Can Niche Players Benefit
from Social Media Strategy?

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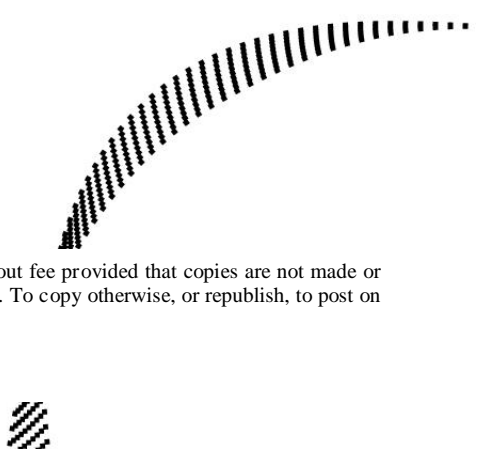
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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Social Media, nowadays, is a popular application for people to communicate with each other and to obtain information about products or services. This trend has also been noticed by companies, and they are now actively operating on various Social Media applications like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn. Social Media enables companies to easier reach their customers and to address a large audience. But what if a niche player, with limited resources and serving a small market, enters the world of Social Media, does it has any benefits for such companies? This problem has been translated into a research question, stated as follows: *"to what extent can niche players benefit from a fully integrated online marketing strategy?"* This question will be answered by conducting a case study. The research will be conducted within a small construction company, based in the Netherlands. The company is specialised in the construction of large detached houses and villas.

The study is structured as follows. Firstly, a comprehensive literature review will be performed, in which important literature and articles in the field of online marketing will be explored and main findings are summarised. Then the analysis is conducted, starting with a brief introduction about the company and its product, and a description of the traditional marketing activities will be provided. A detailed analysis of the company's website follows afterwards, and the Social Media strategy is investigated. Before a company can enjoy the benefits of a Social Media strategy, the website needs to function properly. Therefore, it is important to analyse it as well. During the analysis, both qualitative and quantitative data is collected by means of observations, by use of Google Analytics, outcomes of the survey sent to visitors of the website, and the statistics kept by the various Social Media platforms.

The results of the analysis show the company offers a high quality product and it has a sound financial situation. The company still makes use of traditional forms of marketing, such as paper brochures and advertisements in magazines. A portion of the target group still gets in touch with the company, for the first time, through these kinds of advertisement. The company is aware of this and is still paying attention to the traditional marketing activities. Furthermore, the traditional marketing activities are well integrated in the online marketing strategy. The basis of the online marketing strategy is the website. Important parts of the website, from the perspective of the website visitors, are the portfolio of the villas and information about the company. Next to this, the website operates properly and visitors easily navigate through the website. However, problems occur mainly in the back office integration. The responsible employees for maintaining the website are too busy because of other tasks. There is also a lack of experience and knowledge within the marketing department regarding the performance of the website. In addition, the marketing department is not sufficiently integrated with the rest of the company. Although the company is active in the field of SEM and this produces favourable results for the findability of the website on Google, the company fails in having a responsive or mobile website and it has not yet implemented the *https* protocol. These are two things which are important for Google in terms of a high ranking in the search results. Last remark regarding the website, the company has no specific online marketing strategy, so there is no focus on achieving certain goals, neither a plan of action.

For the case company particularly Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are of interest. Pinterest because it is an application to share the photos of the villas easily across the Web, and Facebook and Twitter to communicate and get interaction with the target audience. In terms of the benefits Social Media offers for niche players, the following can be conclude. Social Media certainly has benefits for niche players, but only when it is organised well and when pages have a certain amount of followers. Advantage of Facebook, for example, is a niche player can alert their small target audience following the company's profile if there is interesting news, or to alert people there is on open house next month. In other words, a website is only a mean to present you as a business, while Social Media gives companies the opportunities to reach the people when they want. Besides, posting messages creates brand awareness, since messages are shared and further distributed on the Internet. In addition, and this is the most important benefit for niche players which are operating on Social Media; it provides opportunities to get into interaction with customers, which provides valuable information to the company and above all, message can be placed at very low cost, or even no cost, making Social Media one of the cheapest forms of marketing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research and Management Problem

There is no doubt that with the upcoming of the Internet, the firm's marketing activities have changed dramatically. Before this change consumers were attracted by advertisements in newspapers, magazines, or via commercials on radio and television. Today, over 50% of Internet users are online every day, and the same percentage of users does online research before purchasing a product (Google, 2015). Consumers also join online social networking sites (SNS), also known as Social Media, such as blogs, forums, Facebook, Twitter, or MySpace. In the Netherlands, on average, 90% of the people between 12 and 35 years are using Social Media (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2013). Consumers use these platforms as a source of information or as a platform for interaction to communicate with each other and to exchange experiences about a certain product or service. Besides, consumers can identify themselves with the brand. A study by Cone (2008) shows that 93% of Social Media users believe companies should have a presence in the Social Media environment. In line with the conclusions of that study and as a result of the shift to more Internet and Social Media use by consumers, companies are also increasingly participating on those platforms, something which can be seen in the number of websites and in the number of links on their corporate websites referring to Facebook, Twitter, and other Social Media platforms. Consequently, companies have increased their marketing budget the last couple of years to develop their online marketing activities.

The Internet and Social Media can be used as marketing applications to attract large groups of customers in a quick, easy, and relatively inexpensive way. This kind of marketing is labelled as online marketing and it has certain features. For instance, companies can gain market and customer information, in an passive or active approach, more easily via the Internet and Social Media (Constantinides, Lorenzo Romero, & Gómez Boria, 2008). Since access to more customers information has led to an enormous increase of competition in the business environment. The availability and use of that information is important for firms, because it is crucial to the success, if not the survival, of the firm (Parasuraman, 1978). The Internet also has ensured that consumers have access to more information, so they are better informed what leads to more control by consumers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Kaplan & Haelein, 2010) and Social Media has led to more interaction possibilities with companies and between each other (Miller & Lammas, 2010). Social Media users talk about their product experiences, something that can be both positive and negative. This can be seen as online word-of-mouth communication, and according to Grönroos (2007), the objective of Social Media marketing is to create brand awareness among people. Another important advantage of conducting Social Media marketing is that it provides a unique opportunity for small to mid-sized companies (SMEs) to present their brands globally (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). Thus Social Media offers certain advantages for companies, but the literature has given insufficient attention whether these advantages are also applicable to companies operating in a niche market. This is an interesting hypothesis, because Social Media is a marketing application to approach a large crowd. Since niche players serve a small target audience, with specific needs, to what extent is it appealing for niche players to integrate Social Media in their online marketing strategy? Next to this, to enjoy the benefits of Social Media, according to Constantinides (2013), the underlying requirement, before implementing a Social Media strategy, is to have a website which functions properly.

To investigate the research gap, this study will illustrate the whole online marketing strategy, ranging from the website to the Social Media market, of a small Dutch construction company called Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, which is specialised in building large, detached houses and villas. The problem within the company is described as follows: The company uses traditional marketing tools such as brochures and advertisements in magazine, but the company also makes use of online marketing tools. This includes the company has its own website and it also operates on different Social Media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Google+, and LinkedIn. The website is designed and largely managed by an external company. This company also manages the Search Engine Marketing (SEM) activities, such as content marketing, paid advertisements on Google and sponsored keywords. Last year, the objective for the website has been established, but this objective has not been achieved. The objective is defined as generating leads, in order to increase the number of visitors which contact the company by telephone or e-mail, or who are requesting for a brochure. The leads should also result in more brand awareness and a better brand image. To achieve the objective the company wants to increase the online findability of the website. The company has attempted to achieve this by making use of certain online marketing tools like SEM, but also by actively operating on Social Media. Because the company is operating in a niche market and it makes use of Social Media, the company is ideal for a case study to explore the working of Social Media Marketing for a niche player. In the

work of Constantinides (2013), a future research direction towards the potential of Social Media in the marketing strategy is given, so the one of the goals of the research is to provide more insight in this subject. The second goal of the research is to come up with recommendations to the case company towards its online marketing strategy.

In order to reach the goal of the research, the marketing management problem needs to be solved. Therefore the problem has been translated into a research question. The main research problem is: *"To what extent can niche players benefit from a fully integrated online marketing strategy?"* The complete online marketing strategy consist of the website and the Social Media strategy of the case company. If a company is actively participating on Social Media, but the website lacks in providing the expected information for its visitors, the main problem is not the Social Media Marketing of the company, but the website (Constantinides, 2013). Therefore, the (E-)marketing Strategy model of Constantinides (2013) will be used to conduct the analysis. This model covers four levels; (1) Product, (2) Marketing/E-Marketing Organisation, (3) Web 1.0 Website, and (4) Social Media Marketing. After the analysis the results will be presented, which corresponds to a diagnosis with respect to the current online marketing strategy. The recommendations towards the company will be based on the diagnoses and the conclusion will be giving by answering the research question.

The remainder of this report is organised as follows. Section 2 starts with an overview of the existing literature and prior research about using the website as a marketing tool and about Social Media Marketing. Besides, literature about the characteristics of the different kinds of Internet users will be explored. A well-executed outline of the literature helps to understand the current knowledge about online marketing and it will serve as the basic knowledge before conducting the analysis. Section 3 covers the methodology for this study, and the explanation of the research method, the measurements and the sample of the study. In the next section the analysis is conducted and structured based on the model of Constantinides (2013). In section 4, the results of the analysis are presented. Last section, section 5, presents the recommendations to improve the company's online marketing strategy and the general conclusion of the study. In addition, the limitations of the research and further research recommendations will be given.

Summarising, Social Media is becoming popular amount all Internet users as a source of information, but also to interact with each other. For companies this gets an interesting marketing tool in attracting customers. A number of studies have already examined the benefits of using Social Media as a marketing tool, however, the literature about the use of Social Media by niche players is rather scarce. Therefore, this study will explore the online marketing strategy of a company operating in a niche market and what Social Media Marketing has contribute. This will be done by performing a case study. The results of this study includes recommendations towards the company and a contribution to the existing literature towards Social Media Marketing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Marketing

Marketing is an old principle. Researchers found evidence for forms of marketing in Ancient and Medieval times (Jones & Shaw, 2002). But what is marketing exactly? The definition of marketing is distinguished in a social and a managerial definition. The social definition sees marketing as a societal process where individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and exchanging products and services of value freely with others (Kotler, 2000, p. 1). The managerial definition is given by the AMA: 'the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large' (AMA, 2014). Grönroos (1989) has criticised the definition of the AMA in his research, since marketing in Northern Europe is viewed from another perspective. The definition Grönroos (1989) has formed, takes the relationship with the customer more in consideration, because the impact of marketing on the customer is a vital part of the total marketing function and outstanding marketing activities can cause high competitive advantages. His definition is as follows: 'Marketing is to establish, develop and commercialise long-term customer relationships, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is done by mutual exchange and keeping of promises' (Grönroos, 1989, p. 57). It is clear the definition of marketing is flexible and it has changed overtime, so it is likely it will change again in the future. From the companies viewpoint, attracting customers is the main goal of marketing, so the managerial definition of marketing is the most appropriate one to use during this research.

For every change in marketing, marketers need to redefine their marketing approaches (Constantinides, 2013). The biggest refinement in marketing was the change of the most widely used and dominant model, the 4Ps

model (Grönroos, 1989; Lauterborn, 1990). The 4Ps model focussed too much from the perspective of the company rather than that of the consumer (Lauterborn, 1990). There, Lauterborn has introduced the 4Cs model, which includes the following: Customer solution (instead of Product), Cost to the Customer (instead of Price), Convenience (instead of Place), and Communication (instead of Promotion). It is clear that there is a shift towards a centrally placed customer instead of the product. This migration is confirmed in the work of Constantinides (2013). He found that marketers faced a new trend, which was caused by the change of the marketing environment, meaning the migration of market power from producers and marketers to consumers and customers. In this migration of power, the Social Media is the main contributor to customer empowerment (Constantinides, 2013). Companies respond to this shift by embracing e-marketing, Internet marketing, online marketing, or so called digital marketing. Based on the model presented by Constantinides (2013), combining the traditional and new kinds of marketing channels, the (E)-marketing strategy consist out of four levels (see figure A in the Appendix). The first level concerns the company's product offering and customer/market orientation. Both should be covered in the company's mission, unique selling proposition, product value, market image, and market positioning. The second level is the marketing (and E-marketing) organisation. Here organisational processes like production, sales, and customer service should be able to support traditional as well as online marketing activities. The third level, the Web 1.0 (web presence), covers the creation of online presence of the organisation. If a website is poorly designed or visitors face difficulties in navigation, this negatively influences brand quality. Moving towards the next and final level of the model, a company is using Social Media as part of the online marketing strategy. Vital in this stage is the synergy with the Web 1.0 environment. Besides, the Social Media strategy and the internal capabilities must be aligned.

For clarification, during this study marketing is seen not only as attracting and winning potential customers, but it covers the whole production process up to the delivery of the product and beyond. Since many marketing activities seem to be focussed on attracting customers to sell products (Homburg, Jensen, & Krohmer, 2008; O'Sullivan & Abela, 2007), some marketing activities also involve maintaining long-term customer relationships, so marketing is not purely of economic interest but it also ensures customer satisfaction after the sale of a product (Grönroos, 1989; Rust, Lemon, & Zeithaml, 2004). Take for example contact via email, or a more recent development, through Social Media to stay in contact with customers to solve any problems occurred. The next sections will elaborate online and Social Media Marketing.

2.2 Online Marketing

The upcoming of the Internet has ensured that there are more possibilities in approaching customers. These possibilities are rapidly adopted by firms and integrated in the overall marketing strategy besides traditional marketing channels (Danaher & Dagger, 2013). Online marketing (also known as Internet marketing or E-marketing) is a form of marketing that is done through or via the Internet. Specific examples of online marketing are banners on websites, an email with product offers, or advertisements on Facebook or Twitter. In the article of Stewart and Zhao (2000) they discussing several advantages of online marketing compared to the more traditional forms of marketing. One of the advantages is that through the Internet companies can reach people from all over the world. Internet also offers the possibility, especially with the development of Web 2.0 (Constantinides, 2013), to interact with each other. This means that businesses can communicate more easily with their clients and vice versa. In the article of Chang, Jackson, and Grover (2003), they discuss if E-commerce marketing is integrated with the firm's strategy, E-commerce opens new sales channels, creates unique capabilities necessary for doing business, and enhances information-sharing and relationship-building. So it is important for a business to tune its online marketing activities to the needs of the customer, to serve them as best as possible. Another advantage of online marketing is the possibility to spread an almost infinity amount of information. Besides, the content is quick and easy to establish and it can be placed online in a minute. Financially, E-marketing is also interesting for companies. A message on Twitter from an optician about the new collection of sunglasses is cheaper in comparison to an advertisement in the local newspaper. However, online marketing can be made as expensive as the company wants through cost-per-clicks of sponsored search terms for example. Since the focus of this study is particularly focused on Internet and Social Media Marketing, the remainder of this section will highlight the parts of online marketing which are important to discussed and related to the case.

2.2.1 Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) was introduced by Sullivan (2010) and it involves a variety of methods to increase the findability of webpages, like managing paid placements, contextual advertising, submitting to

directories, and for developing online marketing strategies. Sullivan defines SEM as 'a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in search engine result pages (SERPs)' (Sullivan, 2010). Some examples of SEM vendors are Google, Bing, Yahoo!, and Baidu. SEM contains of two concepts, SEO and SEA. SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation and SEA is an acronym for Search Engine Advertising. The difference between both concepts is that SEO is more about editorial, organic, or natural search, and it is free, while SEA is paid search, so companies pay money for certain key search words (Sullivan, 2010). However, companies may also pay a small, once-off amount of money for certain SEO keywords to get a higher listing for those particular search words. This is called paid inclusion. Paid inclusion, however, does not guarantee a good listing of the company's URL (Sullivan, 2001). By implementing a variety of techniques, companies can push the ranking of their website to a higher position in the organic listing of search engines. According to Sullivan (2010), this is the core product of a search engine. He compares it with stories published in newspaper, rather than placing advertisements. Paid search, or sponsored ads, are linked to terms like Cost-Per-Click (CPC) or Pay-Per-Click (PPC). This means that companies pay for certain keywords that are associated or related to their product or service each time people click on the URL of the website. When people search via a search engine on those particular keywords, the company's website will appear at the top of the sponsored section of the search engine results page. Separate from the editorial content in a newspaper, these paid ads are comparable with the advertisements placed in a newspaper (Sullivan, 2010). In practice, SEA ads are recognisable by the yellow 'Ad.' block in front of the website URL in the sponsored section of a search engine results page. Below those results, the organic search results (SEO) are displayed.

SEM is a form of mass marketing, but it is also useful to attract a particular group of potential customers in a cost-effective manner. In the study of Goldfarb and Tucker (2011) they conclude that search engine ads are a perfect device that allow firms to send informative advertisements to customers which are hard to reach. This is because firms can form the content of their website in such a way it gets a top-ranking in the search results, or they pay for certain keywords to get a top-ranking of the sponsored search page. Furthermore, it is of great importance that the content contains certain information in order to make SEM effectively. As keywords include retailer-specific information they provide more click-through rates compared to when brand-specific information is included (Ghose & Yang, 2009). The latter is even associated with a decrease of click-through rates. However, this only refers to retailers that are part of a famous, (inter)national brand. This applies to both sponsored and organic listings. Moreover, if a company is listed in both sections, due to the "second opinion" or "reinforcement effect", it will generates enhanced conversion rates and it provides a higher revenue stream to the firm (Ghose & Yang, 2009). Another study done by Agarwal, Hosanagar, and Smith (2011), is about the positioning of a company's website on the search engine results. They conclude that a top-ranking costs a lot of money, what will not always outweigh the revenue of advertising. Therefore, it may be more attractive to a company to appear lower in the search listing. Ultimately, this will lead to a lower CPC or PPC and will enhance the company's profit. What does need some attention however, is that top-ranking websites in organic search are likely to have a higher CPC or PPC in sponsored search. This can have implications for the desirable outcomes of search engine marketing strategy of a company (Yang & Ghose, 2010). If companies lack in having a marketing budget for paid searches, it is important for companies to get a top-ranking in the organic search list. This can be accomplished by qualitative and valuable content on the company's website to customers. This content is called User Generated Content (UGC) in the literature.

Overall SEM is very important for the online presence of a website. A company needs to find a good balance between SEO and SEA, because both concepts support each other in a top ranking of the website URL. This means the website must have enough content to achieve a good SEO, which can be supported by the SEA. If the company's website is visible in both listings, this will have a positive effects on the leads or the conversions to which it aspires. More about content marketing can be read in the next section.

2.2.2 Content Marketing
Content marketing is about the 'creation of valuable, relevant, and compelling content by the company itself on a consistent basis, used to generate a positive behaviour from a customer or prospect of the brand' (Pulizzi, 2012, p. 116). In other words, every form of information published on websites, Facebook profiles, or YouTube accounts, is called content. User Generated Content is almost the same as content, except the content is not produced by the company, but by users or visitors of a website. The literature, however, gives no clear definition of UGC, but what is clear that the user generates it, without any professional organisation

or body (Organisation for Ecenomic Co-operation and Development, 2007; Kaplan & Haelein, 2010; Albuquerque, Pavlidis, Chatow, Chen, & Jamal, 2012).

Content marketing is not a new phenomenon in the field of marketing, because companies are publishing newsletters or articles for decades. But with the upcoming of the Internet, content marketing has changed dramatically. According to Pulizzi (2012), besides the traditional forms of content, nowadays it consists of corporate magazines, blog posts, videos, pictures, webinars, and podcasts. Rowley (2008) has labelled this new form of content marketing as *digital content marketing* (DCM), in which the main difference is in the way it is distributed. DCM is distributed exclusively via electronic channels (Koiso-Kanttila, 2004). In some cases, certain types of content marketing have replaced the traditional ones. But it is also quite conceivable they coexist or are used in parallel, depending on the objective. So content marketing has become a very broad marketing topic, wherein the aim of content marketing also has become broader over time. It is used for enhancing brand awareness, in creating trust, loyalty, or authenticity (Lieb, 2011). But in the first place content marketing in general, should create value for the ones for which it is meant for (Rowley, 2008).

Based on the table presented in the conclusion in the article of Koiso-Kanttila (2004), DCM has several benefits over traditional forms of content marketing. Firstly, information provided by DCM can be combined with different types of information. So it is more modular than content marketing on paper. Next, DCM is more accessible because it is spread via electronic channels. In line with this, the flows of activities proceeds on a website are easily traceable for a company. Further, because content can be spread on each and every time of the day, DCM is more instantly and can be distributed much faster. Last benefit, mentioned by Koiso-Kanttila (2004), Lieb (2011), and Rowley (2008), is that the creation of DCM is much cheaper compared to content on paper, which needs to be printed, transported, and delivered to the customers.

For a website, content marketing and UGC can be a very useful tool to get a better ranking in the google listing. Moreover, this better ranking can be accomplished without any money is being paid. So content marketing and SEM have a direct link with each other. A company can accomplish a top ranking in the listing by using SEA, but by having a good formulated content, this goal can be achieved with SEO. Offering valuable content for the visitor of the website ensures that they will remain on the website over a longer period of time. Moe and Fader (2004) have researched online shopping behaviour of shoppers by classifying them by their motivations and goals. A distinction was made between visits motivated by a planned purchase, a search or deliberation visit, hedonic browsing visits, and to extend the knowledge about a certain product or service. For a company it is therefore important that they know what visitors, and even more important, potential customers, are expecting to find on the website. If customers write a review or a reference about a product or if they mention the brand name of a company, this is seen as UGC (Faber & Winer, 2012). UGC has substantial influence on a company, since reviews consist of positive and negative or complaining comments, reviews can cause an increase in sales or a decrease in profitability (Chen, Fay, & Wang, 2011; Faber & Winer, 2012). When the different kinds of content are placed, a social network between people is the result of it (Goldenberg, Oestreicher-Singer, & Reichman, 2012). For example, by referring to other websites, brands, partners, or even competitors, visitors get connected directly or indirectly to related topics of interest. By creating partner links on a website it leads to more visitors on the website, because the network consist of more partners were potential customers could be located. Shriver, Nair, and Hofstetter (2013) called this effect the local network effect. Moreover, content that the visitor appeals can be shared to other people. This is often done through the use of Social Media. Content sharing can be seen as a substitute for traditional advertising, since it increases brand awareness and the visibility of a company on the Internet, and besides, content sharing is a much cheaper way to advertise (Shriver, Nair, & Hofstetter, 2013).

In summary, content marketing is not only important for the listing in Google, but equally important is people are able find the necessary information. This ensures not only visitors to stay longer on the website, it also prevents they will visit the websites of competitors. So knowing what visitors are searching for is priority to the company. Next to this, the company does not have to provide all the content by itself. Visitors can also place (free) content, for example in the form of reviews or by responding to a blog. Thus a website must offer those possibilities. Another possibility is to share content easily, often through Social Media links, is an option a website must have if it wants to enhance brand awareness. Lastly, placing partner links on a website is a convenient and cheap way to attract more visitors to the company's website.

2.2.3 Social Media Marketing

Social Media is defined as a group of Internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (UGC) (Kaplan & Haelein, 2010). For the record, UGC is all the different kinds of content (e.g. text, photos, or videos) people share with each other. Among Social Media, various types of applications can be included, each with its own design and purpose. Research done by the SIDN (2014) shows that searching via Social Media is becoming increasingly popular, especially among young people. A Facebook user clicks per month on average, nine times on a link related to an external website (Stichting Internet Domeinregistratie Nederland, 2014). This makes Facebook an important source for advertisers to reach their target audience.

In Table 1 an overview of the most important applications related to this study is provided. Social Media can be used for different purposes. It may be used to maintain the relationship with the customer, for exchanging information, or to create brand awareness (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Depending on the objectives a company wants to achieve with its Social Media Marketing, the most suitable application should be chosen (Solis, 2013). A company can also select more than one application. According to Kaplan and Haelein (2010), Social Media consists of two key elements, which are labelled as *social presence* and *media richness*. Social presence is seen as the physical presence that can be achieved with a certain Social Media application. Media richness is the amount of information transmitted in a given time interval. Because there are different types of applications, it differs per type how good they score on both elements (see Table 1). Also, a distinction can made in terms of the achievable objective of the shared content (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Regarding the objective, these can broadly be categorised into four categories: foster dialog, promote advocacy, facilitate support and spur innovation (Owyang & Lovett, 2010). Due to the large variety of suitable marketing applications, companies have plenty of choice to find the best application that serves best its marketing objectives. The objectives have been categorised as the half-life of information and the information depth. See Table 1 which objectives can be achieved with each Social Media application.

In general, companies use Social Media to create certain effects, some of which will briefly discussed here. Social Media is used to boost a brand by triggering a specific type of word-of-mouth communication. This form of marketing is called viral marketing. Different kinds of Social Media, especially SMS messages and personalised emails, are perfect marketing applications for viral marketing (Dobele, Toleman, & Beverland, 2005). The purpose is to create a positive image of a brand or to make people talk about it. To increase brand awareness by means of Social Media, a company needs to manage it activities in a correct manner. The starting point is to set clear goals which are easy to control (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). This could include how many times a message should be posted on the social media platforms, which content is going to be made public, and how to deal with customer responses. Danaher and Dagger (2013) investigated different marketing channels and compared the outcomes in terms of customers purchases. The findings where that traditional media, catalogues, television, and direct mail most strongly influenced sales and profits. Social Media, among others, had no significant impact on sales and profit. However, Social Media had another effect, i.e. it caused an increase in visitors to the company's website. Further they claim that companies should use multiple medias to have the best possible effects. The choice which platform to use is of great importance. An incorrectly chosen platform will not ensure an increase of brand awareness and therefore will be a waste of time and money (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). Next to this, one need to take into consideration that companies have different budgets, what requires different Social Media Marketing strategies (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). Companies with large marketing budgets can afford more in the area of Social Media. As a result, a large audience can be addressed, and it is more prosperous than bus shelter advertising for example. But, comparing Social Media Marketing with the most expensive form of advertising, which are television commercials, it still offers the advantage that it is a relatively cheap marketing tool (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). In line with this advantage, Social Media can address messages to specific groups of potential customers by selecting on their interests, age, or demography for example. This will prevent a spill over of the marketing campaigns to non-potential customers (Dobele, Toleman, & Beverland, 2005).

One can see SMM is a complex tasks for companies, where decisions need to be taken with great care. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) have developed a model that allows companies to construct a Social Media Marketing strategy that makes sense and is functioning well. The honeycomb-like framework consists of seven building blocks which are Presence, Relationships, Reputation, Groups, Conversations, Sharing, and Identity. The model allows to highlight and examine the experience of Social Media users and what implications the company faces. Constantinides (2013) presented a table presenting two

main approaches of engaging the Social Media as a marketing tool. He distinguishes the passive and the active way. This tool highlights the usefulness in specific situation for each Social Media application. But both models do not take into account the usefulness of Social Media in a niche market, since Social Media is still seen as a mass marketing tool.

The table of Constantinides (2013) describes which Social Media applications can work as a marketing tool. A brief description of the model will follow here. The first approach in the model of Constantinides (2013) is called the passive approach and is used for listening-in. Web logs or blogs, content communities, and forums are the most suitable marketing tools to outperform the passive approach. SNSs are also suitable, but to a lesser extent. The purpose of the passive approach is to get information of customer needs, how their experience with the product or brand is and to spot for market trends (Constantinides, 2013). The second approach is the active approach in using Social Media as marketing tools. Direct marketing and influencing customers are central in this approach. As shown by the figure, four sub-categories are classified. The first one, *PR and Direct Marketing,* aims for maintaining online public relations. For customers, the possibility to enter into a dialogue is becoming more and more important. This can be accomplished by using different applications, such as web logs or blogs and content aggregators. SNSs, forums, and content communities are also suitable, but to a lesser extent. Actively participating on blogs creates interaction and a company can disseminate information that is valuable to potential customers. Via content aggregators, specific messages posted by companies are collected through other websites specialised in a certain topic. Content communities like YouTube are a financially inexpensive application to present the business to a large crowd, through for example, a company video. Another way of PR and direct marketing is to advertise on blogs or related communities. This allows to approach specific niche markets or even individual customers (Constantinides, 2013). *Reaching the New Influencers* is the second approach and it aims to advocate early adopters, the press, or experts. Those will ensure for reaching the mass with their opinions. This happens a lot in the form of web logs or blogs and forums. To a lesser extent, content aggregators are also suitable. This approach is a good example of online word-of-mouth advertising and creates brand awareness (Constantinides, 2013). The third approach *Personalizing customer Experience* involves mainly the customisation process of a product. This trend is especially visible in major mass producing brands, allowing individual customers to design their own, unique and tailor made product to their tastes and demands. This enables companies to better retain their customers (Constantinides, 2013). In the situation of the case company, which already produces unique products, this part is difficult to accomplish. This is primarily because the company operates in a niche market where customisation is more common, so it is not a new phenomenon to this sort of businesses. The last approach is about *Tapping customer creativity.* This approach is accomplished to ensure customers to write reviews and to engage them actively in the production process. Customers product reviews of products on websites (i.e. Bol.com) tend to be more reliable to other potential customer compared to reviews by experts (Constantinides, 2013). Indirectly, customers make advertisements for a particular product or brand. Producers can get valuable information through those reviews. In addition, a support community consisting of developers and customers are also on opportunity for companies in optimising the products to the needs of the customer (Constantinides, 2013). So depending of the type of business or the type of products manufactured and sold, Social Media can play a role in the production process and promotion of the products. For this it is important a suitable application is selected to achieve the desired aims.

Concluding, Social Media Marketing is something in which any company should be involved. Today, people expect from a company it operates on a certain or several Social Media channel(s). Each channel or application has its own purpose, so it is important for a company to choose the correct application. Besides, each application attracts a specific audience, so this also needs to be taken into account, otherwise the Social Media campaign will have no effects. When the right channels have been chosen, a company can enjoy the benefits Social Media offers. By posting content that is liked, retweeted, or shared by users, the brand name is brought to attention. Whether users click on a picture or link or not, the brand name is read or at least it has generate some attention. If people react or share, a sort of online word-of-mouth advertising is been established, which is still seen as influential advertising. So SEM and content marketing is more focused on promoting the online presence of a website, SMM is more focusing on raising awareness to a brand. During the analysis of the Social Media activities, it is thus important to analyse the number of likes, the degree of

Overview Social Media Applications

Application type	Social Media	Content	Description/Application	Social presence/ Media richness (Kaplan & Haelein, 2010)	Objectives (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011; Kaplan & Haelein, 2010)
Social Networks	Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+	e.g. Posts, pictures, videos	A social network site for individuals, groups, or organisations to build a personal profile for the exchange of information, or other types of content to the public, and to communicate with other users.	Medium	Because a wide variety of content can be shared, Social Networks have a deep information richness. However, the half-life is short because the content is regularly posted or the content is no longer relevant.
Blogs	Twitter, Tumblr	e.g. Blogs, pictures, videos	Blogs began as online journals where people write about their daily activities. Nowadays it is widely used to publish information about a particular topic. Microblogs is an application were users can place messages with a maximum of 140 character. Users can follow each other if interesting topics are discussed.	Low	Blogs have a relatively shallow information depth, but a long half-life. Therefore, blogs are a perfect tool to share in-depth information or knowledge. Microblogs have a short half-life, what makes them suitable for awareness and brand recall.
Content communities	YouTube, Flickr, Pinterest	e.g. Videos, photos, music	So called content communities where particular types of content can be shared. The content can be rated, or site visitors can leave comments to the content.	Medium	Content communities are focussing on a specific topic, what makes the content has a long half-life and a deep information richness. These applications is suitable to create brand awareness for a large group of users.
Forums/ discussion boards	Google Groups, Yelp	e.g. Discussions, reviews	Sites for exchanging experiences, information, and ideas, usually about a specific topic. In many cases, it is managed by a moderator.	Low	Online communities have a long half-life and are associated with in-depth information. These types of Social Media are well-suited to establish and maintain customer relationships.
Wikis	Wikipedia	e.g. Information, descriptions	Key idea here is that it is an open source, were multiple authors publishing textual documents. The content can be adjusted over time and it needs to be traceable who the writer and what the source of the content is.	Low	High information richness because it is created by many writers. Objective is to create knowledge and information.

Table 1

engagement of the people involved, and the reach a message has, to see if the effect of raising brand awareness is achieved or not.

2.2.4 Mobile Marketing

A growing group of individuals have access to a smartphone or tablet. As a result, this trend has replaced the laptop as the most commonly used device to go online to the Internet (CBS, 2012). Numbers of the CBS (2012) shows that 68% of the mobile users use their smartphone for visiting Social Media. Because of this, marketing has jumped into mobile marketing. Kaplan (2012) has defined mobile marketing as 'any marketing activity conducted through a ubiquitous network to which consumers are constantly connected using a personal mobile device'. Among mobile device is understood any tool that gives access beyond one specific network, and in most cases, this device a one for personal use only (Kaplan, 2012). For example, a tablet that provides access to 4G, WiFi, or WLAN is seen as a mobile device. Barnes and Scornavacca (2004) has labelled this new form of mobile E-commerce as M-commerce and defines it as 'the ability to purchase goods or services through a wireless Internet-enabled device'. The next part of this section will highlight some important characteristics of mobile marketing and why it is important for companies to take a closer look to opportunities of it.

The smartphone is a more personal device than a mailbox. This causes some issues for marketers. Mobile marketing offers more time and attention in forming useful content, because an undesired message has more negative impact on the consumer compared to non-personal devices (Barnes & Scornavacca, 2004). Next to this, issues in acceptance of mobile marketing can occur. These issues can be of an individual-level, demographic, cultural, acceptance of the mobile device itself, or the level of trust an individual has towards the message (Varnali & Toker, 2010). Next to this, Varnali and Toker (2010) discuss the value of mobile marketing, since users are 'always connected'. This leads to opportunities for firms, since potential customers can be reached at all times. But how valuable the presence on a mobile device is, if the website lacks to be mobile friendly, it has no chance of success. A company's website must have a responsive web design. This means it needs a flexible (fluid) grid, flexible images, and CSS3 media queries (Mohorovičić, 2013). More information about SCC3 media queries can be found in the book of Marcotte (2013). It is not only important in serving the visitor to have a suitable, functional website for smartphones or tablets, even more important is it has implications for the online visibility. From now on, Google selects on how mobile friendly a website is. If a website does not display properly on a mobile device, it has consequences for the ranking in the search results listing. That means a site will drop in the search results. According to Google, the change will have a 'significant impact' on the search results (NOS, 2015). Further, searching on a mobile device also has its impact on the SEM strategy (Marketingfacts, 2013). Smartphone users use, in general, short search terms, putting the ranking of the website under pressure compared to the ranking of the website on a computer device. Last remark to make about M-commerce, is that it is not a substitute of or replacement for the in the previous discussed marketing subjects. It must be seen as an additional channel for attracting people and to fulfil marketing objectives of companies (Barnes & Scornavacca, 2004).

Main inference from this section is a website needs to have responsive design, otherwise people will leave the website because it does not functioning well, what also can cause irritation among them, but most important the URL will drop in the listing of Google, making the website less findable.

2.3 Target Audience

For companies operating in a niche market it is important to have an adjusted or tailored marketing strategy to serve the target market, the basic requirement for the success of a niche player (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994). Characteristics of a niche market, gives it is usually smaller in size compared with the size of a segment, it focusses on individuals instead of groups, customers in a niche have specific needs, and they will pay a premium price for the product that best satisfies their needs (Parrish, Cassill, & Oxemham, 2004; Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994). Because the target audience is much smaller, niche players are able to know their customers very well. So for a niche player it is important to know who the target audience, where they are located, and what are their needs, in order to attract them using the most efficient online marketing strategy.

Forrester Research has developed a model in were they have categorised different groups of Internet users. Their Social Technographics Ladder consist of seven overlapping categories. For companies joining the Internet and Social Media it is important to understand how their consumers use it, in order to create a suitable online marketing strategy (Rousseau-Anderson, 2010). From top to bottom, the percentage of consumers in each category, together with a brief explanation of the category, are given. The percentages mentioned are

related to the Netherlands only (van Roekel, 2010). Explanations of the categories are coming from on online presentation posted by Bernoff and Anderson (2010):

- – *Creators* (19%) is the most active group of consumers, publishing blogs, upload self-made video's and music, or write articles or stories and post them online on the Internet.
- – *Conversationalists* (40%) have a strong tension to share their opinions to other consumers. This group update their status regularly on SNSs and Twitter.
- – *Critics* (22%) post reviews of products and services, or they leave comments on blogs. Further they participate in online forums and edit wiki articles.
- – *Collectors* (9%) collect content for their own use by using RSS feeds or tags.
- – *Joiners* (47%) are connected in SNS and maintain and visit their online profile.
- – *Spectators* (66%) are by far the largest group of consumers. This are the passive user. They read blogs, forums, reviews, and tweets or they watch videos of other users.
- – *Inactives* (21%) use none of the social content.

If a company knows into which category or categories their consumers fall, companies are better able to align their content to the expectations of the consumer (Bernoff & Anderson, 2010). In one of the articles of Constantinides (2013), he discusses Social Media as marketing tool and makes an distinction between a passive and an active approach. The main difference between the two approaches, is the active approach requires interaction between consumers or between consumer and firm. The collectors, joiners, and spectators would be the group falling into the passive approach of using Social Media. Weblogs, content communities, and forums or bulletin boards are perfect tools to approach this group (Constantinides, 2013). The active approach is divided in four different marketing objectives, ranging from simple PR use to tapping customer creativity.

Except the knowledge about who the target audience is, it is essential to know which Social Media platforms to choose to reach them. Solis (2013) has developed The Conversation Prims. This model indicates different categories to which lots of Social Media applications are characterised, including the purpose of its use. An incorrect choice of an application will not show derisible outcomes for which a company is intending. Therefore it is a waste of time and money (Bîja & Balaş, 2014). The model is primarily intended to shed light on the applications beyond Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Pinterest. In addition, it encourages to seek for improved experiences and relationships with customers. Finally, it is a charter for the development of the Social Media strategy. To develop that strategy, one must go through different steps. Based on the findings of Solis (2013a), a description of the steps will be provided. The model is designed of four, so called 'halos', of which the inner halo is the company itself. Here it is important a company knows its strengths and where there are opportunities. Halo two is considering the desired engagement, consisting of the pillars vision, purpose, value, commitment, and transparency. The third halo is about what can be achieved the chosen Social Media. Here it is about brand awareness, community, offering service, development, marketing purposes, generating sales, communications, and HR practices. Last halo, number four, is what the benefits for the company itself. Here Social Media can contribute for the listening, learning, and adapting of a company. Since the model is too large to put into the report, see the following website for The Conversation Prism: http://www.conversationprism.com/.

Main learning points here are that before actively participating in the online environment, a company needs to know how their target audience uses the Internet and Social Media. If it seems a substantial part are active users, the website needs to be tailored to this and should actively participating on Social Media. In addition, it is necessary to choose the proper Social Media applications in order to achieve the desired objectives. During the analysis it is important to see if there are appropriate Social Media applications which can contribute to the business which is operating in a niche market.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research will be carried out by performing a case study. In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the research, the entire marketing process will be analysed, so at the end, I will be able to present a complete picture how the marketing activities in the current situation are designed and where there is room for improvements. Next to this, by using data of the case company and its Social Media channels, the usefulness of Social Media by niche players will be explained. For an overview of the research process, a research model is developed, including all the steps to conduct during the research. The research model is provided in figure 1.

3.1 Research Method

In order to obtain the necessary data a case study is conducted. Hereby, a variety of information sources will be consulted. Each source has its own purpose, and all the gathered information together will be beneficial for an extensive recommendation report towards the company and for the contribution to the literature. The gathered information ensures a wide range of data to analyse, in order to obtain the necessary information to make an accurate diagnosis of the fully integrated online marketing strategy of the case company. A mix of quantitative and qualitative data is collected, like the literature suggest to do in performing a valid and reliable research (Yin, 1981). The steps in the research model and the purpose of each step will be explained in the remainder of this section.

Firstly, before any conclusions can be drawn concerning the use of the Internet and Social Media as a marketing tool, an extensive literature review of articles and books considering the subject of online marketing has been provided in the previous section. For collecting the articles, the online library of the University of Twente, Scopus, the AMA website, and Google Scholar have been used. The keywords used to find relevant articles include the words used for the headings of the sections and subsections of the literature review. In addition, the reference list of the collected articles have been used for collecting more relevant articles. The acquired information from the literature review is also used as a basis for the theoretical contribution of the study.

Secondly, a case study analysis will be conducted. Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg (abbreviated as BBL) is the company of which the online marketing strategy will be analysed. The E-marketing pyramid (Constantinides, 2013) will be used to guide the analysis (see figure A in the Appendix). This model shows that each level supports the upper level. That means a website needs to function properly in order to support the Social Media Marketing activities. Also the product and the traditional marketing activities layer need to function well in order to support the website and the Social Media. Therefore these levels

RESEARCH MODEL

Figure 1

will also be part of the analysis. Further a brief introduction of the company will be given, in order to get a general idea of the business. Level three of the pyramid considers the web 1.0 or website of the company. For the analysis of the website, the 4S model (Constantinides, 2002) will be used (see figure B in the Appendix). The four Ss' provide a framework to cover all the important parts of the website. Data concerning the website of the company will be gathered using Google Analytics and Google Page Analytics. Through Analytics a wide variety of data can be generated, ranging from statistics of the website itself, as information about the visitors. The data is collected over a period of between July 25, 2013 until March 31, 2015. This timeframe was chosen because Google introduced a new of way of measuring the website performance on July 25, so to avoid any bias this will be the timeframe for the analysis. The same applies for the Social Media Statistics, unless indicated otherwise. Next to this, internal information is used and if more information was required, this was asked to one of the employees within the company. Also part of the pyramid is the Social Media Marketing. Therefore, the Social Media applications the company uses will be analysed. Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest, and LinkedIn are part of the analysis. To analyse if the company uses the different applications where they are intended for, the table presented by Constantinides (2013) will be used
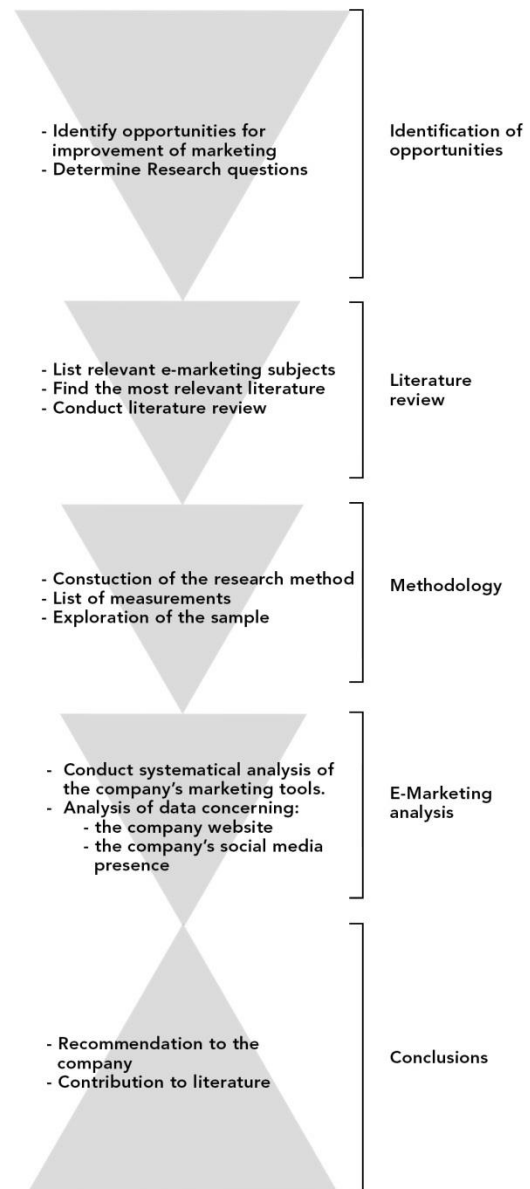
(see figure C in the Appendix). Social Media platforms gather statistics about followers and visitors of the company's profile page. Through these statistics, information is obtained about the efficiency in the use of Social Media by the company. At last, the Social Media data will be compared with the website data, in order to answer the research question.

Thirdly, in order to generate empirical data, an online questionnaire will be sent to those who have done a request for the brochure. Forty responses have finished the questionnaire. The questionnaire is multipurpose; One, to gain insight in how customers have found the company, how they have experienced the visit on the website and to give insight in their use of various Social Media applications. Further determinants of the target groups are explored, such the annual incomes and the geographical distribution of the target audience. The outcomes are especially useful for the second 'S' in the model of Constantinides (2002). More specific, the outcomes are used to determine which marketing activities have the most effective in attracting potential customers and to give a better idea of which type of customers belong to the group of potential customer or the target group. Second, the respondents will be asked about their types of interests in, inter alia, sports and culture. This was one of the propositions of the company, the outcomes are discussed in the analysis, but are not directly of interest for the objective of the study. The questionnaire has been prepared with the greatest possible care, based on relevant literature. On overview of the questionnaire, including the answers, can be found in the Appendix.

3.2 Measurements

Nowadays, many statistics are kept by websites and Social Media applications, such as the number of visitors, the session duration, bounce rate, and conversion ratio. For the analysis, a distribution of the statistics will be made which are of interest to the analysis. Below the variables are named and the importance is explained.

Visitors of the website are potential customers for the company. Therefore, it is important to know something about this group of individuals. Interesting facts about this group are demographic details, such as age and gender, but also the geographic details, so the location of the visitor. Because the company operates in a market for well-off households, the visitors annual income is also of importance. The interests of visitor gives also valuable information. Through the questionnaire a number of general interests, such as hobbies and leisure activities are asked to judge them how appealing they are. On this basis, an image of the potential customers can be sketched. The questionnaire also highlights the level of online activity on Internet and Social Media.

The *website* will be analysed, inter alia, by means of quantitative data. Important variables here are the number of visitors, the bounce rate, the time visitors spend on the website, number of pages visited, the origin of visitors, and the most important ones, the conversion ratio and the number of conversions. With regard to the origin of visitors, Google Analytics give insights in the SEM, but also in the origin via the various Social Media applications. In addition, qualitative data is obtained by means of observations and available company information.

Determinants of the different company profiles on *Social Media* will also be measured. For example, the number of likes or followers are important to measure, because these are related to how much reach a post has and how many people are engaged (Facebook, 2015). The reach and engagement number are important variables to say something about the benefits of Social Media, as part of the fully integrated online strategy, for niche companies. Also, to analyse whether there are actually more visitors attracted to the website after a message is posted will be explored. In addition, the number of posts and what kind of content it contains is valuable information for the analysis. Similar as with the website, the characteristics of the individuals following the company on Social Media will take into consideration. These results can be compared with the results of the visitor analysis of the website to say something about any differences or similarities between both groups. Lastly, an analysis of the Social Media activities of competitors will be carried out.

3.3 The Sample

Depending on what is being studied, the sample includes visitors from the website of BBL, the fans on Facebook, and followers on Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn. These groups may consist of individuals as well as companies or organisations. With regards to the questionnaire, these is send to people who have requested for a brochure in the past. This group solely consist of visitors of the website.

4. ANALYSIS

In order to outline a better understanding of the company, information about the product and the traditional marketing activities, will be provided in section 4.1 before the analysis of the online marketing strategy will be conducted. The part of the online marketing strategy is divided into two sections; a website (section 4.2) and Social Media Marketing analysis (section 4.3). These two sections cover the levels 3 and 4 of the (E)-marketing Strategy model. Before starting the analyse, first some assumptions, based on the literature review, regarding a well-functioning fully integrated online marketing strategy are presented.

The objective of the online marketing strategy of the company is to generate leads, in order to get more visitors to the website. To achieve this objective, first there should be a written marketing strategy, known by all the stakeholders within the company. Internal agreements with the various departments is necessary, so collaboration between the departments is optimal. Further, the website must be findable via search engines, therefore the website should contain enough content to support the SEO. Next to this, the company should also be active with SEA by placing paid advertisements on Google. The content on the website should not only focus on a good ranking in the search engine results, but it should also provide the information visitors are expecting to read. Last criteria regarding the website is it must have a responsive design, so it will be suitable for every device. In general, the appearance of the website should be correspond to what they want to propagate and visitors should be able to easily navigate through the website. Regarding the criteria of the Social Media strategy, the company must be active on the application in which it can share content best and where most of the potential customers are participating on. Concluding, the traditional marketing and online marketing strategy are interconnected and should be aligned, in order to reinforce and support each other.

4.1 Product and Marketing

Founded in 1935, Bouwbedrijf J.H. Lichtenberg en Zoon B.V. is a leading Dutch construction company, building luxury detached houses and exclusive villas. The construction company is part of the overarching organisation Lichtenberg Bouwgroep B.V., which further consist of among others, Onderhoud Service Spectrum B.V. and Lichtenberg Onderhoud B.V., two departments focusing on the maintenance of buildings. During the period between 2001 and 2003, the share capital was transferred to the current owners of the company. In the following years, the company has grown considerable in both financial and commercial perspective, despite the financial crisis in the construction sector. In the past, the company was more production oriented, but the company has been gradually developed into a customer oriented company. In 2014 around 15 houses have been completed. The goal for 2015 is to equal this number, or even better, to build more than that.

In one sentence, the vision of BBL is 'to increase the added value in the entire production process of detached houses, by building fixed valued, traditional built houses designed by an architect' (Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, 2015). To achieve this vision, the company has also defined a mission statement, which is as follows: "the designing and construction of houses for private customers, using a traditional production process. With the construction of these houses we contribute to the housing needs of detached houses of modern society" (Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, 2015). Building houses is not the only main objective for the company, it is about the whole production process, form the inventory of customers' needs, designing the homes, budgeting, guidance and advice to the customer, and the direction of the entire construction process. The company also has specific goals for the company itself. These include: increasing revenues, profit margins, customers satisfaction, and brand awareness.

The villas of BBL are built under architecture. Most villas have a recognizable, characteristic style, making the houses immediately recognizable as a house built by Lichtenberg. On their website they describe it as 'so we enrich your villa, country house, cottage or farm with real masonry, craft poured floors, classic roof tiles, or a robust thatched roof" (Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, 2014). They use high quality materials during the building process and there is an eye for detail. This is done to meet the needs of the customers and to set a standard for the company. Even in the premium segment, there is a difference between for example finish, size, or luxury. This affects the price of a house. That means that houses are built with a price, roughly, starting from €500.000 up to a price the customer wants to pay for a house. Besides building villas for particular customers, Lichtenberg also builds homes in (small) projects. For most of the projects applies they are issued based on call for tenders. The advantage of projects is the size and the guarantee to build many houses, so the company is assured of revenue streams and it is able to keep its employees in work. However, a major drawback are the profit margins on these types of projects, sometimes these margins are that low no

profit is made at all. At the time of conducting tis research, BBL is working on two major projects. The first project is located in Almere, where in cooperation with a number of other companies, houses are built of which some are designed by the famous Dutch architect and designer Piet Boon. For this project, almost 40 so-called courtyard houses are built by BBL. The starting price of the most basic property is €247.900, for the Piet Boon houses the starting price is €275.000. These house prices are significantly lower in comparison with the average customer of BBL. But by the size of the project, BBL still gains good returns. The second project is more in line with the core business of BBL. This project, called Naardereiland, involves the construction of 29 homes on an island next to the harbour of Naarden. The houses are more characteristic as a house built by BBL, compared to the project in Almere.

The marketing goal, as stated in the business plan (Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, 2013), is the same as their vision and mission. The general strategy of BBL aims to apply the 'total formula' for private orders. This means the company is involved in the entire production process; from the program of requirements to the tailoring of the property, it presents a clear financial picture for the complete project, a fixed construction price is offered, and the company takes all possible risks customers can face for its own account. Next to this, the strategy focuses on highlighting the strengths of the products. This is accomplished by providing transparency during the production process, showing the houses already built, making sketches without obligation, offering the Woningborg guarantee, and the costs of the Vereniging Eigen Huis (VEH) are compensated by Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg. For the marketing activities there is a budget available, which includes also the online marketing activities. Looking at Table 2, the total marketing expenses in 2014 are €59.501,52, what means almost half of the costs is due to online marketing. In particular, the expenditures on Adwords and to the external company supporting the online marketing activities of BBL are the main source of expenditures.

	Financial Statement Online Marketing		
	2012	2013	2014
Google Adwords & Adwise[1]	€16.504,-	€30.352,50	€28.318,56
Website optimisation	€6.742,-	€4.249,10	€2.695,00
Additional expenditures	€ -	€ -	€1.741.60
Total	**€23.246,-**	**€34.601,60**	**€32.755,16**

Table 2

4.2 Website Analysis

4.2.1 Scope: Strategy and Objectives

The first S of the Web-Marketing Mix model mainly includes the strategic nature of the marketing strategy. Based on four subsections (market analysis, potential customers, internal analysis, and strategic role of the web activities), enough information will be provided to diagnose the strategy and objectives of the online marketing strategy of BBL. The first subsection, market analysis, is directed to yield a better picture of the market, in terms of their domain, potential, size, and future trends (Constantinides, 2002). The second subsection is about the characteristics of the target audience of the company who have visit the website. It is important to know certain characteristics about the visitor, in order to serve them as best as possible. Third subsection is about the internal analysis of the company. Here the company itself is the unit of analysis. The focus is on the resources, processes, and value of the company. Last subsection will discuss the strategic role of the web activities the company wants to provide to its visitors. The discussion of the role of the website is important for the design, which content should be placed on the web, and the organisational/technical infrastructure (Constantinides, 2002).

4.2.1.1 Market Analysis

In the Netherlands, a great majority of the employees is working in the construction industry (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2015). It is a sector where many companies depend on, or from another perspective, it is an important sector for the country in social and economic perspective. The construction industry is characterised as a cyclically sensitive industry. If the economy grows, the demand of customers increase, in times of economic decrease, the opposite will happen (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2015). Making use of the

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[1] Adwise is the external company taking care of the company's website and SEM

	Key figures construction industry and Dutch economy				
	2013	2014			
	IV	I	II	III	IV
GDP	1,0	0,0	1,1	1,0	1,0
Turnover construction sector[2]	1,0	4,7	-1,8	-1,5	3,2
Added value[2]	2,0	5,8	0,3	-0,9	1,9
New houses x1000	16,1	10,2	9,8	9,6	14,5
Number of bankruptcies	295	268	254	246	219
Number of jobs x1000	525	519	514	511	510
Homes sold x1000	36,0	29,0	34,1	39,2	51,3

Table 3

latest figures from the CBS (2015), presented in Table 3, the construction industry is still suffering compared to five years ago. Measured in terms of total turnover in the sector, in 2014 the sector performed almost 8 index points lower (2010, index 100). Compared with the previous year (2013), there was however a small increase in total turnover of more than 2 index points. Further, shown by the most recently published 'kwartaalmonitor' of the CBS (2015), construction companies have gained more confidence since 2008. In addition, the building expenses and the number of building permits are enhancing. In the fourth quarter of 2014, turnover has slightly increased, mainly in favour of SMEs (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2015). The construction industry is also a dynamic sector, which can be divided into several subsectors (e.g. residential building, commercial building, civil engineering, etc.), processes (e.g. design phase, construction phase), and various specialisations (e.g. architect, builder, contractor, etc.). An in-depth look into the residential construction sector, it can be divided into smaller segments also. There are companies specialised in large-scale projects, prefabricated building, building terraced houses or semi-detached houses. These companies are obviously competitors, but certainly not direct competitors of BBL. Since BBL is specialised in the construction of large detached houses and villas, a small niche market, there are much fewer competitors in the market.

Part of the market analysis is a brief outlook of the business environment. In the business plan of BBL (2013), the direct competitors are described as the traditional villa construction companies, a group of competitors broadly consisting of 10 to 15 companies. In various magazines such as Kavel & Huis, competitors of BBL are listed. The competitors which are analysed can be found in Table 10. Further, the analysis shows that all major competitors have an online presence in terms of a website. The majority of the sites are comparable to each other, what means they offer comparable content, like photos, videos, and links to Social Media platforms. Furthermore, it is hard to compare the different construction companies with each other. In terms of style each construction company tries to distinguish itself. From the perspective of the customer, 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder', thus people who love a modern style will be less likely to choose for a company that builds very traditional houses. Of course, a construction company can built every style of houses, this is also in case of BBL, but people are looking for companies matching with their taste. The company closest to BBL in terms of style, is construction company Homan which, besides, falls beyond the scope of Social Media analysis by lack of any kind of Social Media activities. However, Homan is more active in the eastern part of the Netherlands, so not a direct competitor for BBL, since they are more operating in other parts of the Netherlands. Because BBL is operating in a niche market and the construction of villas is relatively complex, the threat of new entrants is rather small. There is quite some capital required to construct large houses, something small start-ups usually do not have. Regarding the buyers in the market, the bargaining power of buyers in the high-end market is less relevant compared to other markets. This is due to the fact the construction of a house is usually a one of a lifetime opportunity where people put time and effort into it. In addition, the experience within the company is that people in the top-segment pay less attention to the construction cost. In other words, money plays a less important role, the final result is of importance. As mentioned, the construction industry is an industry with a certain size. This enables there are many supplier to choose from, offering similar products, what makes it possible for BBL to easily change from suppliers if it is

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[2] % mutation relatively to a year before

necessary. Overall, BBL has a strong position in relation to its suppliers. Lastly, the substitutes. The housing market has a slow development flow, which means the speed of innovation is rather slow if it is compared to the developments in the ICT for example. People live in houses for many years, so there is not a real substitute. Of course, there have been different trends over time, and homes are constructed with different techniques and materials, but it are still houses constructed as. As long BBL continues to innovate and goes along with the trends of the market, there is no real threat for substitutes.

4.2.1.2 Potential Customers

Market segmentation is the process of 'dividing a market into distinct groups of buyers who have different needs, characteristics, or behaviors, and who might require separate products or marketing programs' (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010, p. 215). The goal of market segmentation is to cluster the heterogeneity of buyers into manageable segments, so it becomes more easier for the company to fulfil the needs of the consumers. The customers segments BBL aims, are characterised by people who want to identify and distinguish themselves with their houses. Despite the location of the company, which is in the eastern part of the Netherlands, the target segment is more located in the mid and western part of the Netherlands. Places like Aerdenhout, Blaricum, Soest, or Zeist, are just some examples of places where the company has built houses, and this are the places the target group is located. Via Google Analytics a top 100 best performing cities are selected based on the conversion ratio. Analysing, the list conducts out of small towns and villages. Out of the hundred cities, a selection is made based on 100 sessions or more. This selection is compared to the top 100 cities in which most conversions have been made. Comparing both lists gives cities who are listed on both lists and are performing above average. The best performing places are Soest, Doorn, Hellevoetsluis, and Honselersdijk. Figure D gives an overview map which clearly shows the target group is located in North-Holland, South-Holland, Utrecht, North-Brabant, and Gelderland. These results are congruent with those presented in Table 4. The findings are also consistent with the finding of the questionnaire. North-Holland is with 27.5% the province where most potential customers are located, followed by Gelderland (17.5%), South-Holland (15.0%) and North-Brabant (15.0%). Besides the geographical data also demographical data is collected and analysed. This data is related to the age and gender of the visitors. The largest and most important group of people for conversion ratio and the number of visitor, measured by their age, are the groups of 25-44 and 45-54 years. Both Google Analytics and the results of the questionnaire confirm that. Furthermore, more men (56%) than women (44%) visit the website of BBL. However, women have the largest share in the number of conversions (2.3% against 1.6%).

The target group must have an above average combined income, what equals an income of more than €75,000 (Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg, 2013). Looking at the average incomes of the total numbers of households, 30% of them fall in the group with an income equal or above €76,500 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2014).

	Overview locations				
	Sessions (% of total: 93,91% (89.004))	New users (% of total: 90,73% (50.832))	Goal conversion ratio	Goals achieved	Gross annual income[1] (€)
(Not set)	24 (0,03%)	13 (0.03%)	0,00%	0 (0,00%)	-
Drenthe	1,139 (1,36%)	636 (1.38%)	1.67%	19 (1.09%)	54,400
Flevoland	2,461 (2.94%)	1,424 (3.09%)	2.36%	58 (3.32%)	58,600
Friesland	1,183 (1.42%)	702 (1.52%)	2.03%	24 (1.37%)	51,100
Gelderland	13,148 (15.73%)	7,442 (16.14%)	2.23%	293 (16.76%)	57,800
Groningen	1,185 (1.42%)	709 (1.54%)	2.03%	24 (1.37%)	46,100
Limburg	1,177 (1.41%)	716 (1.55%)	2.21%	26 (1.49%)	52,900
North-Brabant	11,022 (13.19%)	6,405 (13.89%)	2.03%	224 (12.81%)	57,900
North-Holland	14,124 (16.90%)	8,133 (17.63%)	2.19%	309 (17.68%)	59,200
Overijssel	15,814 (18.92%)	7,377 (16.00%)	1.49%	236 (13.50%)	54,800
South-Holland	13,712 (16.90%)	7,714 (16.73%)	2.25%	308 (17.62%)	58,400
Utrecht	7,833 (9.37%)	4,444 (9.64%)	2.73%	214 (12.24%)	63,100
Zeeland	760 (0.91%)	405 (0.88%)	1.71%	13 (0.74%)	55,400

Table 4

However, only 0.3% of the households have an income higher than one hundred thousand Euro per year. This is equivalent to about 25,000 households (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2014). As expected, the customers of BBL must have an above average income, since people with an average income cannot afford to build the houses of BBL. The results of the questionnaire clearly show that the largest groups has an income between €35,000 and €70,000 and higher than €100.000,- (both 32.5%). At a short distance the group with an income between €70,001 and €100,000 (27.5%) follows. Other variables of the target audience which are worth mentioning are that 92.5% lives together or are married, and two-thirds of this group also has children. By far most people work in employment, followed by the group of entrepreneurs. The income and the type of work are unrelated to each other, in other words, an entrepreneur does not earn more, on average, compared to people in employment or vice versa. To the question why people want to build their own house, 57.5% answers it always has been a dream to build one for themselves. Motivations as family expansion or the costs compared to buying a house are no reasons to build a house. To get a picture of the interests of people, some general questions regarding the interests of people have been asked. It is interesting to know what their interests are, because when an advertisement is placed via Social Media, particularly on Facebook, a selection can be made on the hand of people's interests. In this way, a very specific marketing campaign can be developed for a particular audience that has the most potential. Questions have been asked to value certain interests to the degree of affinity. The interests categories contains of sports, travel, entertainment, relaxation, and types of cars. With regard to the first category, the majority of the target audience have little or no affinity for any sport asked. Football and cycling score slightly better, with an average affinity of 30%. Sports like golf and hockey were suspected to be more popular, because usually these are more popular in the higher income class, but the opposite seems to be the truth. Travel, in contrast, scores on each criterion actually quite well. The results show that the largest group of potential customers have an average or above average interests in every form of traveling. In fact, the best scoring value 'much affinity' scores best for every criterion. Next category is about entertainment. Against expectations, the scores for theatre and concert are below average. The cinema and shopping show an average affinity, and the restaurant is for many people the most popular form of entertainment. In line with the popularity of the restaurant, cooking as relaxation scores also well. Nearly half of the respondents have much to a lot affinity for cooking. Reading also scores above average. Walking, photography, and painting have the worst scores. In the last category, people have been asked to value their affinity with certain types of cars. As expected the luxury car scores best in terms of affinity. Three quarters of the respondents have an average or above average with those cars. The criteria SUV and sport cars show a moderate score. People have the least affinity with a hybrid/electric car and classic cars.

Concluding, the target market of the company is a small market, or a niche market. BBL is focussing on two different target markets: (1) *High-end villa market:* small niche market, individual clients, in which exclusivity, uniqueness, craftsmanship, and custom made are important factors. (2) *Luxury house market:* market where detached houses are produced which are positioned just under the high-end villa market. For this market BBL cooperates with partners, such as real estate agents and local governments, to outperform more large-scale projects instead of one private project.

4.2.1.3 Internal Analysis

The internal analysis covers three parts which are important to identify the degree of readiness of the company in using online marketing and to assess the effects for the company itself (Constantinides, 2002). The analysis will focus on the company's resources, processes and values.

(a) Resources. The company possesses a considerable amount of experience, as the company exists for 80 years. Despite the team consist of young employees, it has enough skills and they are result-oriented, so they are able to achieve desirable results. The management team is ambitious and wants to grow in terms of sales, as well as the company itself. In the last couple of years, the company has been able to manage that there are a large number of reference projects. These references apply to the company as an important showcase in attracting new, potential customers, and to show what the company is capable of. By the number of large construction projects in recent years and the current year, the company has also managed to have a financially sound balance sheet. In 2014 they even receive an award for this, the 'financial healthy award'. However, the strong growth has also led to a number of implications. There is no clear, unilateral structure within the company. This makes the atmosphere is in some cases too informal, too social, and little concretely towards stakeholders, customers, and suppliers. This at the expense of, for example, the quality of the handover of a house, as demonstrated by the outcomes of a client survey outperformed by the company itself.

(b) Processes. BBL has a very traditional way of selling their product. This is because each house is unique in terms of the design, what makes new sales channels, such as the Internet, less appropriate. Potential customers are attracted via (online) marketing activities or customers who already have heard of BBL contact the company directly. After customers have contacted the company, or vice versa, the production process starts. In an initial meeting, the sellers are trying to convince the customers to choose for BBL. This meeting usually takes place at the office building in Rijssen, where the company has specially designed meeting rooms. These rooms are designed in such a way, it has the looks the company strives for. Main motivation for this meeting is to win confidence, so the customers feel a sense of trust. In the construction industry, this is important because building a house is a long, expensive, and complex process. In addition, for many people a home is one of the most valuable assets they have, so one can imagine people find it very important the construction process goes as smooth as possible. During the construction process, the needs of the customers are the main concerns. In other words, the company is very customer focused. The company carries out much of the work on the customer's behalf. For example planning permissions or construction tenders are all arranged by BBL, so customers do not have to do anything, except to sign the final documents to start with the actual construction of the villa. This process is labelled as the 'total formula' the company offers as a unique selling point. This also implies the company regulates the interior or the landscaping of the garden, if customers require to do so.

(c) Values. For BBL it is important to show the brand stands for quality. The brand is put to the market as a premium brand. Further, the fact the company is located in the eastern part of the Netherlands, the company wishes to express sociability and common sense, two statements which are distinctive to that part of the Netherlands. In addition, the company provides enhanced value to the customers because within the company short lines between the different departments ensure a quick and adequate communication towards the customer. However, a customer satisfaction survey demonstrates another perspective. The company asks customers, three months after the key transfer to fill in the survey. For the analysis, the customer surveys of 2011 until now have been used. Before 2011, the company worked with a slightly different survey, so to avoid any bias only the latest version has been used. The questions cover the different stages in the construction process; preliminary stage, purchase phase, construction phase, handover, aftercare & service. The survey results evaluating, shows very good ratings of customers for the first three stages. However, the last two stages, the handover and aftercare & service show insufficient results. This makes clear the company lacks value addition during this part of the construction process. Further worthwhile to mention is the company does a little with the outcomes of the customer survey. Very negative reactions are briefly discussed in a meeting, but hard solutions to solve the problems during these stages are not further elaborated.

4.2.1.4 Strategic Role of the Web Activities

The strategic role of the web activities is to show potential customers what the company is capable of. This is accomplished by showing a portfolio of the houses the company has built in the past. With this portfolio, the company tries to convince customers to contact the company and eventually, to get customers so far they actually choose for the company. Additional, reviews of customers about the product and the company itself are presented on the website. The strategic role of these webpages is purely promotional. Besides, visitors can also visit the site to collect information about the company itself, to read blogs about related topics in field of constructing houses, and the 10-step plan is presented. This plan is a unique selling point of the company, because it is unique in the villa construction market, since few companies offer a total care package. Those webpages do have an informational role.

4.2.2 Site: Web Experience

The website functions as the display window of a retail store. According to Constantinides (2002), the company's website is the most important element of E-commerce. It aims to attract online traffic, to get in contact with potential customers and to increase brand awareness. So besides the website functions as a sales channel, it also allows customers to communicate with the company. This communication or interaction process can be directed as providing customer services, for example a helpdesk, but it can also function as information supplier to stakeholders. Overall, visitors have new opportunities in networking and collaborating with each other and with the company, as well as creating online content (Constantinides, 2002; Chang, Jackson, & Grover, 2003; Constantinides, 2013). Except a website offers customer features, a website also needs to function well in terms of user friendliness, site speed, and findability (Constantinides, 2002). Another, very important point to mention and what is becoming more and more important in designing the

website, is the displaying on mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets (Marcotte, 2013; NOS, 2015). The remainder of section 4.2.2. will delve further into the experience and website functionality.

Firstly, a brief description of the content on the company's website will be provided. An overview of the homepage can be found in the Appendix, figure E. Entering the homepage of the website, a slideshow of photos and sketches are shown. Some general information about the company and the process of building a house is given about. This text is constructed in such a way it will contribute to the SEO. Further, the menu bar on the top of the page contains links to the page where more detailed information about the company can be read, a portfolio with pictures of realised villas, references in the media, customer reviews, the unique 10-step construction plan of BBL, current news, a blog, and a contact page. In addition, on the homepage a link can be find that links directly to the page to make a request for the brochure. At the top of the page, symbols with links to Social Media websites are placed, which link to the profiles of the company. Evidenced by the responses of the questionnaire, people find the portfolio of the villa by far the most important part of the website. The information about the company, customers reviews, the unique 10-steps plan of BBL, and current issues are rated as important. The blog is judged as average on the scale how important this part is for the website. The content on the website is updated as much as possible. Current issues, such as an open house or a project which goes on sale, is posted on the website. However, the blogs, frequently asked questions, and the references are not updated regularly for example, making them obsolete or no longer relevant. This has to do with the organisation within the company itself. This will be further discussed in more details in section 4.2.3. Other comments of visitors, obtained from the outcomes of the survey, is they want more information about the villas, like on overview of the layout or a floor plan, the costs of the built house, and more videos with customer experiences with BBL.

Secondly, the design of the website is also of importance for the experience of the visitors. A website which does not have the proper looks, ensures visitors will drop out earlier, meaning the bounce rate of such websites is generally higher. So with regards to the looks of the website, only 5 percent believe it is not an attractive website, according to the outcomes of the survey. The website has a professional look, styled in the colours of the company. This leads to recognition by the website visitors. Compared with other websites, the website of BBL is not built as and interactive one. In other words, this kinds of websites were sufficient a few years back, but nowadays more is expected from a website, like the possibility to have chat conversations with the helpdesk for example. However, one must consider how an interactive website can contribute to the company itself. As mentioned, BBL is a company operating in a niche market, with a website where already quite a lot of visitors come each month, so what would be the contribution of an interactive website for a company as BBL? Therefore, the contribution of a more interactive website should be balanced with the benefits of it.

Thirdly, it is important to know how the visitors have found the website. Therefore, an overview of the top 20 Adwords is presented in Table 5. Most visitors are attracted by using remarketing. Remarketing are the banner advertisements of the company. They have developed different banners, consisting of banners with pictures and text banners. Furthermore, the search words 'huis bouwen (house construction)' yields most of the conversions, what corresponds with the most brochure requests. During the years, various SEOs and SEAs have been tested on their performance, wherein poorly performing keywords are paused, or the budget has been increased in order to get a better ranking. If we take a closer look to Table 6 and 7, in which the sources and of the visitors are described, it is clear most visitors come via the Google search engine. This is in itself no surprise, since many people have set Google as their standard search engine and people do not often type the entire URL of a website, especially when it a long or difficult one (Stichting Internet Domeinregistratie Nederland, 2014). The 'Google' visitors also have a high rate of conversion. If the monthly website performance overviews, generated by the external company are analysed, the performance of the website is lagged behind regarding the targets set. Besides, the cost per conversion are also higher as set. In addition, the ranking in the Google search results for the main keyword (huis bouwen) is only rank 12[3], which means the website appears on the second page. On the other hand, the website appears at the top of the sponsored links. At time of writing, the company has just engaged in ID-tracking of site visitors. This will give more detailed information of the website, but more important, how to optimise the SEO and SEA for the website. With ID tracking the company will be able to get a more detailed information of how the visitors have found the website of BBL via Google for example.

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[3] Reference date May 1, 2015

Top 20 Adwords Overview					
	Sessions	Goal conversion ratio	Goals achieved	CPC	Total costs
(remarketing/content targeting)	15.297	1,82%	278	€ 0,49	€ 6.395,64
huis bouwen	7.541	2,53%	191	€ 1,76	€ 12.912,91
+woning +bouwen	1.142	3,15%	36	€ 0,74	€ 843,80
+huis +ontwerpen	1.050	1,24%	13	€ 0,51	€ 535,59
architect	732	0,82%	6	€ 0,58	€ 389,29
+een +huis +bouwen	596	0,67%	4	€ 0,59	€ 405,16
+wat +kost +een +huis +bouwen	593	0,34%	2	€ 0,66	€ 380,64
+eigen +huis +bouwen	507	2,96%	15	€ 0,79	€ 382,64
+vrijstaande +woning +bouwen	457	1,09%	5	€ 0,69	€ 304,29
+huis +bouwen +prijzen	435	2,07%	9	€ 0,65	€ 265,89
+huis +laten +bouwen +kosten	381	1,05%	4	€ 0,68	€ 254,71
+kosten +huis +bouwen	376	0,53%	2	€ 0,63	€ 227,41
+villa +bouwen	348	2,59%	9	€ 0,74	€ 236,79
+huis + bouwen +kosten	330	1,21%	4	€ 0,63	€ 202,89
+casco +huis +bouwn	324	2,78%	9	€ 0,79	€ 250,21
+huis +bouwen +voorbeelden	287	2,09%	6	€ 0,68	€ 180,42
huizen bouwen	264	2,27%	6	€ 2,14	€ 539,69
+bouwen +van +een +huis	260	0,00%	0	€ 0,65	€ 164,56
+houten +huis +bouwen +prijzen	244	0,41%	1	€ 0,52	€ 125,61
+villabouw	244	3,69%	9	€ 0,68	€ 155,18

Table 5

Sources					
	Sessions (% of total (89,004))	New users (% of total (50,875))	Avg. session duration	Bounce rate	Goal conversions rate	Goal completions (% of total (1,793))
Google	69,934 (78,57%)	38,303 (75,29%)	00:02:16	44.74%	2.13%	1.489 (83,05%)
Direct	9,397 (10,56%)	5,572 (10,95%)	00:03:53	54.44%	1.63%	153 (8.53%)
Referral	2,462 (2.77%)	1,692 (3.33%)	00:00:43	81.11%	0.04%	1 (0.06%)
Bing	1,985 (2.23%)	1,585 (3.12%)	00:01:52	48.51%	1.61%	32 (1.78%)
Pinterest.com	721 (0.81%)	560 (1.10%)	00:01:21	59.64%	1.11%	8 (0.45%)

Table 6

Sources					
	Sessions (% of total (89,004))	New users (% of total (50,875))	Avg. session duration	Bounce rate	Goal conversions rate	Goal completions (% of total (1,793))
Organic search	30,027 (33.74%)	18,531 (36.42%)	00:03:11	36.95%	2.38%	714 (39.82%)
Paid search	26,942 (30.27%)	21,307 (41.88%)	00:01:25	48.52%	2.00%	539 (30.06%)
Direct	9,397 (10.56%)	5,573 (10.95%)	00:03:53	54.44%	1.63%	153 (8.53%)
Display (banner)	11,204 (12.59%)	251 (0.49%)	00:02:04	49.97%	1.80%	202 (11.27%)
Social	1,435 (1.61%)	1,008 (1.98%)	00:01:49	53.66%	1.53%	22 (1.23%)

Table 7

In Table 8 the key figures of the website are presented, broken down into visitors coming from a PC or laptop (desktop), tablet, and mobile phone. On average, between 2,000 and 2,500 visitors per month visit the website of BBL (objective per month is 2,500 visitors). Next, the goal conversion ratio is set at 2.00%, so over a period of nearly two years, this objective has been achieved. However, the conversion ratio is decreasing the last five months, and compared with the first 3 months in 2014 with those of 2015, the conversion rate is considerably lower. (Jan-Mar 2015: 1.69%. 1.68%, 1.64%; Jan-Mar 2014: 1.99%, 2.47%, 2.11%). Analysing the average bounce rate, it is obvious mobile visitors show a much higher percentage in comparison to desktop and tablet visitors. Google has set a standard between 40% and 60% to be acceptable as bounce rate percentages. Mobile visitors show a rate of almost 60%. One explanation for this is the website is not responsive for mobile phone use. Not having a responsive website was also one the comments left by a respondent of the survey. Therefore, many visitors will leave the website much faster, compared to desktop visitors. This is also reflected in the average session duration, which is much lower than average. Apart from that, a higher bounce rate may not be a worst case scenario immediately. The bounce rate of the contact page is in general very high, since people leave within 10 seconds after knowing the contact details. The same phenomenon is also applicable to the website of BBL, where a percentage of 70% was measured. Contrary, the portfolio pages show a very low rate of no more than 40%, which can be explained because the portfolio is the reason of the visit for the people. If smartphone visitors are analysed in more detail, most visitors are visiting the website via Google, both organic and paid. The visitors coming through Social Media is relatively low, slightly more than 6%, with most people coming to the website through Pinterest (57%) and Facebook (21%). But important to mention is that up from June 2014, almost every month more people have visit the website while using their mobile phones; 268 visitors in June 2014 and 605 visitor in March 2015. Interesting fact to mention is the majority of the website visitors have an iPhone.

4.2.3 Synergy: Integration

Constantinides (2002, p. 65) defined synergy as 'the integrating processes necessary for realising the virtual organisation's objectives. Such synergies can develop between the virtual and the physical organisation as well as between the virtual organisation and third parties.' BBL has a physical presence in the form of an office building, and a virtual presence in the form of a website. The integration of both worlds is complex and a wide range of issues can occur, which are categorised into three different categories. (1) The Front Office refers to the conventional corporate communication and distribution strategies (Constantinides, 2002). This integration facilitates the integration of the new way of communicating into the conventional communication strategy. Main purpose here is to inform existing and potential customers about the new web activities and the advantages of it. Next, by integrating the web activities with the existing promotional activities will result in an efficient marketing tool at low cost and a better launching of promotional campaigns (Constantinides, 2002). (2) The Back Office is the largest category regarding the set of issues. The new E-Commerce activities should be integrated in the existing operations, in order to ensure visitors will stay on your website (Constantinides, 2002). A poorly designed or functioning website will lead to dissatisfied visitors, so they will leave the website and look to websites of competitors. But if the visitor stays, time has come to gain the benefits from it (Chang, Jackson, & Grover, 2003). The article further discusses more issues regarding the Back Office integration, but those points of interest are more oriented to websites with an online webshop. In

Key figures Website				
	Desktop	Tablet	Mobile	Overall
Sessions	56,366	25,546	7,092	89,004
New users	34,754	11,792	4,329	50,832
Perc. new sessions	61.66%	46.16%	61.04%	57.11%
Pages per session	4.29	4.19	2.82	4.15
Av. session duration	00:02:27	00:02:30	00:01:25	00:02:23
Bounce percentage	45.71%	46.75%	57.92%	46.98%
Goal conversion ratio	2.03%	2.19%	1.27%	2.01%
Goals achieved	1,143	560	90	1,793

Table 8

this study, this is not the purpose of the website, so these issues are left out of consideration. The (3) Third parties integration is about networking between other (virtual) organisations. A company should take notion of how search engines, like Google and Bing, work in creating enhanced findability on the Internet. As discussed in the literature review, companies must deepen their knowhow of SEM. Other parties to involve, to create an affiliate network, are partners willing to place a link of the company's website on their own website. This is a low-cost manner of market exposure, especially for new online organisations (Constantinides, 2002). However, a careful selection of partners is important, since a negative image of one partner may have its impact on the organisation itself. Another aspect of the third parties integration is about online advertising, like banners, buttons, or hyperlinks (Constantinides, 2002). Here, according to Constantinides (2002), it also requires a company selects its partners very carefully. In addition, the literature interrogates the effectiveness of banner ads. In many ads the CTR is low and generally only novice Internet users click on banner ads, and this group will become smaller in the near future (Constantinides, 2002; Dahlén, 2001).

4.2.3.1 Front Office Integration

The company's website is the most important part of all the marketing activities. Previously, advertisements in newspapers and magazines were the most used marketing tools, but this has been replaced by the website. The website is the central contact point for customers, since contact details can be found on the website, and it is the initial way to apply for a brochure. The site address is displayed on promotional materials, such as brochures, the company's writing paper and newsletters send by e-mail. In the latest brochure there has even been a QR-code that links to a video about the villa. So in general, the website is well integrated with the traditional marketing campaigns, since enough links are made to the online marketing activities.

4.2.3.2 Back Office Integration

As visitors contact the company via the website by email or phone, this is centrally managed through the secretary. She ensures the visitors get in contact with the right person within the company. She also document the brochure requests together with the sales team. A few days after the requests, the sales team contacts the brochure applicant by phone, and an automatic generated email is sent with a link to the digital version of the brochure, so people can also look at the brochure online and are able to share it more easier. The website is maintained by three members, one of which is the owner of the company and the other two members are actually working in another department. Those two are actually the ones who maintain the website, the owner outlines how he wants it. In addition, the external company is responsible for parts of the website, including the design outline and the SEO and SEA strategy. Obviously, this takes place in consultation with the company itself. Every month there is a meeting with the external company to discuss certain topics to improve the performance of the website. During the meeting in April 2015, a different approach of the contract has been discussed. This means the external company will shift to a more advisory role towards BBL. So the implementation of certain tasks will become tasks for BBL itself. This new development is encouraged by both companies. At the time of conducting this analysis, a lot of data is already generated by the external company and BBL has access to the data generated by Google Analytics. This data provides valuable information to improve the website and to adapt the needs of the visitors. Further, every two weeks an intern meeting is planned with the marketing team, where progress and current issues related to the website are discussed and solved.

The staff who updates the site also have other tasks, tasks which have most of the times higher priorities. This brings maintaining the website often comes second in a row. This causes some parts of the website are not up-to-date, like the FAQ page and the references for example. Further, important decisions which have to be made regarding the website are postponed. This will even further deteriorate if the people who manage the website need to do more in maintaining the website, because of the new contract role with the external company and the heavy workload of the staff having other tasks not related to the marketing field. The tasks in the field of online marketing are distributed among the marketing team, everyone knows his role, but there is a lack of clear agreements, no online marketing strategy is present, and not everyone has sufficient knowledge how to conduct online marketing. Furthermore it is expected that one of the members will stop within a short period of time as a member of the marketing team. This will cause a further increase of the workload for the other two members, and ultimately have consequences for the online marketing activities. In addition, the collaboration between the different internal departments lacks a good collaboration. Content such as photos of projects which are under construction can easily be shoot by the supervisors on the construction site, so the marketing department has valuable content to place online in a blog or on Social Media for example. Besides,

the sales team knows which projects are interesting for posting on the website, and what questions potential customers have. These questions could be posted on the website's FAQ page, so the websites serves it visitors better. Also too little is attention is paid to the data collection by the external company and Google Analytics. A critical look on the efficiency of the SEA misses, causing money is wasted unnecessarily. In short, the marketing department suffers from the fact there is insufficient time to carry out all the work required and the internal communication between different departments is far from efficient.

4.2.3.3 Third Party Integration

The company brand name is mentioned on several websites related to house construction, like droomhuis.nl, eigenhuisbouwen.nl, and kavelenhuis.wordpress.com. People who are browsing on those website are referred to the website of BBL. If people search on a search engine, these websites also appear. Another way of attracting people is via partner links. The company works with different subcontractors, like architects, thatchers, installers and wholesalers. Through these subcontractors, potential customers could be attracted. These customers are often looking more specific and are further in the process of constructing a new house compared to 'shoppers', which are more situated in the orientation phase. But the company does not actively place partner links to its website, and vice versa. Next to this, the company is very active in remarketing by means of banner advertisements. Visitors who have visited the website, but have not requested a brochure, receive banner advertisements from BBL if they visit other websites. As Table 5 showed, most visitors are attracted through remarketing. The conversion ratio of remarketing is on average, meaning enough goals are completed. However, it is the second most expensive form of paid marketing. Next to this, remarketing in the shape of banners are often experienced as annoying advertisements. As mentioned, BBL cooperates with an external company which has designed the website and regulated the online marketing activities. They try to coordinate the search engine and web directories as much as possible, ranging from the development of new Google ads to the meta description. These service cost a lot of money, but are vital and necessary for a proper website and for the findability of the website. Especially because these kinds of organisations have contracts with Google, and therefore they play a valuable role in terms of the search engine results. Beyond the website, the external company handles all website and Social Media related marketing activities BBL cannot do for itself. Besides they regulate the Adwords campaign. All of this in consultation with BBL. However, the relationship with the external company is not always the most desirable one. During writing this analysis, there have been some issues regarding the functioning of the website which not have been solves smoothly. This had partly to do with internal affairs within the external company. Furthermore, the company charges high amounts for their services compared to other companies.

4.2.4 System: Technology, Technical Requirements, and Web Site Administration

This section covers the technological issues which can occur when entering the online environment. A website should meet certain criteria in order to meet the expectations of the visitor. This will prevent customer dissatisfaction, diminishing experience, and lost sales (Constantinides, 2002). Important system-related decisions concern the following areas. The site should be available 24/7 for visitors and support staff. Therefore, it is important to have a sound back-up system, in order to solve technical issues quickly with the minimal amount of effort. Besides, the site construction is an important area. The website should be user-friendly and quick to use, it must have an appropriate appearance and it should be working on any device. Regarding the content of the website, it must be kept up-to-date with the expectations of visitors, market trends, and competitive strategies (Constantinides, 2002). Further, the evaluation of the website is of importance. Via the collection of traffic data, valuable data about the functioning of the website, testing new ideas and the effect of promotions can be assessed (Constantinides, 2002).

In this section the focus is on the underlying website requirements. The website is built by the external company, which also manages the construction and design of certain parts of the website. The hosting is also externally controlled. If certain parts of the website are not functioning properly, the external company will be contacted as soon as possible to solve the bugs. Small improvements to the website can be made by the staff of the marketing team, as long as those requirements do not involve changes to the templates. So adding photos, text or videos can be managed by the staff. The external company also takes care for the backups of the website. As BBL chooses to change much to its website, the company also makes one for itself before the changes are implemented. With regard to the security of the website, currently the site does not make use of the recently introduced *https* protocol. Now, the website of BBL is not one where personal or privacy-sensitive information is issued immediately, however, having an *https* protocol for the website does not only

guarantee the security of the visitors, is also influences the ranking in the Google listings. Quoting Google (2014): "over the past few months we've been running tests taking into account whether sites use secure, encrypted connections as a signal in our search ranking algorithms." In other words, when the switch to *https* is not made in the near future, this will have consequences for the ranking in the search results.

In the survey some questions have been asked regarding the usefulness of the website. On the top of the website a simple menu bar ensures user- friendliness. A simple menu bar allows users to browse quickly and easily between different pages. This is confirmed by the outcomes of the customer survey, since 97.5% believe the information is easy to find and more than 90% of the visitors are satisfied with the provided information. On top of the home page links are placed to the Social Media profiles of the company, except the LinkedIn page. In addition, on the page with the villa's the ability to share the photos via Facebook, Twitter, Google+, or Pinterest is offered. However, this ability is only used for one of the villas. Analysing the users flowchart and the percentage of user click on the website, the following can be said. One footnote, one should take into account that the website is evolving during the year and certain elements are added or dismissed in a previous or later stage. 26% of the visitors go from the homepage to the page about the built villas. The next most popular pages are the customer reviews and contact page, with 3.2% and 5.5% respectively. These findings are consistent with the results of the survey, in which 97.5% has responded the portfolio is important, or even the most important part of the website. Two-third of the respondents have answered that the reviews are also important, nearly 30% find it very important. The blog is seen as the least important part of the website. If we analyse the percentage of clicks on the link to the brochure requests, visible in the right corner of every page, this ratio is 1.9%, measured from the homepage. This corresponds to more than 750 brochures over two years.

4.3 Findings Website Analysis

This section summarises the findings of the analysis and has the same structure the previous section. For an overview of the findings regarding the website analysis, the main points are summarised in a SWOT-matrix, as seen in figure F.

4.3.1 Product and Marketing

The villas of BBL are high quality, traditionally built houses, of which every house is unique. A thatched roof, white stuccowork, wooden boards, and large chimneys are characteristic features of the building style of the company. Each villa is tailored to the needs and program of requirements of the customer. In addition, each villa is designed by an architect. This ensures the uniqueness of the product. Prices start at around half a million euros, rising to the maximum what a client wants and can afford to pay. BBL is thus in the premium segment of the housing market. Besides the expensive villas, the company also builds houses in the upper or luxury segment. This is often done by means of projects, developed internally or in collaboration with partners, where several houses are designed and built at the same time.

4.3.2 Marketing

In 2009, the company has prepared a business plan in which the marketing objectives are also incorporated. The objectives are much in line with the company's vision to offer the client the total formula. The marketing objectives are stated in a very general way, what makes the objective is applicable to the entire company, not specifically for its marketing activities. A marketing objective should focus more on what will be achieved with those activities, like for example to increase the brand awareness of the business or to have more brochure request. Such objectives are more suitable for an marketing strategy. The marketing strategy in the business plans consist of an enumeration of buying motives, strengths of the product are described, and strong and weak points of the different competitors, This means the company has had a critical view at itself, the market, and their competitors. Those points give some focus and serves as a framework for the marketing activities. However, it lacks a clear definition which marketing activities should be undertaken to realise the objectives. Additionally, the objectives and marketing strategy should be reviewed every year to adjust the right marketing activities. In this way, the marketing strategy will remain competitive and it will have the intended effects. Because there is no review of the marketing activities, the current strategy does not mention anything about online marketing or Social Media marketing. In short, the marketing departments lacks a suitable organisation of its marketing activities to make it to become successful.

4.3.3 Website

(Scope). The market conditions in the construction industry are beginning to show some positive omens. This is reflected in the figures of the CBS, but also in the number of orders and sales appointments already have

taken place this year. The fact that the construction industry is a cyclical sensitive industry, it is expected the economic conditions remain favourable for the near future. Moreover, the niche market in which BBL operates has not been affected that hard compared to other companies operating in the prefab construction industry. After all, the individuals in the premium niche market have a lot of capital, and this will not quickly disappear. In addition, there are relatively few competitors in the market. Each construction company, specialises in villa construction of building luxury houses, has developed his own style, which serve certain groups of customers. The competition therefore does not cause an immediate threat. Besides, most projects of BBL are located in areas where people have an above average income. The company is not located in that region, but this is not necessarily a disadvantage, since the east of the Netherlands, in particular Rijssen, is known as a place with many and highly respected construction companies. The company is aware of the location of potential customers, and in general the company's location is not a problem for doing business.

Looking at the potential group of customers in more detail, than the results show this group has an age of between 35 and 54 years, and has an above average income. The majority is married, some of which also have children. The business plan shows the company focuses on individual or households with an income of €75,000 or higher. The questionnaire shows however, that the largest group of clients has an income between €35,000 and €70,000. This has partly due to many projects accomplished the last few months with houses below the average construction cost of a villa. But nevertheless, with the current view a large part of potential customers are not reached. BBL is fully aware it serves two different markets, two markets which requires different approaches. This is an important starting point, since the premium villa market has different requirements, desires, and expectations of the company compared with the luxury house market.

From the internal analysis some issues have emerged. Strong points are the company has more than enough financial resources and it has an extensive portfolio of finished villas. Offering the 'total formula' is a good marketing tool, because not all competitors offer this possibility. The formula is extensively described on the website, so visitors are able to read the content of the formula. However, the last step of the formula, the aftercare, the company fails to offer the service as promised. Despite it is the last step and the work has been done for 99%, this step is also of importance in order to guarantee the satisfaction of the client. Customers can publish negative reviews or will not recommend the company through word-of-mouth advertising, what means unwanted, negative publicity for the company. Offering good aftercare is definitely an issue for the company. Last note is about the strategic role of the website. The website informs, shows, and visitors have the opportunity to request for a brochure. This makes the role of the website is both informative and promotional.

(Site). For a company that uses the website as a display window, the looks, content, and the portfolio is of great importance. The homepage of the website is recognisable as a website of BBL through the used colours. In addition, the users experience the website as user-friendly. Regarding the portfolio, BBL has 30 projects placed on its website, which are supplemented with recently completed villas. Also more than 40 sketches of houses are presented. For visitors there is plenty of inspirational material on the website. Regarding the content, visitors experience the website as informative and the information is sufficient. However, the findability on Google through SEO is inadequate. The ranking is not desirable, the page of BBL is on the second page of the results, at rank 12. The SEA however performance rather well, it always appears at the top of the paid advertisements in Google, resulting it automatically stand as the first URL at the search page. But in terms of the SEO content the site has deferred maintenance and is not regularly updated. But the company is recently starting up the ID-tracking of website visitor, which is good for the development and optimisation of the SEM. Unless this new development, the company still faces the issue of not having a responsive website for mobile phone users. The figures clearly show those users perform worse in term of conversion, while this is precisely something the company wants to enhance. Not having a suitable mobile website is not only bad for the experience of the visitor, but also for the ranking in the Google search results.

(Synergy). The literature dictates that integrating online marketing with traditional marketing, and especially with the company as a whole, is necessary to make online marketing works. In case of BBL, concerning the front office integration, the website is seen as the main marketing tool and it is rather the traditional marketing tools are adapted to the website. Take for example the QR-code in the brochure. Regarding the back office integration, the website lacks in being responsive to mobile phone use. This not only harms the experience of visitors, but also has negative consequences for the ranking in Google search results. In addition, the internal cooperation between various departments is not optimal. For example, the sales department is little involved

with the marketing activities, while they can have valuable information to be placed on the website. The overall impression is the marketing activities are secluded or a self-contained department at the company. Also in the third party integration the company can win. Up to now, the company is not active with creating partner links, so no affiliate network is created with other businesses. Moreover, link building as part of SEM contributes to the findability on Google. But the company scores well via the banner ads, part of the remarketing. Many returning visitors come through remarketing to the website and this group also has a high number of conversions. Last finding out of the analysis is about the cooperation with the external company. A construction company does not always has the internal knowledge in the field of online marketing. This is also the case at BBL. Therefore they cooperate with a specialised external company. However, the figures shows the objectives are not reached for the last couple of months, and it is an expensive service, taking a great part of the marketing costs for its account.

(System). The website is managed by both BBL and the external company. Technical issues, such as changes in the templates, are carried out by the external company and BBL manages the content of the website. If problems are detected, these are as quickly as possible solved by the external company. The visitors of the website are also very satisfied with the provided information and the findability of it. A technological requirement which, however, the site has not yet is an *https* protocol. Such a protocol is not only important to ensure the integrity and privacy of visitors, but is also affects a good ranking in the Google search results.

4.4 Social Media Analysis

4.4.1 Social Media applications

At the time of writing this paper[3], the company makes use of five Social Media applications. These are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, and Google+. There is a sixth application, LinkedIn, but no link is placed on the website and the company does not actively participate on LinkedIn. The difference between the Social Media applications are already discussed in section 2.2.3. Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ are used most intensively. If content is placed, those three applications are used simultaneously. That means if a message is posted on Facebook, the same message is placed on Google+ and a shorter version is placed on Twitter. At the start of this research, an average of two messages per week are placed on Social Media. The message contains of different content, ranging from sketches and photographs of finished villas to text posts referring to a blog on the company's website. This section is further divided into subsections per Social Media application, wherein both the content and the target audience will be analysed.

(a) Facebook. In September 2011, the company began actively participating on Facebook. The first messages posted online contained pictures of finished projects, so the page had directly interesting content for its page visitors. At the time of writing, the company's profile has 371 likes. An upward trend can be observed in the number of likes in the past six months. Last month (April 2015) the number of likes has increased by over 3%. The likes consist of individuals and companies, of which most companies often have a regional character or are related to the construction industry. Among the likers are also commercial organisations, such as the magazine Kavel en Huis and the magazine about real estate Vastgoedjournaal. Both pages are well-known and influential organisations in the construction sector. According to the statistics of the Facebook page of BBL, it has an average, daily range of 205 users, of which 37 users are engaged users (PTAT). The engagement rate for the Facebook page is around the 18%. The engagement rate is the number of likes, response, and number of shares compared to the people who have seen the message. The range of 205 users can be divided into 151 organic users and 54 paid users. By only one paid promotional action of BBL, the Facebook page has reached significantly more people. Next, per message an average of 160 users are reached. Out of the analysis of those figures, it makes clear that if the company does not post regularly, fewer people are reached. This emphasizes again how important it is to post on a regular base. The visitors of the website have been asked in the questionnaire on which Social Media applications they operate. The results show that almost two-third (62.5%) has a Facebook account, and 35% are online every day. The statistics generated by Facebook about the number people who have liked the page, and the number of reached and engaged people, shows they correspond with the target audience of BBL in terms of their age. Especially those aged between 35-44 has liked the page. The category of 45-54 years, also an important target group for BBL in terms of age, however, does not show a representative online presence on Facebook. What is striking is that many men follow the page, women represent only a quarter of the total.

Regarding the content placed online, BBL has managed to find a proper balance in terms of variety of the content. Sketches are shown of villas which will probably be built, pictures of the construction site while the

villas are under construction, the final outcomes of the villa, and posts containing a link to the website if the blog or FAQ is updated. In particular, the process from sketch to final result is a nice artefact, making the progress of the construction process better visible. Except for work- and company-related messages, occasionally more informal messages are posted (i.e. Christmas wishes). In percentages, the company places 68.2% as pictures, movies 4.5%, and 27.3% text posts or status updates. Average 1.76 posts per week are post online, with each post yields on average 15 likes, comments and shares. Apart from good content and the number of posts, more variables are of importance for an effective Facebook page, in order to attract many people. Timing and the length of the post plays also a big role in an effective Facebook marketing campaign. If the timing of the posts are analysed, the majority of the post are placed between 12 – 15 hours. In general, messages placed between 15 – 18 hours generate the most users. Next, if a message contains more characters (>500 characters), these post will generate more responses by followers. This allows for more interaction between users. Analysing the characters, most post consist between 100 and 500 characters. Finally, concerning the content on Facebook, the postings contain not enough interaction possibilities, causing the company cannot interact with the users. The flow of information at this moment is too much focused as one-way traffic, just like a website. Also, hashtags are not used at all. It actually comes from Twitter, but it is very important for Facebook too, in order to find relevant users and to create brand awareness.

Facebook offers in addition to the ability to place free messages also the options to promote a message, so it will reach more followers, and advertisements can be placed. Both are paid services of Facebook. What particularly is appealing for niche players is the fact a company can chose to whom the advertisements are shown. Through a number of variables, a company can select on age and gender, but also on geographical data, points of interests, and on the connections of users. In this way, a very specific group of potential customers can be addressed, so the advertisement will have maximum effectiveness, since the advertisement is not shown to people outside the target audience. The same is applicable to Twitter and YouTube.

(b) Twitter. The company has tweeted her first tweet on September 16, 2011. From that time, regularly tweets have been placed on Twitter. Over the years, Twitter has grown and more statistics can be collected via Twitter Analytics. From 2012 the development of the number of followers are available, and in 2014 statistics regarding the content of the tweets are collected. The latest available statistics show the Twitter page has 1,840 followers, and the company itself follows 1,175 pages. The group of followers is quite a large group, containing of many companies, but individuals as well. In total, 315 tweets have been tweeted over the years. Measured from September 2014, as this is the first full month of which Twitter has collected statistics, there is an average of 5 tweets tweeted per month, in which each tweet generates, on average, 896 view. Further, 195 people visit the twitter page of BBL usually each month. A quarter of the target group is using Twitter, from which most are active daily or several days a week. Yet there is a remarkable difference to the number of followers and users. Compared with Facebook, whit a relatively low number of likes for the page of BBL, does Twitter have many followers in comparison with the Twitter users of the target group. Since July 25, 2013 Twitter as brought 161 visitors to the website, however the rest of the statistics show a high bounce percentage (57.76%), a low number of pages are visited (3.52), and the average time of one session is also low compared with the other Social Media applications (00:01:34). In addition, visitors via Twitter haven not brought any conversion yet.

The content of the tweets is much similar to the messages posted on Facebook. Since Twitter has a limited number of characters, often an abbreviated URL is placed in the tweet linking to the website or another relevant page. With regard to the content of the tweets, it is not applicable for every tweet, but hashtags and the 'at' sign are used as much as possible, in order to generate more views through RTs. Next, for every tweet it is tried to attach a photo with it, because these messages perform best in their views, as the statistics show. The tweets do not generate many responses, but they are retweeted so now and then. Occasionally, BBL is mentioned in a tweet by other companies or followers, those tweets are retweeted by the company itself.

(c) YouTube. With regard to the activities on YouTube, these are rather marginal. The company has an account on YouTube and it contains of 15 short videos. These are uploaded in a period of 5 to 3 years ago. Most of the uploaded videos are compilations of photographs of the built villas. These are the same as the presented pictures on the company's website. Two videos however have been developed as video material. One is a broadcast of a television program in which one of the villas of BBL is highlighted. The other one is about the construction process of one of the villas, including comments of the superintendent. In recent years, there has been little attention to be up-to-date with their YouTube channel. The main cause of this is because

the YouTube profile is no longer accessible, since the username and password are unknown and can no longer be retrieved. The company does not use YouTube as an active marketing tool, it has a more functional function to put videos on YouTube so they are able to place video content on their website more easily. As for the people of the target group, about 28% of the respondents indicated it uses or have their own profile on YouTube. However, YouTube it is not a Social Media application where people have a daily online presence and according to the statistic of Google, YouTube does not attracts much visitors to the website. This number is that low it is negligible.

(d) Pinterest. BBL also has a Pinterest account where photos of the villas are presented. However, when checking the page's statistics, the e-mail address used for the login seems to be a non-existing address. Because a new password was required an email was send to that non-existing address. This means the login details are no longer useable, and as a result, neither the Pinterest page. After some actions we have managed to get access to the account on Pinterest. First thing was to change the e-mail address and password, so the account is accessible again. After it was possible to login to the company's page on Pinterest, some numbers can be presented. The company has 25 active boards with a total of 207 pictures. The company has 50 followers, and follows 64 persons by itself. Judging by the responses of the people on whether they use Pinterest, the analysis shows Pinterest is the least popular Social Media application. Approximately 17.5% said it uses Pinterest. Despite the target group is not very active on Pinterest, it still generates the largest group of visitors to the website of all the used Social Media applications. The fact the profile has not been managed for a long time, little effort has been put into adding new photos in recent months. Current projects placed on the website were not placed on Pinterest. Since many people come through Pinterest to the company's website according to Google Analytics, it is a missed opportunity in attracting potential customers. In addition, the profile on Pinterest is directly converted into a business page, making it easier for the company to receive useful statistics about the page and its visitors in the future.

(f) Google+. During the analysis of the Google+ page of the company a remarkable fact was observed. The company seems to had another company page on Google+ in the past, called 'Lichtenberg bouwbedrijf'. The Google+ link on the company's website was still linked to the old Google+ page. After March 19, 2013 no content was posted on the old page. On the 'new' Google+ page, called 'Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg', content has been placed since the beginning of 2015. The page has no followers yet, but the views are estimated on 23,000 views. No statistics are there to report, because the page is still relatively new and Google cannot show any relative statistics yet. From the target audience, according to the questionnaire, 35% has a Google+ profile. Only a quarter of them are online every day.

(g) LinkedIn. BBL does not operate actively on this platform. There is an account on LinkedIn, but no messages or updates are posted. On the website there is also no reference link to LinkedIn. Worthwhile to mention is the company has two profiles on LinkedIn. One is created as if the company is a person, the other one is a company page. From the last one the login details are not known, so the company cannot login to this page. The login details of the other page are known and a login is possible. Further, the survey revealed that more than half of the visitors (52.5%) is actively participating on LinkedIn. Moreover, it turns out the group of LinkedIn users are generally better educated, and the age distribution is more consistent with the target audience of BBL (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011).

(e) General notes. When new photos of the villas are uploaded or a new blog is posted on the website, it will be announced through Social Media to reach the target audience. To see whether this has any effect, it is compared to the daily number of website sessions. The analysis has focused on the last two months, March and April 2015, because in these months the company was very active on Facebook and the effects will be more visible. Table 9 gives on overview of all the messages posted in those two months. Facebook has been chosen, since the messages on Twitter are the same as Facebook, but Twitter keeps fewer statistics of the messages. he analysis shows that after posting a message there is a peak in the number of sessions the same day compared to the day before. In particular, the posts consisting of photos perform very well. Moreover, it is clearly visible if people give a reaction of share the message it significantly yield more sessions to the company's website. Take for example the best performing messages post on the 9th and 23rd of April on Facebook. The number of visitors to the website on these days compared with the total visitors, Facebook ensures roughly for between 20 and 25 percent of the daily visitors. The data gained via Google Analytics shows, however, the number of conversions are low for Facebook visitors. In the two mentioned months, only two conversions have been yield. Further it shows that Facebook, among other Social Media applications, has

attracted most of the visitors to the website. But if we look to the number of sessions over a period of one year, Pinterest has yield most of the sessions and of from all the used Social Media applications it is also responsible for the highest number of conversions.

4.4.2 Competitor Analysis

As part of the Social Media analysis, a brief overview of the Social Media activities of the competitors is given. This analysis will be less in-depth compared to the analysis of the case company, but it serves as a global outline of the current state of their activities. The selection of the competition is based on the companies mentioned alongside BBL in the magazines of Kavel & Huis. Companies which are not active in Social Media are left out the analysis. An overview of the findings regarding the competitors, can be seen in Table 10. Pinterest is not listed in the table, because SelektHuis was the only company using it. Compared with the Pinterest profile of BBL, SelektHuis has a total of 16 followers and 26 pins. Further, in general the following can be said, based on the table. A quick scan shows the companies Livingstone and SelektHuis perform very well and they are comparable with BBL. Livingstone has in particular a large number of likes on Facebook. SelektHuis has a good presence on all the mentioned Social Media. This causes SelektHuis can reach a wide audiences, ranging from potential customers to jobseekers. If we take a closer look to the Facebook activities, using the *Pages to Watch* tool of Facebook, the engagement ratio, measured by the number of likes, comments and shares of the messages of week 22, BBL had de highest engagement (76) compared to its competitors. The competitors all showed an engagement below 50. The significant engagement is caused by the message of April 28, which has reached many people because the message has been liked a lot.

Broadening the spectrum and analysing what other niche or luxury brands outside the construction sector do on Social Media, with brands such as Aston Martin, Bergdorf Goodman, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, and Tiffany & Co. for example, gives some other interesting perspectives how to use Social Media. All big brands, but focused on a small niche market. The brands are operating on various Social Media applications, those who are also have been discussed in this report. The pages of the brands all have generated many likes, some a few millions, and thus they reach lots of individuals. Most brands post messages on a daily basis,

	Performance Facebook messages vs. website visitors March & April 2015			
Date	Reach	Likes/responses/shared messages	Engagement rate	Increase (+) / Decrease (-) website visitors
2-3-2015	941	25	26%	+
4-3-2015	280	19	16%	+
5-3-2015	302	18	17%	-
9-3-2015	218	5	18%	+
12-3-2015	715	20	11%	-
16-3-2015	406	24	21%	+
19-3-2015	591	23	11%	-
25-3-2015	227	15	14%	+
1-4-2015	243	19	14%	+
2-4-2015	270	6	10%	-
7-4-2015	342	9	23%	+
9-4-2015	397	5	10%	++
17-4-2015	418	22	9%	+
22-4-2015	215	0	1%	+
23-4-2015	1.980	28	5%	++
28-4-2015	1.607	38	11%	+
30-4-2015	497	3	5%	-

Table 9

	Social Media competitor analysis[4]					
	Number of likes (Facebook)	Number of followers (Twitter)	Number of followers (Google+)	Numbers of connections (LinkedIn)	Number of subscribers (YouTube)	General impressions activity
Flieroord	158	35	N/A	N/A	N/A	Very active on Facebook by posting messages frequently. Twitter account is there, however since 2011 no tweets have been posted
Livingstone Villabouw	1.221	372	N/A	148	N/A	On Facebook the company is very active, placing messages ranging from blog posts to photos of projects. On Twitter, the company is less active, the latest tweet is dated 19 February this year. LinkedIn is used to post vacancies.
Presolid Home	134	276	N/A	N/A/	1	Presolid Home places almost once a week messages on Facebook. Twitter does not show any data, this page is closed to non-followers. On YouTube a couple of videos are placed, but here the company is not very active.
Roscobouw	76	1	1	N/A	N/A	Little activity on Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. General level of activity poor.
SelektHuis	357	545	2	400	8	SelektHuis actively posts messages on different Social Media Applications. LinkedIn is used to place vacancies. YouTube contains of many videos, but since it is part of a larger organisation, several other videos are there.
Variahuis	402	27	1	N/A	0	An average activity of two posts per month on Facebook. Other Social Media is poorly maintained or even done nothing with it the last couple of years.
Villabouw Mattone	240	N/A	N/A	79	1	Except Facebook, little is done through Social Media by the company. No company Twitter profile, but profiles by employee/owner
Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg	371	1.840	0	103	7	Online presence on all platforms, in particular Facebook is used properly. The number of likes are rising and the engagement is excellent.

Table 10

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[4] Reference date May 1, 2015

ranging from photos and videos about their products to status updates of events. This variety ensures that pages do not get bored because messages always share different content. Next to this, comparing the different applications of one brand, the posted messages differ on the various applications. For the brands one picture is worth a thousand words, what makes it attractive for fans to share the content with their friends. Also storytelling is an important part of the Social Media strategy, some of which fall back on the history of the brand or important events which have happened in the past. In addition, the text posted in a message is also of importance. The brands anticipate on trending topics, such as upcoming public holidays or a day like Mother's Day. Moreover, messages do not always have a serious or professional character, sometimes the post are very informal. Four Seasons, for example, has a very active marketing department that seriously reacts on comments and like reactions of people. This causes a feeling of involvement by the fans, which will improve the relationship with the brand.

Summarising, having a Facebook page or Twitter profile will not be a guarantee for companies to increases sales or their turnover, but in accordance with the findings of Cone (2008), only the expectations of people to have an online presence on Social Media, is already a reason to be active on it. Furthermore, Social Media is an easy and cheap way to create brand awareness if a company posts messages on a regular basis, with suitable and sharable content. In addition, to generate more traffic to the company's website, placing links in message on Social Media particularly well, and against a low amount of cost.

4.5 Findings Social Media Analysis

From all the different Social Media are Facebook and Twitter the most extensively used applications by the company. The Facebook page of the company, compared to competitors of BBL, has more likes, and this number is growing. The company has once placed a paid message, but the majority of the activities are organic. The paid message is however the best performing message ever posted in terms of reach and engagement. Further, the organic message have on average much likes and are shared by fans, what means there is a wide reach, ranging more people. This is confirmed by, on average, 16% commitment of the messages. However, fans do not respond to posts that often. A reason for this is because the messages do not invite to respond to. In the absence of reactions, BBL itself can also not respond to it, which is not good for the interaction on Facebook. Compared to other luxury companies who are active on Facebook, these have managed to get more interaction, so the company is able to respond what ensures people feel more engaged with a company.

The major advantage in using Facebook is that messages are also picked up by residential or lifestyle magazines, which share the post of BBL. This causes BBL comes to the attention of a much larger group of Facebook users. Additionally, Facebook, and Social Media in general, gives the advantages that people can be reached very easily and against low expenses. For example, a website is a tool to sell products or offer a service, but people only visit a website is they feel the need for a visit. However, through Social Media a company is able reach the people, to draw attention to new products placed on their website or if there is anything new placed on the company's website. This is in line with the fact if a Facebook message is placed online, clearly increases the number of visitors for that day, up to 25 percent.

Regarding the Twitter activities, these strongly resemble the Facebook messages. Long messages are shortened, and a URL is placed to the website, so people are able to read the whole text. In addition, just like on Facebook, lots of photos are shared. What is not surprising, since the villas are the showpieces of the company. Remarkably, the company has many followers in comparison with competitors, but there is not much interaction via Twitter. Messages are frequently retweeted, but not many users mention BBL in there tweets. But because of the large group of followers, BBL has the opportunity to get attention from a large group of audience.

The YouTube profile of the company is used more as a functional application rather than a commercial one. Fifteen videos, consisting of two documentaries and the rest are photo compilations of built houses, are the content of their page. YouTube is mainly used to easily post a video on their own website. The fact that the login details were not known, indicates that YouTube is not seen and used as a marketing tool. The figures also show that a few people are attracted by YouTube to the website, or that it leads to a conversion. Moreover, only a quarter of respondents indicated to be active on YouTube, so the target audience are not active YouTube users. This is also shown by the figures, since a few people come to the website via YouTube and it has led to any conversion.

In case of Pinterest the login details were incorrect also. After some time the login details have been determined. There are plenty of photos on Pinterest, however the most recent projects are not posted online. But against all the expectations, Pinterest scores very well in terms of conversions generated by all Social Media and it leads to the most visitors. The target group is, however, not much online on Pinterest, but this offers opportunities in addressing people which initially may not have been thought.

For Google+ the company has had two different profiles, one of which was outdated and having a wrong name, but it was still in use. The outdated page is put offline, after which the correct one is taken into use. BBL has a profile on LinkedIn, but there is no link on the website and it is not actively used. The target group however, is very active on LinkedIn, so potential customers can easily be reached via LinkedIn. Moreover, the LinkedIn users are closely related to the target audience in terms of their age.

Taking the Web 2.0 Applications as Marketing Tools model of Constantinides (2013), to investigate if BBL makes good use of the various Social Media platforms, the following can be conclude. Starting with Facebook and Twitter, part of the Social Networks in the model, BBL uses Facebook and Twitter as an application to share news, status updates, and to alert people. According to the model a social network is moderately suitable for PR and direct marketing. In addition, people on Facebook have the possibility to leave a review of the company. So visitors have the option to share their experience. However, social networks can be used as personalising the customer experience and allowing product customisation. For a company in a niche market, this is hard to reach. The marketing budget is rather small for developing 'configurators' or other tools for customisation. But this can be solved in a different way, for example by placing certain messages that contains text which is inviting to respond to. So BBL makes good use of Facebook and Twitter for marketing purposes, but it lacks in using it for more customer experience and customisation. YouTube, as part of the content communities, has many advantages for companies. However, BBL is purely using YouTube as a functional application. For a small and unknown brand, it is difficult to attract large groups of viewers via YouTube. But it is a cheap and useful platform for free publicity to a large crowd, if BBL uses it more actively. Also Pinterest as a content community for BBL's villas is a perfect device for personalising the experience of customers. Pinterest scores high in reaching new customers and for direct marketing purposes. Something what is contradictory to the model of Constantinides (2013), but in line with the model of Solis (2013a). Finally, Google+ and LinkedIn are also social networks for the company. Since the company recently started with Google+, nothing relevant can be conclude about this. LinkedIn users are most consistent with the target audience of BBL, which makes LinkedIn an application to reach them easily. However, no links are placed to LinkedIn and they use is not actively, what causes they lack the benefits of it. Overall can be conclude that Social Media certainly has potential for the company, but their approach is too passive. If the company is actively operating on the platforms, be up-to-date and ensures more interaction, they are able to enjoy the benefits Social Media offers.

4.6 Findings Target Group

Looking at the groups of the Social Technological Ladder and judging by the results of the questionnaire and the analysis of the various Social Media applications, the target group consists of joiners, spectators, and creators. The majority uses Social Media is a passive way by reading blogs or reviews and watch videos. You also have the group of joiners, which are a little bit more active on Social Media. This is reflected by the number of comments people write on Social Media after a message or photo has been posted. Also the likes and retweets generated shows the target group does not solely consist of spectators. Next to the less active Social Media users, a small portion is very active. This is determined by the fact that, while writing this report, one of the buyers keeps a blog of the construction process of their new house. Since there is no possibility to place a direct post with a blog on the company's website, the blog is send to the marketing team which places it on the website and is posting a link to the blog through Social Media. Finally, there are always the inactives, people who do not use Social Media at all. This group will continue to decrease in the future, as expected, but for now it is still important to use traditional marketing like advertisements in magazines, to attract also this group of potential customers.

BBL uses different applications, in order to be able in achieving various objectives. Facebook and Google+ are applications to get brand awareness, and the company can listen to the customer's voice. Twitter as microblogging application should provide a service to the followers in terms of information for example. Here BBL has not yet fully address the objective of Twitter, since most of the messages post on Facebook are also post on Twitter. So no distinction is made here. Further, Pinterest ensures social curation among people,

supporting the marketing activities. This is projected by the figures, since Pinterest attracts most visitors and is responsible for the highest number of conversions. Altogether, BBL has find a good balance in the chosen applications, in which Pinterest is supporting the findability of the website, and Facebook and Google+ is used to bring the brand under the attention of a larger group of customers, a group that corresponds with target audience in terms of age.

4.7 Findings Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three separate parts: one which explored general determinants of the respondents, second part concerned the website and Social Media activities and the last part covered the interests of people. This last part was commissioned by the company itself, but it adds no direct value to this research, therefore, it will not be discussed here, but the outcomes will be used for internal purpose only. The first part shows the target audience is mainly living in provinces BBL already is building their houses. In itself, this is no surprise, since the western areas tend to have a higher average annual income. Regarding the incomes, the results show a portion of the respondents earning between average and above average. This means the target audience would be a much bigger group. However, due to projects of the last few months, in which houses have been sold below the average construction cost, this group is bigger than expected. For the main products, people need an income of above €100.000,- minimum.

The results of the questionnaire show the majority of the visitors are satisfied with the looks of the website, the available information, and the findability of browsing through the website. From the perspective of the visitors, the website complies. But as already discussed in the findings of the website analysis, issues lie more in the internal organisation of the tasks, rather than the website itself. The website is an important element in the findability of the company, since many people begin their search for a suitable construction company through the Internet. In addition, the website should also have a sufficient ranking in Google, because the largest group is starting the search via search engines. In other words, SEM is of great important for niche companies to be visible in search engine listings, because this is the primary lead to the website. The results regarding Social Media, show Social Media is not the first place people start their information gathering to build their own house. Only two respondents have indicated that they have begun their quest through Social Media. The majority starts their search over the Internet. Regarding the findability of BBL's website through Social Media, only one person indicated it had found BBL via Social Media. However, respondents are still actively operating on several Social Media applications, which means potential customers can be addressed via Social Media. Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+ are the most commonly used Social Media applications the target audience is operating on. It is striking Pinterest shows the lowest score (17.5%), while it attracts the most visitors to the website and has produced the highest number of conversions of all the Social Media applications. Concluding, the visitors coming via Pinterest will probably not being part of the most potential customers.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study has contributed to a better understanding of the benefits that Social Media offers. Through a case study, it has highlighted under which circumstances Social Media is beneficial. In addition, the analysis has explored the website of the company in order to improve its online marketing strategy. The study also made a theoretical contribution, by investigating the Social Media strategy of a niche company. Many studies have shown the benefits for companies serving a large market, but not for companies operating in niche markets. And although the study has some implications, which are discussed later in this section, this research has shown that under certain conditions, Social Media is beneficial for niche players. As in every research, this study has its limitation too. Therefore, the study will be judge from a critical perspective, in order to make the study more reliable. The aim of this section is to raise some cautionary notes about the limitations and how it can be justified. This section is divided into the theoretical and practical implications. Next some future research recommendations will be provided in which other researchers can contribute to the literature about Social Media Marketing for niche players.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The model of Constantinides (2013) implies that Social Media Marketing only works if the website of the company meets all the requirements of the 4S-model (Constantinides, 2002). During the analysis of the website a number of improvements have emerged. The underperformance of the website may have influenced the results of the Social Media analysis. It would have been better if the case company had a website that already had fulfilled all the requirements, so this bias would not have occurred. Another implication is about

the analysis, which has focused on one niche player, what makes the generalisability over other niche players more complex, since companies operating in other industries can face different management issues and are exposed to other market variables which have impact on the online marketing strategy. Therefore, the outcomes of this study are not always applicable to other niche players. Besides, this study addresses the benefits of Social Media looking at the objectives of the case company, while Social Media can also be used for other purposes, so only a reliable conclusion concerning the increase of website visitors can be given. Furthermore, this study showed that there are indeed benefits for niche companies in using certain Social Media applications, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. However, through the passive use of YouTube and Google+, little can be concluded on the basis of these applications. The last implication is related to the survey. One of the questions about how often the respondents are online on various Social Media applications gave a number per application, however, those figures do not always correspond with the figures regarding the question of which application they are operating. But the outcomes of the survey are still valuable for the conclusions, because it may apply people visit certain Social Media without an own profile, so also those people can still be reached through Social Media. Altogether, this study provided evidence that Social Media offers benefits for niche players under certain conditions. It is important to take into account which applications are suitable to reach the target audience best. In addition, the properly working internal organisation of the tasks related to the online marketing strategy is essential, not only for maintaining the website, but also for structural posting messages to keep in contact with the users.

5.2 Practical Implications

This study is practically relevant for niche companies for a number of reasons. For niche players it is important to know in the first place Social Media offers certain benefits. However, they need to work thoroughly in order to make it successful. Especially for niche players, serving a specific target audience and with limited resources, they cannot afford to lose time and money into a marketing strategy that is ineffective. To make it effectively, two main conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, companies need to develop an online marketing strategy, with clearly stated objectives, so the strategy is actually manageable. Secondly, it is important companies know where the target audience is located, in order to ensure that they can also be achieved, which is certainly a prerequisite of a marketing strategy. A study of the characteristics, what percentage of the target group uses social media and what applications are important variables for the establishment of a social media strategy to support integrated anywhere in the online marketing strategy of a company. Companies still have a lack of knowledge in online and Social Media marketing. That is why marketing managers can take the advantages of the outcomes of this research in forming an online marketing strategy to the favourable outcomes. This knowledge helps organisations not to waste time, money, or energy in an online marketing strategy that does not work.

5.3 Future Research Recommendations

This study has focused on the online marketing strategy of a small construction company operating in a niche market. Research towards Social Media Marketing for niche players is in its formative stage and could be explored further through longitudinal studies with larger samples. Future research could explore niche players operating in markets for example, in order to investigate whether there is a difference in the benefits of integrating Social Media in their online marketing strategy. Such a study ensures the limitation, discussed in the previous paragraph about the generalisability of the outcomes, will be overcome. Further, usually small companies do not have access to a significant marketing budget. Therefore, a study towards the potential of Social Media as a (cheaper) substitute of the expensive marketing tools such as SEA, will be of interest. Such a study will reveal if Social Media can also be a platform for advertising and reaching its target group, besides a platform for interaction with customers. Future studies may also focus on other objectives to reach by a niche player, such as increasing their sales or enhancing its turnover. In this way further potential benefits of using Social Media by niche players can scientifically be investigated.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objectives of the study were twofold: giving an advice to the case company for improving the online marketing strategy and to make a contribution to the literature by specifying if Social Media, fully integrated in the online marketing strategy, has benefits for a company operating in a niche market. Therefore, firstly the website of the company has been analysed, because this is the basis before Social Media can contribute to a company (Constantinides, 2013). In the remainder of this section first the research question will be answered.

And next to this, the recommendations to the company will follow in how to improve its online marketing strategy, including the Social Media Marketing.

The main research problem of this study has been described as *'to what extent can niche players benefit from a fully integrated online marketing strategy?'* To answer the research problem, a case study was conducted, and based on the collected qualitative and quantitative data, the conclusion of this research is stated as follows. A company should have a presence on various Social Media platforms, in order to reach all the potential customers of the company's target audience, because the target audience does not solely participate on one platform. Next to this, a company has to deal with competitors. If those are using Social Media as part of the online marketing strategy, they already have an advantage with respect to those who do not participate on Social Media. Thus, not being active on Social Media means lacking the opportunity to get in contact with potential customers. Next to this, Social Media is an inexpensive marketing tool, since placing a message on Facebook or Twitter is for free and it is a fast marketing tool either, because a message can be placed online in a few minutes, so niche players have directly results of their message. Social Media offers possibilities to promote a message or to place paid advertisements, in order to reach a wider audience. This makes Social Media an sufficient platform for advertising, which can be compared with traditional advertisements in newspapers of magazines, but the reach via Social Media is much broader. However, this wider audience can only be reached if the platform had a significant amount of followers, otherwise the reach of a message is rather low and the marketing campaign had no effect. So Social Media offers benefits for a niche player if the various pages or profiles had enough followers. Another benefit of Social Media for niche players, in particular Facebook and Twitter, is the possibility to select who sees the paid advertisement. Based on demographical or geographical information, a specific group can be addressed. Facebook even offers the possibility to select on people's interest, behaviours, and connections with other users. This benefit is especially interesting for niche companies, because this provides an opportunity to only address the target audience, so there is no waste of money in advertising to people which are not part of the target audience. Further, and this is perhaps one of the main benefits, Social Media provides the ability to draw the attention of people. People normally do not visit a website if there is no need for, especially websites of niche brands which are not very familiar. That means, a website can have a top ranking at the search engine results because of good SEM, but the company still depends on the needs of a person to visit the website. This makes Social Media a device to create attention among potential customer to make a visit to the website. Eventually, attention has led to an increase of website visitors. In addition, posted messages which are shared by followers or are 'liked' by fans, what ensured more people read the company's brand name. So Social Media creates attention and it enhances brand awareness among people. However, this only applied if the company had chosen the right Social Media platforms and if it had enough followers.

The website is the basis for the online marketing strategy and ultimately it is necessary for the implementation of Social Media in the marketing activities of the company. As the benefits of a fully integrated online marketing strategy are now obvious, some recommendations to the case company can be made. Firstly, the recommendations towards the website. Most essential for the development of the marketing activities is to have a strategy. Not having a clearly stated strategy means no direction or objectives are there in which the success or failure of the marketing activities can be measured. Therefore the company needs to develop marketing objectives to achieve and it should determine who the target audience is to address to (more about the last point in the next paragraph). Next recommendation includes the website needs to have a responsive design, or a mobile website needs to be developed. Also, the *https* protocol should be introduced, to prevent further deterioration of the ranking in Google. Regularly updating the website with new photos, add descriptions to the villas, and write more blogs and FAQs contributes to the ranking. This also ensures the website is attractive to visit again and it contributes to the SEM of the website. Main recommendations are in the field of the Synergy and System integration. The website needs to be integrated with the traditional marketing activities, what ensured the online marketing strategy is successful. Regarding the back office integration, clear agreements are needed within the marketing team who is responsible for the different tasks, but also the activities should be more integrated with other departments within the company, making everyone in the company is more engaged in the marketing strategy. Because managing the marketing activities takes time, it is recommended to appoint a new person for supporting the marketing team, or to distribute tasks differently among current employees, so the workload is distributed differently and the website will remain better up-to-date.

Another important point of interest is that before an online marketing strategy can be developed, it is essential to know who your potential customers are. Among the target audience there is always a small percentage actively participating on the Internet and on various Social Media platforms. These fanatics are important for creating UGC by writing blogs or reviews for example. Therefore, one of the recommendations is a niche player should encourage people to write blogs, or encourage them to leave reviews on the company's website after delivering the product. The majority of the target audience consist of spectators or joiners. Posting content what is appealing to those groups and the information they are looking for enables visitors to stay on the website over a longer period of time. To better understand what the website visitors are looking for, it is advised to do this on the basis of frequently asked questions of people during sales. This recommendation emphasises again the importance of the back office integration with the marketing strategy. Another possibility is asking the visitors of the website directly to fill in an online survey when entering the website or through Social Media. In this way the company is able to better understand the target audience.

Lastly, the recommendations regarding the Social Media activities. First of all, intended objectives for the Social Media activities should be developed, and translated into a Social Media strategy. The Social Media strategy must be part of the fully integrated online marketing strategy of the company. Also, make a distinction what content is placed on which application, so it is interesting for followers and fans to follow various Social Media pages of the company. Additionally, Social Media should be used where it is intended for, as a tool for interacting with customers. The messages should be aimed in creating interaction. To accomplish this, make use of hashtags, tag people or related companies in posts, and respond to the reactions people gave. Further, do not be too formal in terms of the placed content. Social Media has an informal character, so make use of this. As for Facebook and Google+, for both pages more likes and followers should be created, either organic or paid. Take advantage of the paid advertising service of Facebook to select certain criteria or characteristics, such as demographic or geographic characteristics. As for Twitter, do not copy all messages which are also posted on Facebook. Twitter is a microblogging application, so place content which is suitable for this application. Further, YouTube and Pinterest should be kept more up-to-date. In particular Pinterest, since it attracted most of the visitors to the website and it created the most conversions. In order to create more brand awareness, the company could chose to place the brand name on particular photos placed on Pinterest, so if they are 'pinned', the brand name is visible. Finally, be more active on LinkedIn, since this platform is popular among the target audience. Last remark towards Social Media in general: it should constantly be optimised, expanded, innovated, and it should cross borders, not only to enjoy the benefits it has for niche players, but certainly because people are expecting a niche player operates on Social Media.

Summarising, the following can be concluded. Social Media is an inexpensive and quick way to address the target audience or to advertise. So even companies with little or no marketing budget at all, are able to advertise. Further it provides the ability to promote the company or product by drawing attention by customers. So Social Media is a marketing tool for creating brand awareness. For advertising, Social Media offers the ability to address a very specific group of customers, so the advertisement is as effective as possible. At last, it offers the possibility to start the dialogue with customers, so the engagement with the company will increase. However, Social Media only offers advantages for niche players if certain conditions are met.

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APPENDIX

The (E-)Marketing Strategy

Level 4 — *Social Media Marketing*

Level 3 — *Web 1.0 Web site*

Level 2 — *Marketing/ E-Marketing Organization*

Level 1 — *Product/ service*

Figure A (Source: Constantinides, 2013)

The 4 Ss of the Web-Marketing Mix

1. Scope: Strategy and Objectives

Market Analysis: Competition basis, competitors, market potential, market forecast, market trends

Potential Customers: Profiles, motivation, behaviour, needs and current way of fulfilling them, priorities

Internal Analysis: Internal resources, processes, values. Is the Web a sustaining or disruptive technology?

Strategic Role of the Web Activities: Generic types: Informational, Educational, Relational, Promotional, Transactional

2. Site: Web Experience

Customer oriented content. Important questions:

- What does the customer expect in the site?

Domain name, content, design, layout, atmosphere, aesthetics and web site positioning and the classic 4 Ps

- Why the customer will make use of the site?

Simplicity, functionality, speed, findability, searchability, navigation, interactivity and customisation

- What motivates customers to come back?

3. Synergy: Integration

Front Office integration: Integration with the physical Marketing Strategy and Marketing Activities

Back Office integration: Integration of the Web site with Organisational processes, Legacy systems and Databases

Third Party integration: Create networks of partners who will assist the commercial, logistic and other site activities

4. System: Technology , Technical Requirements and Web Site Administration

Software, hardware, communication protocols, content management, system service, site administration, hosting decisions, payment systems, performance analysis

Figure B (source: Constantinides, 2002)

Web 2.0 Applications as Marketing Tools					
	Passive	Active			
MARKETING OBJECTIVE	Listening In	PR and Direct Marketing	Reaching the New Influencers	Personalizing customer Experience	Tapping customer creativity
APPLICATION TYPE					
Web logs	XXX	XXX	XXX		
(Content) Communities	XXX	X		XXX	XXX
Social Networks	X	XX		XX	XX
Forums / Bulletin Boards	XXX	X	XXX		
Content Aggregators		XXX	X		

XXX: very suitable, XX: moderately suitable, X: less suitable, Blank: not suitable

Figure C (source Constantinides, 2013)

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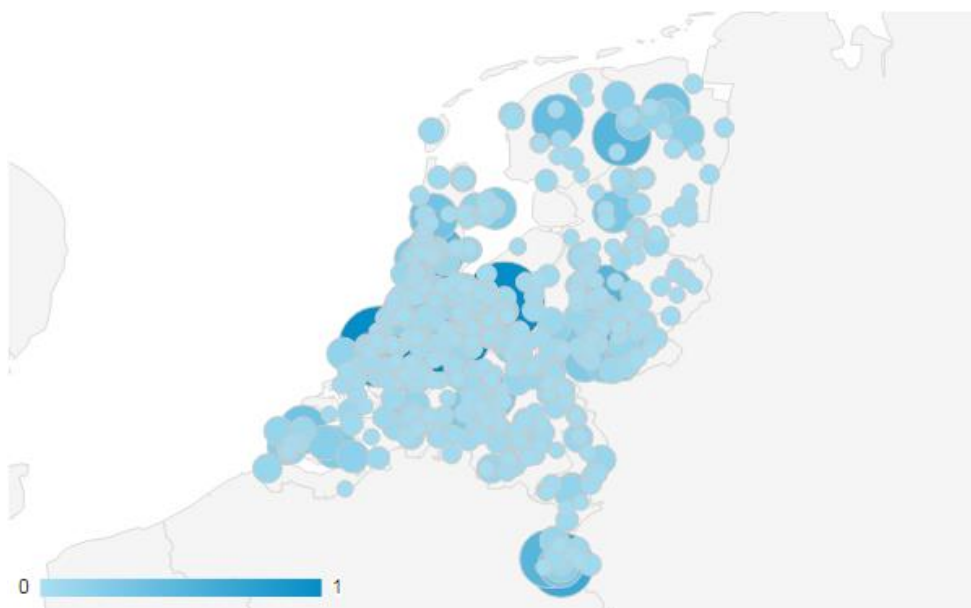
Figure D

Figure E

| SWOT-Matrix Website Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- User friendly - Recognisable website design - Comprehensive portfolio, qualitative pictures - Good call-to-actions for brochure request - Relevant and useful content (blogs, videos, FAQs, reviews, references) - Links to Social Media - Speed of the website	- Clear online marketing strategy is missing - Lack of organisation concerning the website - No mobile responsive design - No search function - Content is not always up-to-date - Lack of a specialist maintaining the website - No *https* protocol - No description with the pictures
Opportunities	**Treats**
- Majority of competitors makes little use of Social Media - ID tracking Google Analytics for SEO and SEA improvements	- IT developments and new technologies - Changing of Google's ranking algoritme

Figure F

General customer information
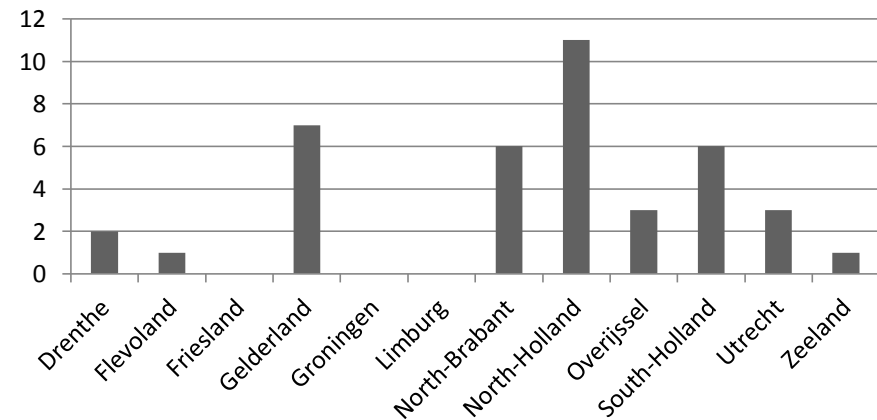
1. What is your age?
    - ◯ Under 25 years   (1)[5]
    - ◯ 25-35 years   (5)
    - ◯ 36-45 years   (15)
    - ◯ 46-55 years   (13)
    - ◯ 56-65 years   (3)
    - ◯ Over 65 years   (3)
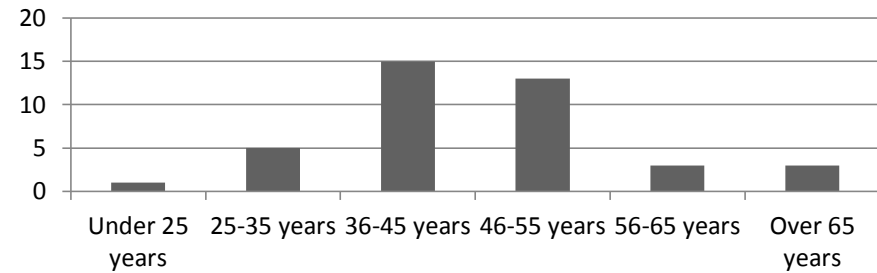
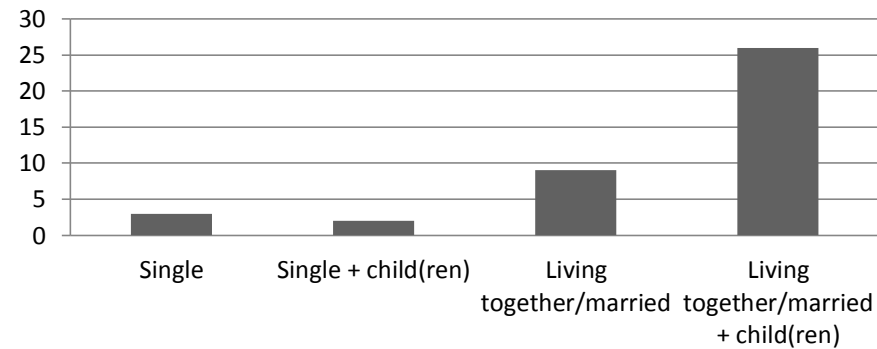2. In which province you living?
    - ◯ Drenthe   (2)
    - ◯ Flevoland   (1)
    - ◯ Friesland   (0)
    - ◯ Gelderland   (7)
    - ◯ Groningen   (0)
    - ◯ Limburg   (0)
    - ◯ North-Brabant   (6)
    - ◯ North-Holland   (11)
    - ◯ Overijssel   (3)
    - ◯ South-Holland   (6)
    - ◯ Utrecht   (3)
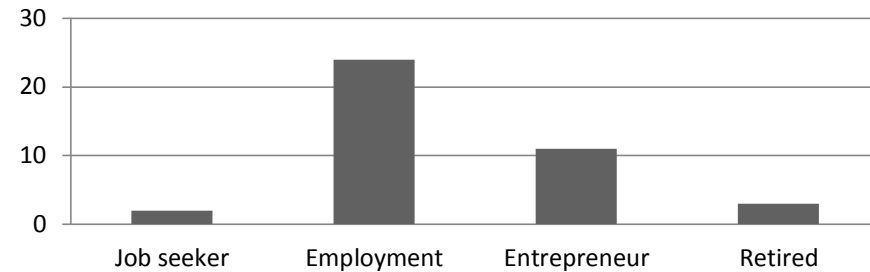   - ◯ Zeeland   (1)

3. What is your home situation?
    - ◯ Single   (3)
    - ◯ Single + child(ren)   (2)
    - ◯ Living together/married   (9)
    - ◯ Living together/married + child(ren)   (26)

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[5] The figures in parentheses are the number of respondents for each answer.

4. Which of the following is most applicable to your situation?
   ○ Job seeker   (2)
   ○ Employment   (24)
   ○ Entrepreneur   (11)
   ○ Retired   (3)
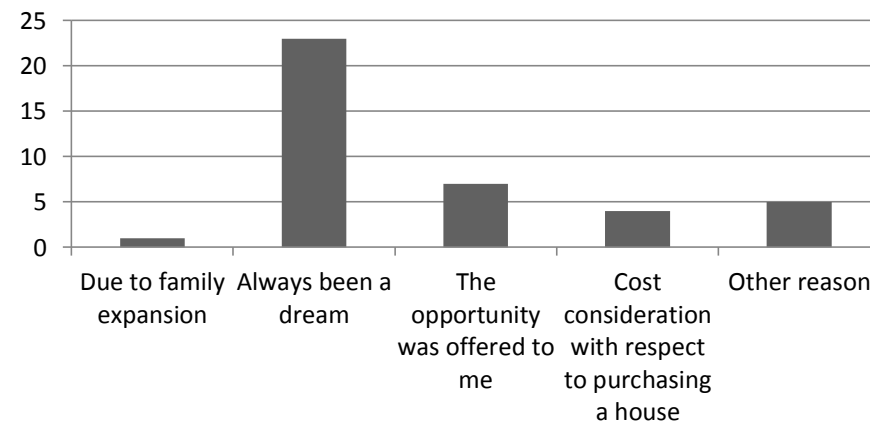
5. What is your (joint) gross annual income?
   ○ Less than €35.000   (3)
   ○ Between €35.001 and €70.000   (13)
   ○ Between €70.001 and €100.000   (11)
   ○ More than €100.000   (13)

6. Why do you want to build your own house?
   ○ Due to family expansion   (1)
   ○ Always been a dream   (23)
   ○ The opportunity was offered to me   (7)
   ○ Cost consideration with respect to purchasing a house (4)
   ○ Other reason   (5)

Website

7. Through what medium did you start your research in construction a house?[6]
   - ◯ Magazines (9)
   - ◯ Internet (34)
   - ◯ Social Media (2)
   - ◯ Conversation with architect/contractor/construction company (5)
   - ◯ Lifestyle fairs (9)
   - ◯ Other medium (1)
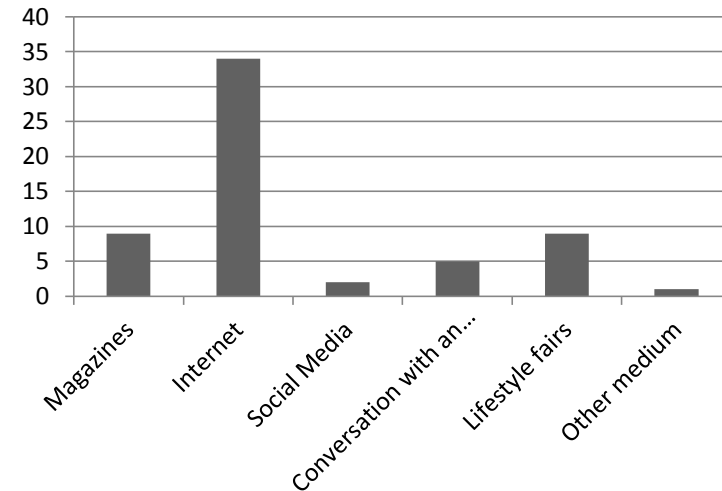
8. How many brochures have you applies alongside those of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg?
   [OPEN QUESTION]

9. How did you find the website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg?
   - ◯ Directly via the web address www.bouwbedrijf-lichtenberg.nl (5)
   - ◯ Through a search engine (eg Google.nl) (27)
   - ◯ Through another website (eg eigenhuisbouwen.nl) (4)
   - ◯ Through Social Media (eg Facebook of Twitter) (1)
   - ◯ None of the above suggestions (3)
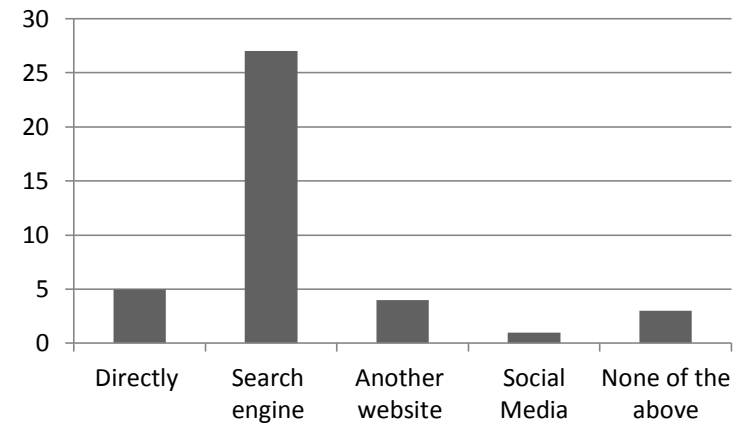
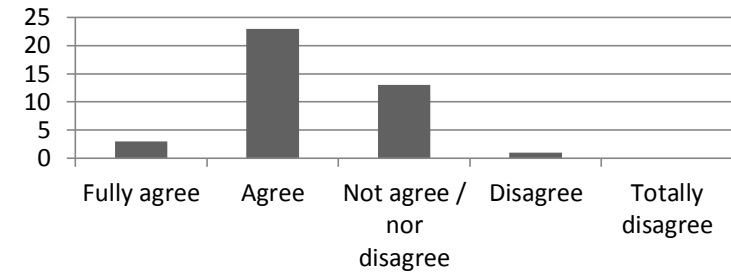10. The website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg offers enough information:
    - ◯ Fully agree (5)
    - ◯ Agree (22)
    - ◯ Not agree / nor disagree (11)
    - ◯ Disagree (2)
    - ◯ Totally disagree (0)
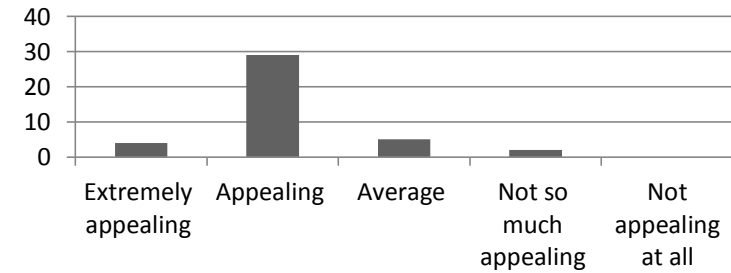
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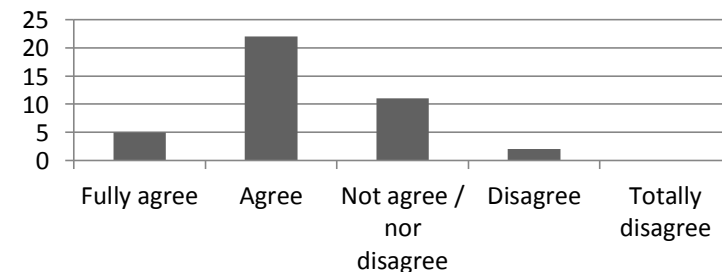
[6] Multiple answers allowed

11. All the information is easy accessible:
   - ◯ Fully agree (3)
   - ◯ Agree (23)
   - ◯ Not agree / nor disagree (13)
   - ◯ Disagree (1)
   - ◯ Totally disagree (0)

12. How much appealing is the website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg to you?
   - ◯ Extremely appealing (4)
   - ◯ Appealing (29)
   - ◯ Average (5)
   - ◯ Not so much appealing (2)
   - ◯ Not appealing at all (0)

13. How important are the different parts of the website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg to you:

|	Completely unimportant	Unimportant	Average	Important	Very important
Portfolio of built villas			(1)	(20)	(19)
Company Information			(12)	(25)	(3)
Customer Reviews	(2)	(1)	(6)	(20)	(11)
The 10-Steps plan		(2)	(13)	(19)	(6)
News about current projects		(4)	(15)	(18)	(3)
Blog	(6)	(10)	(19)	(4)	(1)

14. In which form do you prefer to receive the brochure?
    ○ On paper   (17)
    ○ Digital   (4)
    ○ Both   (19)
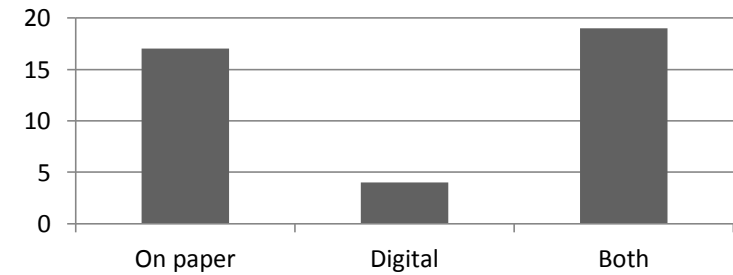
15. Did you visit the website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg again after receiving the brochure?
    ○ No   (12)
    ○ Yes, to look for the contact details   (6)
    ○ Yes, to search for more information about the company   (11)
    ○ Yes, to read customer reviews   (4)
    ○ Yes, to explore the 10-Steps plan   (4)
    ○ Yes, other reason   (3)
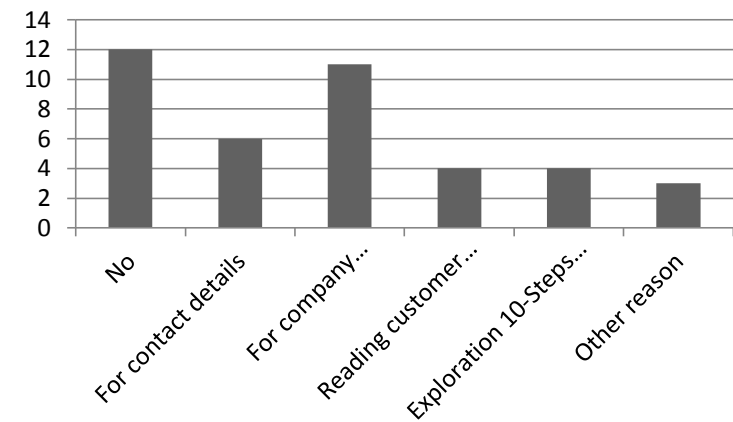
16. Have you ever shared a page of the website with family/friends/acquaintances?
    ○ No   (29)
    ○ Yes   (11)
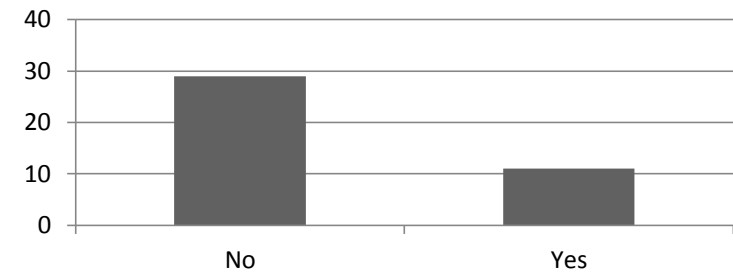
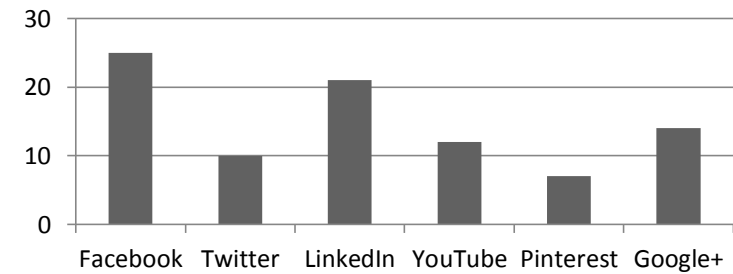17. On what Social Media platforms are you operating?[6]

    ◯ Facebook   (25)
    ◯ Twitter   (10)
    ◯ LinkedIn   (21)
    ◯ YouTube   (12)
    ◯ Pinterest   (7)
    ◯ Google+   (14)

18. Please indicate how often you are online on the Social Media platforms?

	Every day	2 or 3 times a week	Weekly	Once a month or less	Not applicable
Facebook	(14)	(9)	(0)	(6)	(11)
Twitter	(6)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(28)
LinkedIn	(8)	(2)	(8)	(3)	(19)
YouTube	(1)	(7)	(6)	(5)	(21)
Pinterest	(1)	(1)	(5)	(2)	(31)
Google+	(4)	(4)	(6)	(1)	(25)

19. Do you have any comments or suggestions about how the website of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg could be improved?
    [OPEN QUESTION]

20. Do you have any comments or suggestions about how the Social Media of Bouwbedrijf Lichtenberg could be improved?
    [OPEN QUESTION]

Personal interests

21. How much affinity do you have with these sports?

	No affinity	Little affinity	Average	Much affinity	Lots of affinity
Football	(12)	(5)	(12)	(6)	(5)
Golf	(14)	(11)	(7)	(7)	(1)
Hockey	(18)	(9)	(4)	(5)	(4)
Athletics	(20)	(11)	(7)	(1)	(1)
Cycling	(13)	(8)	(12)	(4)	(2)

22. How much affinity do you have with these types of holidays?

	No affinity	Little affinity	Average	Much affinity	Lots of affinity
City trips	(2)	(4)	(13)	(19)	(2)
Sun holiday	(2)	(3)	(5)	(17)	(13)
Ski holiday	(6)	(7)	(5)	(12)	(10)
Long-distance traveling	(6)	(7)	(8)	(11)	(8)
Car holiday	(5)	(3)	(9)	(18)	(5)

23. How much affinity do you have with the following kinds of entertainment?

	No affinity	Little affinity	Average	Much affinity	Lots of affinity
Theatre	(5)	(13)	(13)	(6)	(3)
Cinema	(4)	(8)	(21)	(5)	(2)
Concert	(8)	(10)	(11)	(10)	(1)
Restaurant	(0)	(1)	(10)	(15)	(14)
Shopping	(1)	(8)	(17)	(10)	(4)

24. How much affinity do you have with these types of relaxation?

	No affinity	Little affinity	Average	Much affinity	Lots of affinity
Reading	(2)	(8)	(10)	(14)	(6)
Walking	(1)	(8)	(17)	(11)	(3)
Painting	(17)	(13)	(8)	(2)	(0)
Cooking	(5)	(9)	(6)	(15)	(5)
Photographing	(7)	(7)	(14)	(9)	(3)

25. How much affinity do you have with the following types of cars?

	No affinity	Little affinity	Average	Much affinity	Lots of affinity
Sport cars	(8)	(5)	(9)	(15)	(3)
Luxury cars	(3)	(7)	(6)	(19)	(5)
Hybrid/electric car	(10)	(11)	(8)	(7)	(4)
SUV	(8)	(5)	(11)	(12)	(4)
Classic car	(11)	(12)	(6)	(10)	(1)