though such organizational structure is desirable, scarce resources may limit this possibility. However, this thesis concludes that the tenants may be a potential helpful source to create content. Furthermore, this thesis concludes that another step of the content marketing process that is limited due to scarce resources, is conversations. Dealing with conversations in the way literature suggests, takes up a lot of time and resources and it also demands a good knowledge in the field of consumer conversations. To sum up, shopping centres can follow the overall content marketing process structure suggested by literature. However, due to scarce resources, they might not be able to follow every suggestion and recommendation made.

Research 2: *How does a chosen shopping centre segment perceive content being distributed to them?*

The findings showed that the chosen 18-40 year old female consumer segment found inspiring content to be most interesting to them. Informative content was perceived as valuable as well, however, this thesis concludes that such content should not be excessively distributed on social media but rather easy accessible on the business website. This thesis further concludes that out of the categories of content the chosen segment had to choose from, they perceived educational as the least interesting.

7 Discussion

The seventh section is the discussion. This section elaborates on potential improvements to the thesis and to its creation process. Also future research suggestions are given.

After finalizing this thesis, some aspects could have been conducted differently. The comparison of a real example towards literature is one way of investigating what the content marketing process actually looks like and what objectives literature may set that is out of reach for companies. By studying the shopping centre a6 in depth, this thesis was able to gain a better understanding of what a company may find challenging when working with content marketing. Literature will provide suggestions and recommendations on how to do something in the best way possible, however companies may not be able to follow such recommendations due to different reasons. A study of more than one company could further investigate how literature on content marketing differs from reality, why it differs and what effects that may have.

It is difficult to measure the success of literary recommendations about content marketing without testing them in a real scenario. Further studies should try to find more companies that work with content marketing in different ways and try to compare and measure them towards each other. Such studies should look for less costly and time-consuming ways of implementing the content marketing process for businesses with a lower marketing budget.

After evaluating the survey, a few things could have been done differently. First, in regard to the ranking questions, there is a risk that some of the respondents ranked the content based on the actual post rather than what it represented. For example, the form that the educational content took rather than just ranking how interesting they find educational content may have affected respondents with no interest in lipstick makeup and coffee. Doing the survey as we did, with two ranking questions, this risk was somewhat minimized. However, one could measure the different content categories towards each other without the potential interference of specific preferences in regard to the form that category takes. In such a case, the categories of content could have been exemplified by not one but several alternatives. Nevertheless, doing the survey the way we did allowed us to measure actual content distributed by a6. Another aspect that could have made the survey better is getting a greater diversity of age groups. There were many more respondents in the age range 18-24 than the two other age groups. A better age distribution of the respondents could have enabled a more extensive and detailed comparison between the different age groups in the chosen segment.

When it comes to measuring perception of consumers and what kind of content they want to receive, further studies should find a method that is able to gain a deeper understanding in the area. Consumers may not know what they want until they actually get it. Thus, studying them in an environment where they can receive content and give instant feedback could potentially generate additional knowledge about what consumers actually perceive as valuable content. Moreover, researchers could try to gain a better understanding on how such content could be used to reach company's objectives, whatever they may be.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Question 1: How old are you?

- 18-24 years
- 25-32 years
- 33-40 years

Question 2: Do you follow a6 on social media?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Both
- No

Question 3: What is the main reason for you to follow companies' social media pages?

Question 4: Rank the following posts according to what you would like to take part of on social media. (1 - most interesting and 4 - less interesting)



Question 5: Rank the following posts according to what you would like to take part of on social media. (1 - most interesting and 4 - less interesting)



Question 6: When you have looked at the posts, is there anything that you are missing?

Question 7: Do you use to visit a6 website?

- Yes
- No

Question 8: For what reason do/ don't you visit a6 website?

Appendix 2

Interview 1

Position: Centre manager

About you as a manager

For how long have you been the manager of a6 centre?

For 13 years.

Has it been the same employer all of the years?

No, my employer for the first 8 years at a6 was a English capital investment company called Aberdeen Property Investors. Over the last years, it has been Newsec Asset Management, a Swedish company.

What are your main work tasks?

I have economic and technical total responsibility for a6 Centre. My daily tasks are to establish stores, negotiate contracts, running and managing projects and manage the commercial development of the centre. Also, I have a responsibility for the joint property unit (Outer spaces such as parking lots) that is own by Alecta, IKEA and Corallen. Alecta is the employer of Newsec and the owner of a6 Centre. My position in the joint property unit is chairman and chief investment officer.

How involved in marketing are you as a Centre manager?

Back in 1987, the original 50 stores at a6 formed a business association. The association has been active until the year-end of 2015 but it is now being phased out. In the past, I have been negotiating the marketing contributions for every store and that contribution has been included

in the leases. It has been the association's responsibility to market a6 with the economic contribution of the tenants. However, since January 2016 the responsibility now lies with the property owner. The tenants are now paying the property owner for marketing instead of the business association. Both now and during the time of the business association's existence we have always had a Centre marketing manager with operative responsibility with the additional tasks of providing suggestions for further marketing strategies and marketing budget. Our Centre marketing manager is working the same way now, as when the business association was active, the only difference is that now the marketing responsibility lies with the property owner.

I have an overall responsibility of economics and budgeting regarding the property that we manage and marketing is a part of that. I have been a part of developing the marketing plan and developing the marketing budget. However, our centre-marketing manager is the one who is mainly responsible for how our marketing budget should be distributed.

About you as a company

Has the marketing strategy changed/developed over the last years?

In the past when the business association was still active, their board of directors held where the Centre-marketing manager was present. The Centre-marketing manager was never a part of the board of directors per se but answered to the board and had collaboration with them. When we decided to phase out the business association we also decided to keep the board but as a market council. They used to be a governing authority but now they are only working advisory together with the centre-marketing manager. That means that we now have more control over the marketing strategies, the marketing budget and what kind of marketing project that should be carried out.

If we look beyond the organizational changes, Have their been any changes to the marketing strategy?

With these changes going on, the strategy itself has not really changed that much. The purpose of that is to keep stability and not change everything at the same time. Since the board of directors from the business association is now forming the market council, we have the same competency and knowledge about our strategy as before. We have agreed to not make any big changes to our marketing strategy initially. This is because we don't want to make a lot of changes as the same time. Also, the current centre-marketing manager has just been employed and with all these new changes going on with our organization around our marketing, we did not want to change anything radical in the marketing strategy as well. As I said, we are looking for some stability during all these changes and will be developing our marketing strategy further on.

You say that you will not make any changes now, but in the future what kind of changes do you want to see?

Well, first of all, the new employed centre-marketing manager has good knowledge about digital and social media. That is an aspect of our marketing that we would like to improve.

Also, we are in a process of rebuilding and expanding the shopping centre. That is an important task for our marketing to deal with.

We want to make a lot of our marketing better. We want to be better in several fields such as events and activities with a marketing purpose. Also we need to strengthen our profile and brand.

In the Newsec group we manage around 60 trading places and we have strong network in Sweden where we can benchmark and see what other parts of our Newsec group is doing with their marketing and what works and what does not.

It was my idea to phase out the business association and instead start the marketing council. That means that it is now up to us to show that we can do it even better than they could now when the marketing responsibility is with the property owner and us.

Can you further elaborate and explain the Newsec group and the benchmarking?

Newsec has over 500 employees in the Nordic and Baltic countries. We manage many shopping centres, and thus there are plenty of centre managers and centre-marketing managers to benchmark towards and see what they are doing that works and what does not.

Do you have close contact with each other within the Newsec group?

We are connected through chat forums; email and we also have meetings. Tomorrow, just as an example, we are going to a forum called “retail-forum”. At such a forum, managers of different shopping centres meet and discuss aspects related to retail and shopping centres. The centre-marketing managers meet and exchange marketing knowledge with each other.

Has the spending on marketing changed?

It has been stable. It has to do with the marketing contribution controlling the marketing budget. The marketing contribution that the stores pay is determined based on store size. Re-negotiation those terms and change the marketing budget would demand a lot of work and negotiation. Every lease would have to be re-negotiated.

As I said we are rebuilding and expanding the shopping centre. When that happens new stores come to a6 and that means an increased marketing budget.

Basically what makes the marketing budget is a marketing percentage that the stores pay in relation to their store size. Alecta as a property owner pays for all expenses regarding the centre-marketing manager but other than that it is the stores who pay for the marketing with terms negotiated in their leases.

In what way is the marketing staffs structured? (Number of employed marketers, areas of responsibility)

We have a centre-marketing manager. I would say that the centre-marketing manager works with 90 per cent marketing and 10 per cent other tasks such as office and operational issues such as cleaning and security.

What are the directives, main goals and objectives for the marketing department?

Basically we want consumers to come to the shopping centre, stay longer, shop more and come more often. The marketing should drive visitors to the centre and increase the revenue. We want to see that every krona spent on marketing increases the amount of visitors and our revenue. For

example when we have activities and events in the shopping centre as a marketing purpose, we can measure the amount visitors and see if the events and activities made any difference.

We measure the amount of visitors from year to year and during different periods. We also look at the revenues for all the stores to see if our marketing efforts make any difference. There are many other factors as well, one of them being the weather, that are important to the amount of visitors and revenue. As any other business we carry out market research in order to see what our marketing brings to the table. Also, our centre-marketing manager has a good communication with the storeowners in order to see if certain events and activities made any difference.

Do you have any marketing toward stores rather than visitors?

We don't have a specific strategy on how to market ourselves towards stores. A6 was a part of the first shopping centres that opened in Sweden. A6 is a very attractive shopping centre for stores to locate in and the size of the shopping centre has not been enough to answer to the demand of stores that want to establish at a6. Being so popular we haven't really been forced to market ourselves towards stores in any other way than just being a successful shopping centre.

Marketing towards foreign stores and concepts are more interesting to us since they normally establishes themselves in the bigger cities such as Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö as a first step into the Swedish market. If we want to compete with those cities and get exciting foreign stores to a6 we need to be a bit more active. In Europe there are some conferences that shopping centres can use to market themselves to stores. We have been present at such conferences every year. Nordic council of shopping centres is one example where international store concepts visit to find potential establishment locations.

So marketing towards international store concepts is common but you don't really focus on it when it comes to Swedish ones?

The Swedish retail market for us is very much relying on word of mouth and personal networks and connections. Also the use of LinkedIn has become more important as a network of retail connections.

Do you put emphasis on marketing your stores or a6 as a brand itself?

We have a mix between the two. We both want to market and strengthen the brand itself but we also want to market the stores we have in the shopping centre. A lot of the bigger store concepts market themselves a lot but when they do they don't focus on a6 of course. They sometimes feel like even though they don't market the a6 store itself they already spend a lot on marketing and thus the marketing contribution that is involved in the lease is a bit unfair. So the marketing contributions can sometimes be a bit controversial.

How has the shopping centre changed over the last 15 years?

We had 50 stores back in 1987 when we established for the first time. Between 2003 and 2004 we made a rebuild and expansion where we increased the amount of stores to around 80 stores. Now, we are once more rebuilding and expanding over the next 5-6 year period.

Does the rebuild and the expansions affect your marketing in any way?

The 2003-2004 rebuild gave us an increase in visitors and also revenues went up.

We can look at the rebuild and the expansion as a marketing effort in itself. Also, as we increase the amount of stores in the shopping centre, the marketing budget is increased since there are more stores contributing to that.

Did you try to market the expansion in order to increase the publicity even more?

We had much connection with the media who was writing about the expansion. Also the 30 new stores that were about to move into the shopping centre marketed themselves and made sure that their consumers would know that they were establishing at a6. We also included some information about the expansion in our own magazine a6an.

How do you work with marketing with the new rebuild? How do you inform?

We are just about to develop and finish our communication strategy and communication plan. During the expansion our marketing will take two different approaches. The first one is the regular marketing and the second one is information about the expansion. The marketing about our expansion will be trying to create some cliff hanger's about what is to come and create interest for the new changes. We are going to use our channels, such as Instagram, Facebook and our Website to showcase the expansion and provide information about the project. We will also have press releases and smaller sets of information to the local media such as Jnytt, JP, and Jmini. It is also important to inform our employees at the shopping centre. We will be doing that through an app called MallCome communication. There are about 1000 employees working with stores and such at a6. Those are important channels for us as well since they will be spreading information via word of mouth.

We are also working with an advertising agency to work with this specific project. We just had a meeting to determine what they should be doing and what our own centre-marketing manager should be doing. For us it is important who is telling the public about us. When providing information about the expansion project, it is I, as a centre manager who is responsible for the communication. We are trying to make sure that the information comes from the right place in order to avoid any misunderstandings or bad publicity.

Appendix 3

Interview 2

Position: Centre-Marketing manager

About you as a marketer

For how long have you been a marketing manager at a6?

Since the 1st of december 2015

Is content marketing an important aspect of your job as a marketer, to what degree?

I believe that it is very important. It is the basis for all the content that we create and distribute.

What kind of previous content marketing knowledge / experience do you have?

I have been working with it during the last couple of years when it has become a popular concept. It has become an important factor over the last six years. I have been creating content myself. I have been a web editor and created content for different companies websites and after

the emergence of social media I have been creating content for such channels as well. I have also been working with blogs, it all traces back to content.

Do you have a specific style/tone that you like to implement when providing content?

I like to try to make it feel personal. I try to make it sound like it is an actual person expressing the content. In the case of our Facebook, I think it lacks some of that personality. I want to create the feeling that a6 is writing as a person rather than just a company. In some cases when you have an agency providing content it can become rather stiff and not very personal. Therefore it is important to create that feeling of the expression of content being very personal. Sometimes i ask people working in the stores to create content for a6. They are often very creative and entertaining on their own channels when it comes to provide content and I would like them to do that for a6 as well. Just recently we had an employee in one of our jeans store filming when he made a backflip. Such content is very personal and shows the people working here at a6.

What would you say makes content successful?

It is very important for the reader to find the content relevant and have a feeling of the content being interesting or even able to solve a problem for the reader. It could be content that provides the reader with a potential solution for a problem. I am happy when I achieve to provide such content. I can tell that the content has been perceived as relevant when people share the content, comment on it or in any other way engages with the content. It is also important to plan ahead. I have a calendar where i keep track of what kind of theme of content we are providing every week. For example, i can have one week in my calendar that is devoted to providing content related to a specific event or holiday such as easter or a week where we are arranging a fashion show. I think that it is important to know what kind of content should be provided in the future so that you don't have to make it up the same week as it has to be distributed.

About you as a company

For how long have you been actively and consciously working with content marketing?

I wouldn't say that a6 have been working consciously and actively with content marketing before I started to work here. I can't say that we are completely working with it in a perfect manner as it is today either but it is getting better and better. Within a couple of weeks I would like to see that it is more clear that we have a conscious way of working with content.

What changes has been made since?

We have become more active on our different channels and also been trying to figure out what kind of audience should be targeted through the different channels. Also, we are thinking more consciously about what content to provide to certain audiences than before. In some cases we are trying to connect the content provided to specific events and activities in the shopping centre. This is because we want to provide content that can drive visitors to the store in some way. For me it is important to drive visitors to the channels such as the website and later on drive those visitors to the shopping centre or to sign up on activities that we are arranging. We don't want to just provide content but make sure that it is valuable for the reader and that it can create some kind of action from the reader.

In what way would you say that content marketing is an important aspect of your marketing strategy?

We are presenting content that makes our channels a source of valuable information. Instead of just posting messages like “come to our shopping centre”, we are trying to create content that is relevant and create a interest for us as a shopping centre. For example, when we are sharing content related to fashion, we want to inspire readers to be interested in something that we can offer and provide in the shopping centre. That could be our different clothing or makeup stores that provide fashion related goods, but also activities such as fashion shows in the shopping centre. Depending on the different audiences we try to create relevant content to satisfy different interests. It could be related to health, fashion and food etc.

In our channels that don't provide content per se, such as advertising in magazines and radio commercial we still want to include some kind of part that drives traffic to our content channels. As for now, we are doing mostly branding campaigns on those channels but I would like to see a part where we say “Find us on social media” for example. If we provide great content on our social media or website, we want people to see it.

How would you say that your content marketing strategy differs from your competitors?

As far as my mini analysis goes, I have seen some of our competitors going in the same direction as we are. A lot of our competitors though, are mostly focused on sales and showing of products and offers. In some cases I feel like they are focusing on a product and its price rather than the needs and wants behind purchasing such a product. I want to focus more on the step where consumers start to need or want something.

I feel like the product and price focus in marketing should be the responsibility of the stores in a shopping centre rather than the shopping centre itself.

Who is your audience? (Several audiences?)

We have several since we are a shopping centre with a lot of different audiences. We do not only have consumers and visitors in the shopping centre but also tenants. The tenants require a different kind of content than the visitors. As it is right now, we don't provide that content as I see it. I would say that the media is also an important audience for us. If the media can't find exciting content about our shopping centre, they may be less likely to write about us. Media could be everything from weekly magazines, digital newspapers and local media.

Do you provide content to media specifically?

Not at the moment but I want us to. Sending out newsletters could be one strategy of doing that. Also creating a connection with different writers and journalists could be beneficial in order to have them write good things about a6. That could be done on Twitter for example, where we see a lot of journalist figuring. In the past when I have been working with other companies with this, twitter has been a way to reach out to journalists since that is a common digital place where they find material for their own work.

What audience do you target the most with your content? (Not tenants but rather visitors of the shopping centre)

At the moment a lot of our content is targeted towards females between the age of 20-40 who are interested in shopping and fashion. The reason for that is that it is the easiest content for us to create and publish. I want to have more specific audiences in the future but since I am new at this job I haven't had the time to develop them yet. The 18-40 year old fashion interested female

audience is an audience that we have been targeting before and that is one of the reason why that is the audience that we are focusing on today.

Also we have had our own a6an magazine, fashion photo shoots, and fashion shows. That, combined with the fact that the stores at the shopping centre with the best social media knowledge are stores with focus on fashion, is the reason why that kind of content is easiest for us to create and provide.

I think that there are other categories other than fashion that would be rather simple for us to provide content for as well, such as health, beauty, and interior design. In the past we have basically only focused on fashion but in the future I would like to see that we focus on 3-4 more categories with our content.

Initially we have looked at what different content we can create and what kind of content we would like to create rather than focusing on a specific audience. That will happen in a later state in this process.

In the past, I think that the content provided by a6 have been inspired by our magazine a6an and that magazine has been very focused on fashion. The content on the website and social media have been very similar to the content in the magazine. As we go forward we want to provide content not only within the fashion segment.

How do you see the future of providing content to tenants?

I would say that it will probably be informative content that we would provide to tenants and potential future tenants. I think that such content is more important for tenants than visitors of the shopping centre. I think that the consumers and visitors are less interested in the informative than the inspiring for example. For a future tenant it could be possible to provide newsletters, quarterly information and such as content in order to show our success. I would like to see a tab on our website that is focused on providing informative content to tenants rather than consumers.

About the content marketing strategy

Through what channels do you provide content to your audience?

Website, Facebook, Instagram.

What steps do you take when you actually create your content?

It differs a bit from time to time when we deal with different kinds of content.

1. We like to determine the purpose of creating the content.
2. Determine the audience
3. Determine the format
4. Decide who should produce the content
5. Decide who should distribute the content and on what channels.
6. Decide who should answer questions if necessary.
7. Measure the success of the content and if it was able to fulfil its purpose

I can give an example of providing content that promotes a specific activity.

Fashion show - activity

1. Purpose is to promote the activity
2. Determine the audience for the activity
3. Decide if we like to format the content with text, pictures or videos
4. Decide who should produce the content and how to distribute it
5. Decide with what kind of interval the content should be provided before the activity. Also we decide how many days before the activity the content promotion should start.
6. Decide if we would like any offline channels to promote the activity as well
7. Decide who should answer questions about the activity
8. Decide what kind of content should be provided during and after the activity
9. Measure the success and see if the content was able to fulfil its objectives and purpose (Drive people to the activity) and also measure the success of the activity itself and see if it gave any results on amount of visitors and revenue etc.

Do you have a set story that affects the whole content marketing strategy or how do you decide what content to create?

We have developed a concept that is basically “A6 likes everyone”. This is something that is present in all aspects of our marketing such as TV, radio, our magazine, and also our content marketing on social media and website. We keep the line “a6 likes” but change the thing that we like. For example during a recent book sale, we used the line “a6 likes books”. When we have had visits from environmental organizations we have used the line “a6 likes the environment” and now during Easter we are going to use “a6 likes barncancerfonden” in order to support research for kids with cancer.

This is a concept that we have created in order to be applicable on all of our content and in our activities and events in the shopping centre. We always want to have the line “a6 likes” present. For example during a fashion show we create a hashtag with “a6 likes fashion” that should be present whenever content is provided on Instagram and Facebook. Also, that hash tag can be used during the activity as a link to a competition or something like that. We ask all of our stores to join the hash tag in order to create a larger reach with the content. If it is a reoccurring event we would like to use the same name (hashtag) every year. In the past we have had a lot of ideas but been lacking in consistency and changed our concepts and names very often.

How do you decide what content topics to focus on and what format that content should take?

We like to look at trends and what is popular at the moment. Also during holidays we like to connect some kind of content to those holidays. As I have said before, we like to connect our content to actual activities in the shopping centre. When doing so we have a specific audience in our mind. However, we need work more with audiences and provide content that really suits them and provide content for more specific audiences. Hopefully, in the future I will be able to determine those audiences more specifically. When doing so I would gain a greater understanding on what content they want to receive. We don’t want to provide content or arrange an event or activity that we don’t really see a clear audience for.

Do you promote your online channels, if so, in what way?

We want to promote it on every other channel that we have such as Newsletters, ads and every other place where we have information about us. I would like to see that we promote our online

channels even more. I want us to have a shout out on all of our other channels that helps to drive visitors to our online channels. When I have interviews and talk to the media I always try to promote our social media and website. I also try to work with this internally by getting all the store owners and their employers to follow our social media and get their friends to do the same.

After you have published a specific piece of content, how do you promote it?

We try to coordinate with our other channels. If we have a campaign on Instagram about jeans for example, we like to promote that campaign on Facebook and our website. If we can include it in our magazine a6an that is also something what we try to do. We want to showcase our campaigns on our other channels in order to drive interest.

Getting back to the last question, promoting the online channels, we are thinking about doing that to a further extent on our display screens in the shopping centre. When doing that, we could also include the Instagram flow on those screens. That would be one way of promoting the online channels and the content we provide there.

When it comes to social media, what do you publish?

We publish text, pictures and videos.

How do you know if your content has performed well or not? (Measure)

We have statistical tools to measure our content posts. We can check the amount of likes, shares, comments, and followers and see if specific content is popular or not.

We can check if a posted content drove any traffic to some other channel such as the website, or we can see if that specific content post resulted in more followers. We can also check our online statistics towards amount of visitors and revenue numbers to see if our content drives people to the shopping centre.

Can you provide a specific example of content that you created in order to entertain the audience?

Funny or entertaining video clips. We should increase our amount of entertaining content because I think that we are lacking that kind of content. Last week we had a jeans campaign where an employee in one of our jeans stores made a backflip but I think that our entertaining content needs to be better and more innovative.

Can you provide a specific example of content that you created in order to educate the audience?

Advice tips and tricks for trends. We had a post about winter cold, and what to use when we have the winter cold periods. During the book sale we published content where the bookstore manager gave book tips. It is not perfect, but it is somewhat educational.

Can you provide a specific example of content that you created that provides information to the audience?

Information about nursing rooms, buss connections to the shopping centre, and parking lots for people with dogs. Those things can be obvious for us at the shopping centre but we should not forget about the consumer who doesn't know those stuff. Where you can find Defibrillators and wheelchairs is also important. It is not the most fun content but nevertheless important.

It could also be information about new concept that are establishing such as a new restaurant or different even different information about where to eat your lunch.

Can you provide a specific example of content that you created in order to be inspiring?

This is the kind of content that we have most of. Those kinds of content posts get a lot of likes and such on social media. However, maybe we haven't really given the other categories a fair chance to challenge the inspiring one. Our inspiring content can also sometimes be educational. For example inspiring content about fashion that educates the reader about fashion trends as well.

Examples of inspiring content could be clothes, interior design, and how to set your table for different holidays etc.

How do you receive feedback?

We receive feedback from our statistics regarding social media and our website. That could be the amount of followers going up or down. We can also look at comments on those channels. In order to track conversations on other channels than our own, we use a tool called meltwater. By using meltwater, we can see what consumers are saying about a6 and from that feedback and potentially make changes and adjustment. At the moment, we do not have the resources to participate and respond to conversations on other channels than our own. I would like to make surveys to get really good feedback other than the statistics that we already have. One way to receive more feedback in the future could be to carry out focus groups with different audience segments.

What was the last piece of feedback that you received?

As I mentioned before we had a guy doing a backflip in a video. We received positive comments about the clip without really asking for it. When receiving that kind of feedback spontaneously we can see that extraordinary entertaining video clips could be very interesting for us. Such a clip does not focus on any sales whatsoever but should just be entertaining. As I said we don't have a lot of those content posts at the moment but it is something that we are looking at improving.