WHO ARE WE?
Micro-sized companies’ corporate identity on social networking sites

Ida Hansén, Sara Fredriksson

Department of Business Administration
Civilekonomprogrammet
Degree Project, 30 Credits, Spring 2018
Supervisor: Nils Wåhlin
Abstract

Corporate identity is something every organization has (Bernstein, 1984, cited in Abratt, 1989, p. 69). Balmer (2001, p. 254 & 257) describes the concept with the question “What are we?” Companies now recognize that a strong corporate identity is very beneficial because it can help them “align in the marketplace, motivate their employees, attract investments and also to serve as a means to differentiate their products and services” (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006, p. 846).

Social networking sites (SNS), has become an integral part of both individuals’ as well as companies’ everyday life (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358-359). They allow companies to connect, communicate and share information directly with the target groups and also enables customers to talk to each other about the company (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358-359). The use of the SNS is easy and provides companies with a cost and time efficient method to instantly engage and connect with their target market (Bell & Loane, 2010, p. 213; Lacho & Marinello 2010, p. 128). Since SMEs have limited amounts of financial and technological resources, social media play a vital role for their ability to market themselves and their offerings (Narula, 2004, p. 153). There are lot of previously conducted research and studies on corporate identity and social networking sites, as two separate subjects. However, there is a lack of research of corporate identity and social networking sites combined and in relation to each other.

The purpose of this study is to investigate and create an understanding for micro-sized companies’ corporate identity and how they use the social networking site ‘Instagram’ to present it. Moreover, to give researchers within this research field some guidance and practical recommendations for future studies in how companies’ corporate identity can be communicated via Instagram.

To fulfil this purpose, five qualitative interviews with owners and managers of micro-sized companies, was performed. Via the findings from these interviews and with support from our constructed summarizing theoretical framework, we were able to answer our research question;

How and in what way are micro-sized enterprises showing their corporate identity on the social networking site ‘Instagram’?

The result from the study shows that what and how micro-sized companies present and display on Instagram, is a consequence from their corporate identity. Thereof, their use of Instagram is a digital extension of their corporate identity. This study also concluded that the founders of the micro-sized company personifies the entire organization, because they have the fundamental idea of what they want their company to be and stand for. Furthermore, it was seen that all dimensions within corporate identity are linked together and since every company has their own corporate identity, it is unique and difficult to copy. Moreover, this study provides insights in the lack of previous research about the relationship between corporate identity and Instagram.
Acknowledgements

Firstly, we would like to thank our supervisor Nils Währin for guidance throughout this thesis. He provided us with valuable knowledge, quick responses and support when needed. Moreover, we would like to thank all the respondents that took the time to be a part of this study; without them we would not have been able to go through with this study. Finally, we would like to thank our friends and family for helping and supporting us during this process.

Umeå, May 21th 2018

Sara Fredriksson

Ida Hansén
Table of contents

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 PROBLEM BACKGROUND ........................................................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 KNOWLEDGE GAP ......................................................................................................................................................... 2
  1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY & RESEARCH QUESTION .................................................................................................. 3
  1.4 DELIMITATIONS ............................................................................................................................................................... 3
  1.5 THESIS OUTLINE ............................................................................................................................................................... 4

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL METHODOLOGY .................................................................................................................... 5
  2.1 PRE-UNDERSTANDING ....................................................................................................................................................... 5
  2.2 NATURE OF THE RESEARCH ............................................................................................................................................ 6
  2.3 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE .............................................................................................................................................. 6
  2.4 RESEARCH APPROACH ......................................................................................................................................................... 7
  2.5 LITERATURE SELECTION ...................................................................................................................................................... 8
  2.6 CRITICISM OF SOURCES .................................................................................................................................................... 8

CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE ........................................................................................................... 10
  3.1 CORPORATE IDENTITY .................................................................................................................................................... 10
    3.1.1 Selected definition of corporate identity ....................................................................................................................... 13
  3.2 SELF-PRESENTATION THEORY ....................................................................................................................................... 16
  3.3 SOCIAL MEDIA ..................................................................................................................................................................... 16
    3.3.1 Social networking sites (SNS) ...................................................................................................................................... 17
  3.4 SOCIAL NETWORK MARKETING AND SMES .................................................................................................................. 18
  3.5 SUMMARIZING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .................................................................................................................... 19

CHAPTER 4. PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY .......................................................................................................................... 22
  4.1 SME - MICRO-SIZED COMPANIES ................................................................................................................................. 22
  4.2 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE INSTAGRAM .......................................................................................................................... 22
  4.3 SAMPLING ........................................................................................................................................................................... 23
  4.4 INTERVIEW STRUCTURE ....................................................................................................................................................... 24
  4.5 INTERVIEW GUIDE ............................................................................................................................................................... 25
    4.5.1 Pilot interview ............................................................................................................................................................... 25
  4.6 INTERVIEW PROCESS .......................................................................................................................................................... 26
  4.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS ............................................................................................................................................................... 28

CHAPTER 5. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND FINDINGS ......................................................................................................... 30
  5.1 COMPANY OVERVIEW ......................................................................................................................................................... 30
  5.2 DATA FINDINGS ................................................................................................................................................................. 32
    5.2.1 Corporate culture ......................................................................................................................................................... 32
    5.2.2 Behaviour ...................................................................................................................................................................... 34
    5.2.3 Communication & visual identity ................................................................................................................................ 39
    5.2.4 Market condition ........................................................................................................................................................... 44
    5.2.5 Instagram ............................................................................................................................................................... 46
  5.3 CONCLUDING CHART .......................................................................................................................................................... 51

CHAPTER 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION ............................................................................................................... 57
  6.1 CORPORATE IDENTITY ..................................................................................................................................................... 57
    6.1.1 Corporate culture & behaviour .................................................................................................................................. 57
    6.1.2 Communication ......................................................................................................................................................... 59
    6.1.3 Visual identity ........................................................................................................................................................... 60
    6.1.4 Market Condition ................................................................................................................................................... 61
  6.2 INSTAGRAM ......................................................................................................................................................................... 61
  6.3 DEVELOPED SUMMARIZING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ............................................................................................ 62

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................................................... 65
  7.1 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS ............................................................................................................................................... 65
  7.2 PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................................................................................................... 66
7.3 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH .......................................................... 66
7.4 CONTRIBUTIONS ................................................................................................................ 67
7.5 SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS .................................................................................................. 67

CHAPTER 8. TRUTH CRITERIA ................................................................................................. 69

REFERENCE LIST ..................................................................................................................... 71

APPENDIX .................................................................................................................................. 78

APPENDIX 1 - STRATHCLYDE STATEMENT ........................................................................... 78
APPENDIX 2 - INTERVIEW GUIDE ........................................................................................... 79
APPENDIX 3 - THE INTERVIEW GUIDE CONNECTED WITH THEORY ................................... 82
APPENDIX 4 - INFORMATION LETTER TO RESPONDENT ..................................................... 84
APPENDIX 5 - SCREENSHOT OF THE COMPANIES’ INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS ....................... 86

List of figures

Figure 1: A holistic understanding of corporate branding (Rode & Vallaster, 2005, p. 123) .......................................................... 14
Figure 2: Dijck’s categorisation of social media platforms .......................... 17
Figure 3: Our summarizing theoretical framework ........................................... 20
Figure 4: Our developed summarizing theoretical framework ..................... 63

List of tables

Table 1: The three categories within SMEs ................................................................. 22
Table 2: Overview of respondents ............................................................................ 27
Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter provides a background to the subjects that are going to be handled in this study, together with the knowledge gaps within these areas. Subsequently, it will lead to the research question as well as the purpose of the study. Lastly, the delimitations are presented.

1.1 Problem background

Identity is simply defined as “the fact of being who or what a person or thing is” (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). However, what about the identity companies have? How is the corporate identity defined? Corporate identity is something every organization has (Bernstein, 1984, cited in Abratt, 1989, p. 69) and has increasingly gained attention the last decades due to “changes in technology, market dynamics and consumer values and behaviour” (Melewar, 2003, p. 195). Although, what exactly the concept entails is hard to state since it doesn’t have a universal and clear definition (Balmer & Greyser, 2003, cited in Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006, p. 847). Consequently, corporate identity has slightly different meanings and interpretations depending on the author. This lack of clear definition is reflected in the business world, where many managers have confessed of not knowing how to make use of the concept, or even how to define it (Melewar et al. cited in Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006, p. 847). Even though there is a lack of a unified definition of the concept, there are characteristics of corporate identity that trustworthy authors and researchers emphasize as important (Balmer, 2001, p. 254 & 257). The characteristics are a mix of different elements which give the company its distinctiveness, these are for example; history, communication, culture, strategy, business activities and market scope (Balmer, 2001, p. 254 & 257). Balmer (2001, p. 254 & 257) summarizes the description of the concept with the question “What are we?”. The interest of corporate identity has increased considerably the last decade (Powell, 2011, p. 1365). Companies now recognize that a strong corporate identity is very beneficial because it can help them “align in the marketplace, motivate their employees, attract investments and also to serve as a means to differentiate their products and services” (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006, p. 846).

Business is today unequivocally changing in the direction and pace dictated by the state of constantly evolving technology (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015, p. 276). The primary driver of this paradigm shift is the widespread use of social media and its social networking sites (Georgescu & Popescul, 2015, p. 276). The second largest social networking site in Sweden is Instagram. It was established in 2010 and has more than 800 million unique users each month around the world (Instagram, 2018). Social networking sites have become an integral part of both individuals’ as well as companies’ everyday life (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358-359). They allow companies to connect, communicate and share information directly with the target groups and also enable customers to talk to each other about the company (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358-359). The use of the social networking sites is easy and provides companies with a cost- and time efficient method to instantly engage and connect with their target market (Bell & Loane, 2010, p. 213; Lacho & Marinello 2010, p. 128). Of the entire Swedish population, 81 percent are users of social media (people under 12 years excluded) (Thoresson & Davidsson, 2017). The extensive use of social media has not only changed
the consumer behaviour, but also how companies operate and communicate to their target market (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 358-359).

Micro-sized company is a category within ‘Small and Medium Enterprises’, SMEs. The categories are micro-, small-, and medium, and which one the company belongs to is defined by the number of employees and annual turnover and/or balance sheet (European Commission, 2018). Micro-sized companies have a maximum of ten employees and the annual turnover and or balance sheet should not exceed two million euros (European Commission, 2018). In Sweden, 99.9 percent of all the companies are categorized as SMEs, whereof the micro-sized companies accounted for 94.6 percent (European Commission, 2017). With SME’s limited amount of financial and technological resources, social media plays a vital role for their ability to market themselves and their offerings (Narula, 2004, p. 153).

The relationship between corporate identity and the social media has during the last years received attention from several researchers who has identified this relationship (Devereux et al., 2017, p. 110; Bruce & Solomon, 2013, p. 308).

1.2 Knowledge gap

There is a lot of research and literature about corporate identity, most originating from its practitioners and less academic literature (Van Rekom, 1997, p. 410). Although, what makes this extensive research area not entirely complete and usable is a few different reasons. We have identified two research gaps which are described below;

There is not much recent research in the field of corporate identity in relation to the present businesses, making it difficult to assess if it is applicable to companies these days or not. Furthermore, a lot has undoubtedly changed in the business environment in the last decades, which means that the research and literature in this area need an update to become more applicable under the prevailing conditions. One major problem in the area of corporate identity is the lack of agreement among authors on the definition. This makes the existing research quite scattered which makes the concept hard to grasp and fully understand.

Earlier academic research has tried to explain corporate identity as a concept or definition, while few researchers have brought up and explored the outlook and effect the social media have on companies’ corporate identity (Bruce & Solomon, 2013, p. 308). Social media is a very contemporary and highlighted topic, especially since businesses now increasingly use social media and its various platforms as marketing channels. Aula (2010, p. 44) states that companies now have to change their strategy due to the usage of social media. Since business strategy is an integrated part of a company’s corporate identity, they now need to be updated (Melewar, 2003, p. 163). Social media in relation to corporate identity is therefore a combined area that is missing in earlier research and needs more attention. In order to further understand how social media affects businesses’ corporate identity, and how to improve it, more studies are required.
1.3 Purpose of the study & research question

The purpose and aim of the study is to find out about micro-sized companies’ corporate identity and how they use the social networking site ‘Instagram’ to present themselves. Another objective with this study is to give researchers within this research field some guidance and foundation for future studies in how companies’ corporate identity can be communicated via Instagram. Our research question is as follows:

_How and in what way are micro-sized companies showing their corporate identity on the social networking site ‘Instagram’?_

In order to answer our research question, we need to review the variety of interpretations and definitions of corporate identity and explicate the elements of the concept based on the literature. We focus on investigating empirically how corporate identity is practiced and how it is comparable to the theoretical aspects of the concept. By examining and creating an understanding of companies’ corporate identity, we can then put it in relation to the social networking sites Instagram.

1.4 Delimitations

Delimitations of the study has been made in order to achieve the stated purpose and research question. The delimitation is the study's boundaries and are set by the study’s authors (Nenty, 2009, p. 24). With the support of this study’s delimitations that has been set, the purpose of the study and the research question can easier be answered. Three distinct delimitations have been actively made, which is further explained below;

**Micro-sized companies (within the categorization of SMEs)**
The study only investigates Swedish micro-sized companies. Micro-sized companies are a subcategory within small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs.

**Instagram as one of the company’s main communication channel**
Instagram is the only social networking site that is investigated and considered in this study. We have selected companies who uses Instagram as one of their main communication and marketing channels, towards their target group. The limitation is made for two distinct reasons; Firstly, Instagram is one of the largest established social networking sites (Pew Research Center, 2018). Secondly, compared to other social networking sites, Instagram enables social interaction through publication of visual content rather than textual ditto.

**The internal perspective of companies’ corporate identity**
This thesis concentrates on exploring only the internal perspective of companies’ corporate identity. This because much previous research has been conducted on the external effect of customers’ perception of companies. Therefore, focus will be from the perspective of internal members of organizations and how they see its corporate identity.
1.5 Thesis outline

Chapter 1
Introduction

Chapter 2
Theoretical method

Chapter 3
Theoretical frame of reference

Chapter 4
Practical method

Chapter 5
Empirical research & findings

Chapter 6
Data analysis & discussion

Chapter 7
Conclusion

Chapter 8
Truth criteria
Chapter 2. Theoretical methodology

_In this chapter is our theoretical methodology presented. Based on the purpose of the study as well as the research question, decisions regarding the method is made. Those decisions and motivations are explained as well as our pre-understanding, literature selection and criticism of sources._

**2.1 Pre-understanding**

Pre-understanding can be described as the researcher’s already existing knowledge of a phenomena or field of research. In order to understand the affect our previous understandings and experiences, it is important that we outline our pre-understandings (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 40-43). The investigated subjects in this study are corporate identity, social media and its social networking sites. Based on our interest in management and marketing our curiosity to investigate the relationship between these subjects awoke. It is important that we understand that our pre-understandings can determine and somewhat change how we see and believe things to be. Therefore, our pre-understandings are discussed below in order to understand how our views might impact this thesis.

The subject of this study is chosen due to our personal interests as well as the knowledge we have gained through previous courses within the University as well as work experience. We both are final year students at the Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics, in the International Business Program and Service Management Program respectively. Before the subject of the study was selected, discussions between us regarding our prior knowledge and interest in the research subject were elaborated upon. We found out that we had different pre-understandings of the study’s field of marketing and management. The importance of the internal organization has been highlighted in many of the included courses at the Service Management program, which provided one of us with in-depth knowledge in the field of management, which her master also is within. The other student is enrolled at the International Business Program, and her master is within marketing. She has practical experience of how Swedish SMEs plan and execute their marketing activities due to her consulting firm, which specializes in strategic marketing. The different prior knowledge we have is seen as an advantage for this study, as we provide two different perspectives of how the results can be interpreted and evaluated. Furthermore, we strive to complementing each other with our individual prior knowledge. We are both of the belief that working with the internal organization is important for every company's development and we have a positive outlook on this.

We do not have any specific or extensive experience with the subject corporate identity, therefore we are of the opinion that we can keep a rather objective outlook. We are though aware that the interpretations we make in this study, are being affected by the presumptions we make based on our pre-understanding, which can be both conscious and unconscious. Nevertheless, we enter the study with an open mind in order to reduce any biased results.
2.2 Nature of the research

According to Collins and Hussey (2014, p. 4) is research defined as “a systematic and methodological process of inquiry and investigation with a view to increasing knowledge”. The relation between the research purpose, the research question and its answer is fourfold, which consist of exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and predictive research (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 4). Expressly, the way a research question is stated will guide the research’s purpose and be answered according to one of the four research classifications. An exploratory research seeks to investigate a research problem or issue which has not been, or in a limited way, been researched and therefore is not provided with large amount of previous information (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 4). The research study aims to develop an understanding of the phenomenon through establishing patterns and ideas in respect to the fundamental problem, rather than testing a hypothesis (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 4).

In order to achieve the purpose of the study two aspects, corporate identity and the social networking sites (Instagram) will be examined. The two aspects have contrasting prior levels of comprehensive studies. The field of corporate identity is a well investigated academic and researched subject, however there is still lack of clarity and definition of the concept itself. The academic research on social networking sites and especially Instagram is scarce. The combination of corporate identity and Instagram as a research field are very young and there exist no extensive studies related to our research question. Therefore, we have come to the conclusion that in order to answer our research question with an adequate answer and get insight in the relationship between the two aspects, we will conduct an exploratory research approach.

2.3 Methodological choice

Authors who write about methodological issues often distinguish between qualitative and quantitative research (Bryman, 2011, p. 39). Qualitative and quantitative research can be seen as two different orientations to conduct business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 37). According to Bryman (2011, p. 40), it is an effective way to classify different methods or approaches within social scientific research. Bryman (2011, p. 39) states that the difference between the two methods are getting more important and clearer just as time passes.

Quantitative research method gives rise to quantification in terms of data collection and analysis, it is usually precise and in numerical form (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 37; Collins & Hussey, 2014, p. 196). In quantitative studies the researcher is usually interested in being able to say something about the extent to which the results can be generalized to other groups and situations than the current one in the study (Bryman, 2011, p. 168). The quantitative data is analysed using statistical methods and results in observations/findings with a high degree of reliability (Collins & Hussey, 2014, pp. 6 & 130).

Qualitative research can be explained as the method which, instead of measuring variables, emphasizes words, themes and patterns of experiences and meanings of a phenomenon (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 38; Collins & Hussey, 2014, p.10). Qualitative data does usually include figures, text, images and visual material such as recordings of videos, interviews and focus groups (Collins & Hussey, 2014, p. 130). When analysing the collected new data interpretative methods are used (Collins & Hussey, 2014, p. 6).
results in observations/findings with a high degree of validity, in oppose to a quantitative approach (Collins & Hussey, 2014, p. 130). Nevertheless, qualitative research has gotten some criticism of being too subjective, showing lack of transparency and difficulties with generalizing as well as replicate an investigation (Bryman, 2011, p. 368).

This study’s research approach is qualitative, where we do not aim to generalize the results. We want to gain an understanding for micro-sized companies corporate identity and how they use the social networking site 'Instagram' to present themselves, whereas it is imperative that we get an understanding for people’s feelings and thoughts about specific events in their own words.

2.4 Research approach

Depending on research process a study can take a deductive, inductive or sometimes even an abductive approach. The most common views of the relationship between research and theory are deductive and inductive strategies (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 25).

A deductive approach is used when the researcher starts with creating one hypothesis or several hypotheses (Saunders et al., 2012, s. 145). These need to be subjected to empirical study and afterwards the hypotheses are confirmed or rejected (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 23; Saunders et al., 2012, s. 145). Deduction is often used to explain the connection between various variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 27). Induction, on the other hand, is the opposite to deductive approach since the study is based on specific observations rather than theory (Bryman, 2011, p. 28). The inductive process entails that you draw generalizable conclusions based on observations (Bryman, 2011, p. 28).

When talking about the relationship between theory and research, the deductive strategy is often associated with a quantitative approach, while the inductive strategy then is associated with a qualitative approach (Bryman, 2011, p. 29). To summarize shortly, deduction has a process that goes from theory to observations/findings, while induction goes from observations/findings to theory (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 25; Saunders et al., 2012, s. 144-145).

The abductive approach has in recent years become more popular, especially among qualitative researchers (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 26). Abduction is a combination of induction and deduction and as similar to them is abduction used to “make logical inferences and build theories about the world” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 27). Abduction moves back and forth, from theory to data and data to theory, instead of just one way, which inductive and deductive does (Saunders et al., 2012, s. 147).

Our data collection will be through interviews with five micro-sized companies, because we will want to understand the individuals’ thoughts and experiences about a phenomenon. Our study is based on theory on the subject corporate identity and social media and its social networking sites and will thereafter result in findings. The empirical findings will then generate a new developed framework we will construct. This study takes an abductive research approach since this study will go from theory to data and then data to theory.
2.5 Literature selection

In order for us to answer our research question the literature was a crucial part of this study. The literature used was peer-reviewed journals in the fields of mainly management, marketing and business development. Through our library accounts at Umeå University we did get access to journal databases, such as Emerald, Scopus and EBSCO.

When looking for relevant articles and literature, the authors were of high importance to us. Therefore, our aim was to identify the key authors within the study's main subjects; corporate identity and social networking sites. To identify those authors was Google Scholar mainly used and with that we made sure they were cited, referenced and experienced enough. The authors found within the area of corporate identity, included authors such as Balmer (1991; 1998; 2001; 2002; 2003), Olins (1995; 1978) and Melewar (1998; 2002; 2003; 2006). These are well-recognized in corporate identity literature and their theories are widely accepted and give this study a point of departure and orientation. In order to support us in the field of social media, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) view of social media was chosen. Furthermore, the approach of social networking sites in this study has been received by Dijck’s (2013) view. Goffman’s (1954) self-presentation theory has been used in this study. We are of the opinion that even though the theory was developed for more than 60 years ago, it is still of relevance. Regarding the fact that the theory was developed for individuals desire to present themselves in a physical setting has also been taken into consideration. With support from previous researchers, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), the connection between the self-presentation theory and the social networking sites, Instagram, has been made.

Another thing we took into account when choosing articles was the publication date. We wanted to get an understanding of the earlier research that is considered classic within respective area and those articles that recent authors base their research on to come to new findings. Therefore, many older articles were reviewed and used, as well as more recent articles. Doing this helped us to understand what has been done in the field and how it was studied. Many of the articles we used in the study was based on SMEs, which we believe add to the reliability of the study since we only investigate SMEs. The definition of SMEs in this study was taken from the European Commission. It was chosen since it focuses on the European market and its companies. Most of the used literature also had a qualitative approach, which we believe further adds reliability to our study.

Our framework is built upon Rode and Vallasters’s (2005) model “A holistic understanding of corporate branding”. This model is only used as inspiration for the construction of our own framework which is made with focus on corporate identity and Instagram to fit our purpose of the study and research question.

2.6 Criticism of sources

When conducting research, two types of data sources can be used to gather knowledge within the chosen field, namely primary and secondary data (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 304). Based on the research purpose, and the overall characteristics of the study, the type of data source should be determined (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 312; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 304). Primary data is applied when the research aims to fulfil a specific purpose, compared to secondary data, which use data from already conducted studies that act as
the foundation for the new research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 312; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 304). The advantage with secondary data is that it can be gathered swiftly, and at a low cost via institutional or governmental publications on websites (Vartanian, 2011, p. 3). Primary data is viewed to be a more reliable source of knowledge, due to the fact that it is collected to fulfill the specific research purpose (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 157-158). However, primary data is more time demanding due to the gathering process and the tests for validity that needs to be run (Vartanian, 2011, p. 3). The use of primary data is generally when the researcher has identified a gap or problem, which contribute with new knowledge (Hox & Boeije, 2005, p. 593).

In this study, both primary and secondary data has been used. Primary data, however, constitutes the essential data source of this study. The selection has been made with regards to the purpose of this study. We aim to create an understanding of corporate identity in relation to social networking sites, both of them already respectively thoroughly researched. Nevertheless, the combination of the two areas, and the link between the two subjects have been missing in earlier research. We are therefore of the opinion that primary data collection would be more applicable for this study in order to fulfil its purpose, and because of the fact that one plus one may not always equal two. There might be a presence of synergetic effects difficult to foresee. Nevertheless, secondary data have been applied in this study to form the theoretical basis of the study. The selection of secondary data constitutes exclusively of scientific articles published in recognized journals, course literature used at universities, material from internationally known organizations and statistics from well acknowledged statistical organizations.
Chapter 3. Theoretical frame of reference

This chapter starts with a shorter literature review of corporate identity to come to a unified definition of the concept. Furthermore, social media and its components is reviewed and described to come to a more developed explanation of one of the components; social networking sites (SNS). Relevant theories in relation to social networking sites are explored and the concept Social Network Marketing is brought up and explained. An existing model which contains the two concepts corporate identity and social networking sites is explained. In order to answer our research question and fulfil the purpose for this study, the model is modified and re-constructed. This summarizing theoretical framework is created so that we will be able to draw conclusions from it later in the study.

3.1 Corporate identity

“Groups always develop an identity, a personality and a behaviour pattern of their own, different from and greater than the sum of the personalities involved” – Olins (1989, p. 1).

Corporate identity is an extensive concept that sounds quite simple and easy to define. Nevertheless, the field of corporate identity is of multidisciplinary nature, thereof the various and even lack of a shared definition of the concept (Melewar, 2003, p. 85). Consequently, it is no wonder that there is not any universally accepted definition of corporate identity (Melewar, 2003, p. 76; Otubanjo, 2012, p. 1; Abratt, 1989, p. 66). As a matter of fact, there are about forty different viewpoints used when talking about the definition of the concept (Otubanjo, 2012, p. 1). The issue of the indefinable concept has been discussed at various conferences around the world (Otubanjo, 2012, p. 1). Nevertheless, the interest of corporate identity has increased dramatically in recent years (Melewar, 2003, p. 195; Cornelissen et al., 2007, p. 1). The concept corporate identity will from here on be referred to as CI.

There is a great amount of previous research and literature that has been conducted within the area of CI (Abratt, 1989, p. 66). Many authors have written numerous scientific articles in order to try defining the concept and presented several models, most of which are conceptual (Devereux et al., 2017, p. 111). Various definitions have thereafter been stated, but the concept still remains unclear and no universal definition has emerged (Abratt, 1989, p. 66). Even though numerous definitions of the concept exist, there is a recurring pattern among them all. The characteristics described, are often similar to each other and many authors seem to believe the same about CI even though they express it differently. Some authors are more prominent among the many researchers on the subject. In this chapter have we have carefully picked these authors’ descriptions and definitions of CI to serve as a basis for this study. In order for our study to be as reliable as possible, will we decide upon one definition that we consider to be the most appropriate for this study.

The concept of CI has developed and changed over the years. Originally, CI was heavily associated with visual identity in comparison to the organizational internal view (Baker & Balmer, 1997, p. 368). The visual identity encompasses the company’s logo, symbol, name, type-font or the colour scheme (Dowling, 1994, p. 127). Downey (1986, p. 7) made
a good point stating that “... identity is still too often thought of as image instead of being recognized for what it truly is: the very heart and soul of an organization”. Abratt (1989, p.68) explained CI as, “an assembly of visual cues—physical and behavioural by which an audience can recognise the company and distinguish it from others and which can be used to represent or symbolise the company”. Further does Van Riel and Balmer (1997, p. 340) argue that CI was originally synonymous with the “… organizational nomenclature, logos, company house style and visual identification”. The authors continue arguing that the understanding of the concept has broadened increasingly and that the identity now is seen to be more revealed through communication and behaviour but also through the symbols the stakeholders sees (Van riel & Balmer, 1997, p. 341).

Wally Olins (1978) wrote the book ‘The corporate personality: an inquiry into the nature of corporate identity’ on what he believed CI implied. He did not state a definition, but he wrote some well-cited quotes and descriptions about the concept that’s still used in literature and research. Olins is one of the world’s most experienced practitioners of CI and has written several well-known articles and books on the subject (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, p. xii). Olins describe CI as;

“The company develops a way of projecting itself that it uses to communicate to all its audiences, internal and external” ... “the identity of the company, the corporate identity, looks both inside and outside at a wide spectrum of audiences who have different views of, attitudes towards, and interests in the company.” (Olins, 1978, p. 121).

“If it is to mean anything, the corporate identity must say something about the organisation that is intrinsic to its personality.” (Olins, 1978, p. 82).

“Many mature organizations manage to develop an ethos, a way of doing business, that is so characteristic and so much a part of them, that they seem to pursue it relentlessly, almost regardless of who runs the company. These companies have a personality which is so ingrained so much part of them, that the corporate identity expresses itself in their every action.” (Olins, 1978, p. 82).

“is the point at which the real differences in style, personality and soul between one company and another really emerge.” (Olins, 1978, p. 116).

To summarize, Olins believed CI to be about the organization’s personality, its culture, what gives the company its “soul” and “essence” and what makes it distinct from other companies. He also points out that the visual identity is a part of CI, which is shown through signs, logos and so on. In more simple terms, everything the company is that is shown from the outside, that the customers see.

The later definitions of CI are changing direction, from the visual and graphic aspect to instead be more focused on the internal organization. Back in 1997, Baker and Balmer (1997, p. 366) acknowledge that an increasing number of consultants and academics started to refer to CI as “what” an organization is, instead of how companies use their visual and graphic identity. Balmer (1998, p. 254) even argue that CI is incorrectly used when referring to visual identity. The later researchers within CI are using the older definitions and descriptions as a basis for their research but are complementing the outlook of the concept with new aspects. The meaning of CI has since the late 1990’s been extended to not only be about the visible outward presentation of companies but
instead to be more focused on the traits and intrinsic characteristics that gives the company its stability, specifics and coherence (Balmer, 1998, p. 977).

A multidisciplinary academic/practitioner forum called The International Corporate Identity Group (ICIG) has developed the “Strathclyde Statement”, whereas CI is described. It was outlined as a collaborative effort by leading academics and identity consultants, such as John M.T Balmer and Stephen A. Greyser (ICIG, n.d). The statement is mentioned and used as a definition and description of what CI is in several articles. Although it was decided to not give the concept a definitive definition but rather to be a statement which expresses the multidisciplinary nature of the concept (Van Riel & Balmer, 1997, p. 341). The statement is rather extensive (See Appendix 1) but in essence is it about that every organisation has an identity and that “articulates the corporate ethos, aims and values and presents a sense of individuality that can help to differentiate the organisation within its competitive environment. When well-managed, corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating the many disciplines and activities essential to an organisation’s success”. Further, it is said that “By effectively managing its corporate identity an organisation can build understanding and commitment among its diverse stakeholders”. It is for instance concerned with the retaining and attracting of employees and customers and to create a sense of purpose and direction, which is obtained via organizations’ CI. Also, the statement implies that CI is separate from the traditional brand marketing. This because it is concerned with all stakeholders within the organization and the different ways they communicate.

John M.T Balmer, leading corporate identity scholar, professor of corporate identity and founder and chairman of ICIG, begun early with researching about the concept CI (Academia, n.d). In the latest articles and literature on the concept, Balmer is frequently cited and referred to, which makes him a reliable professor of corporate identity. He has conducted a magnitude of research within the subject, in which he adjusts the concept after the 21st century's market situation companies are nowadays facing. In the article “Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate marketing -Seeing through the fog” Balmer (2001) did a literature review on the most relevant previous research on CI. He combined several different definitions and descriptions from different academics, including himself, to arrive at a thorough and informative combined definition of what CI is;

“The mix of elements which gives organisations their distinctiveness” … “Although there is still a lack of consensus as to the characteristics of a corporate identity, authors do, for the main, emphasize the importance of several elements including culture (with staff seen to have an affinity to multiple forms of identity), strategy, structure, history, business activities and market scope.” … “Corporate identity addresses the key question “What are we?” (Balmer, 2001, p. 254 & 257).


T.C Melewar, another significant academic within the field of CI, has written some of the more recent articles on the subject. Melewar often refers back to Balmer and Ollins for definitions and descriptions on CI, although as being a more recent author within the field
he adds a more updated and modern perspective. He recognized that organizations have become more aware of the importance of managing and developing their CI, which has been acknowledged as a strategic resource and source of competitive advantage (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 76).

Melewar and Jenkins conducted in 2002 an extensive literature review on CI. The purpose of the review was to develop a model containing the dimensions that comprise the concept (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 76). This is one of the latest literature reviews of CI, which also include Balmer’s research with a critical view of his work. The article reveals four dimensions of CI, which of each contains different subconstructs. The four dimensions found is; communication & visual identity, behaviour, corporate culture and market conditions (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 86).

This goes hand in hand with Balmer’s definition from his literature review (2001) which emphasizes culture, strategy, structure, history, business activities and market scope. Since the authors constructed definitions which entails the same themes, though they are named differently, we consider Melewar and Jenkin’s definition to be the most applicable in comparison to Balmer’s. Firstly, Melewar and Jenkins’s construction of the four dimensions are more clearly stated and easy to understand and follow. Secondly, since Balmer took his own research into consideration when conducting the literature review, he is likely to be more biased than Melewar and Jenkin. Although, since Balmer is one of the most trustworthy authors within the subject is it of importance that he is taken into consideration when doing a literature review of CI, which Melewar and Jenkins do. Therefore, we consider Melewar and Jenkins to have an impartial view of the different definitions and consequently construct a fairer definition.

We are of the opinion that the definition of CI needs to be updated continuously due to the constantly changing business environment. Based on these arguments, we will apply Melewar and Jenkins’s definition in this study, and also taken into account that it is one of the latest updated and published literature review of CI.

3.1.1 Selected definition of corporate identity

Rode and Vallaster (2005, p. 123) assembled a model called “A holistic understanding of corporate branding”. The model consists of a company's internal organizational aspect, containing the CI and its dimensions. The company's external aspect is also displayed, containing their communication channels to the company's target groups. The model provides an illustrative structure and overview of the relationship between the CI, the communication channels and the external aspect with target groups. In the previous section, CI is extensively reviewed and researched to come to a final definition. For that reason, the definition by Melewar and Jenkins is going to be explained further and Rode and Vallaster’s dimensions of CI are not considered in this study.
The four dimensions of CI, which the model entails are; corporate behaviour, corporate culture/personality, corporate communication and corporate design (Rode & Vallaster, 2005, p. 123), but since we are going use Melewar and Jenkins definition of CI, we are applying those dimensions instead. However, as mentioned in the previous section, every author has different approaches/sayings on what CI implies and includes and therefore we do believe it’s possible to replace Rode and Vallaster’s CI dimensions. With the support from the previous section, Melewar and Jenkins dimensions on CI are applied in this study, which is; Corporate culture, Behaviour, Communication & visual identity and Market condition (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 86).

The Corporate culture is the company’s shared beliefs, values and behaviour, which then should form the behaviour of the employees of the company (Downey, 1986, p. 7; Guiso et al, 2015, p. 61). The importance of the Corporate culture to an organisation’s identity has been acknowledged by identity scholars (Balmer & Gray, 2003, p. 988). Downey (1986, p. 7) even argues that the Corporate culture “in fact flows from and is the consequence of corporate identity”. Furthermore, Melewar and Jenkins (2002, p. 81) believe the subconstructs of Corporate culture to be ‘Goals, philosophies and principles’ and ‘Nationality’. The company's nationality and perceived attributes, becomes more important when companies expand their business globally, where every country has its strengths and weaknesses (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84). The company's beliefs are, according to Melewar and Jenkins, expressed through corporate philosophies and statements of their corporate principles (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84). Furthermore, are statements like that a means in order to differentiate a company from others (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84).

The second dimension of CI is Behaviour, which entails the subconstructs ‘corporate behaviour’, ‘management behaviour’ and ‘employee behaviour’ (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 8). The ‘corporate behaviour’ is the “body-language of the organisation” (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 81). The ‘corporate behaviour’ is performed by individuals in the organization (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83). As the corporate behaviour is an intangible dimension, is it hard to measure and control (Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2002, p. 38). The ‘management behaviour’ arises from the top management and also from the interaction of employees and managers (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83). The

---

**Figure 1: A holistic understanding of corporate branding (Rode & Vallaster, 2005, p. 123)**
founder’s managerial behaviour is reflected throughout the entire organizational behaviour (Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007, p. 35). The ‘employee behaviour’ is represented both internally and externally of the company, they facilitate the organization’s work to express the organization’s CI (Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007, p. 37). It is said that through the employees’ behaviour the organization’s unique characteristics are exposed to the external stakeholders and reflect how the company “thinks, feels and behaves” (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83).

The dimension Communication & Visual identity entails the subconstructs; ‘corporate communication’, ‘uncontrollable communication’ and ‘corporate visual identity’. ‘Corporate communication’ is described as “an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms or internal and external communications are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible as to create a favorable basis for relationships upon which the company is dependent” (Van Riel, 1995, p. 26).

‘Corporate communication’ encompasses the components management communication and marketing communication (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). The management communication is the most important, since it is the primary way the top managers distribute the organization's objectives and goals to the employees (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). It is a form of communication that appears from the interaction between employees and managers (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). Marketing communication, however, accounts for all the communication that is provided to the company's external stakeholders (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). The ‘uncontrollable communication’ is the unplanned or informal communication, which the employees make with outsiders of the organization as well as reports from third parties (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). According to Melewar and Jenkins (2002, p. 82) is this component what companies gives most attention to, since the marketing communication is associated with financial costs.

The corporate visual identity entails the logotype, corporate name, typography, colour and symbols (Melewar & Saunders, 1989, p. 291). According to Olins (1995, p. 11) is the Visual identity used “to present the central idea of the organization with impact, brevity and immediacy”. The visual identity benefit from a standardized format (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83).

According to Melewar and Jenkins (2002, p. 81), the two subconstructs ‘nature of industry’ and ‘corporate/marketing strategies’ are what entails the dimension Market condition. What the authors implies with the corporate strategy is the process itself and not the content of it. Whilst thinking of it that way, it retains some continuity over time and, therefore, makes the strategy closely related to the core of the organization and has its roots deeply embedded within the corporate activities (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84). The ‘nature of industry’ implies to what degree a company’s industry and its characteristics are influence the company’s CI (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p.85). If an industry is characterized upon clearly defined features, such as paternalism and conservatism, it will according to Morrison (1997, p. 158) have a high influence of the company’s CI.

In contrast to the internal side of the company and the CI, the corporate image accounts for the external side in Rode and Vallaster’s model. Corporate image can be described as what the individuals actually perceive the company’s CI to be (Olins, 1978, p. postscript). Through all the impressions, feelings, experiences, beliefs and knowledge people have about a specific company, which results in the company’s corporate image (Worcester,
2009, p. 578). One example is the company’s logotype that is seen by people which then leads to perceptions and associations of the company’s image (Cornelissen et al., 2007, p. 115).

When looking at the illustrated model by Rode and Vallaster, the external side consists of two main aspects which are channels and target groups. The “channels” can be described as the company's specific communication channels which is used to distribute their CI and reach their target groups. In the illustrated model the target group consists of customers, suppliers, public, analysts and investors. The communication channels can be social media, face-to-face, website, call centre and mail (Returncustomer, 2011). Although, these channels do not work on their own, since they are dependent on the company’s employees' behaviour and social conduct to interact and communicate with their target groups.

3.2 Self-presentation theory

The self-presentation theory enhances the social aspect of human behaviour (Goffman, 1959, p. 232). According to Goffman (1959, p. 26) all individuals have a desire to convey the presentation of themselves to others. Where the individual has the aspiration that the presentation is consistent with his own perception of himself, which in turns affects how the individual’s behaviour and communication then is executed (Goffman, 1959, p. 14). The individual's presentation can be consciously and unconsciously revealed to his surrounding via his behaviour or communication (Goffman, 1959, p. 16). The conscious presentation is executed, in which the individual performs his actions in a calculated manner and solely reveals a desired presentation of himself (Goffman, 1959, p. 17-18). In contrast, the individual displaces an unconscious presentation of himself via information sharing which might not be coherent with the individual's conscious perception of himself (Goffman, 1959, p. 16). Depending on the level of the conscious and unconscious presentations the individual provides to others, his desired level of self-presentation is determined (Goffman, 1959, p. 63).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) can self-presentation theory be applied on the digital channels via social media. In the context of social networking sites, an individual's desire to control the presentation of himself can be exploited via the users’ ability to display themselves via the site (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) argues that the user can distribute visual content to present to other users what he wants to be identified with. Furthermore, suggests the authors that the social networking sites’ communicative feature facilitates the users to textually present himself (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61).

3.3 Social media

From the revolution of the Internet-driven technology, social media has emerged which has caused changes in the business environment (Devereux et al., 2017, p. 113). Social media does not only increasingly penetrate the businesses today but are also recognized as the fastest growing marketing channel in the world (Pentina et al., 2012, p. 65; Coremetrics, 2010, cited in Pentina et al., 2012, p. 66). This is because companies now recognize that social media, as a platform for business, is a must these days (Ainin et al., 2015, p. 570). The development of the social media has made it possible for users to directly communicate with thousands of others, about companies and its products or
services (Mangold & Faulds, 2009, p. 367; Varadarajan & Yadav, 2002, p. 296). To be able to answer the research question, the foundation and development of social media has been investigated and presented.

Despite the last decades broad expansion and adoption level of social media by individuals and companies (Han et al., 2016, p. 947), there are still no unified accepted definition of the concept social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60). Although, the characteristics of social media can be explained; social media are Internet-based technologies that allow its users to create and share user-generated material (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011, p. 61). The foundation of social media consists of the phenomenon Web 2.0 and user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60-61). Web 2.0 was developed to provide a two-way communication between internet users, which has facilitated the social media users’ ability to create and publicly distribute content on the platforms (Dijck, 2013, p. 6; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60). The term user-generated content is defined by the ability for the social media users to create their own content and make it public on that system (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61).

According to Dijck (2013, p. 6) social media has the ability to connect and socially engage its users through participation and collaboration between the users. According to Dijck (2013, p. 7), there are four categories of social media, the first one is ‘social networking sites’, which is from here on referred to as SNS. The SNS enables interpersonal contact between individuals and companies, which makes it possible to share information and have social networking with users beyond demographic and geographic boundaries (Dijck, 2013, p. 7). Examples of SNS are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and Snapchat. The second category is ‘User generated content’, which facilitate platforms where creative content is generated and exchanged between professional or amateur users (Dijck, 2013, p. 7). Examples of UGC platforms are YouTube, Wikipedia and Myspace (Dijck, 2013, p. 7). The third category is ‘trading and marketing sites’ (TMS), which aims to sell and promote companies’ and individuals’ offerings (Dijck, 2013, p. 7). The sites Amazon, eBay and Groupon are examples of TMS (Dijck, 2013, p. 7). ‘Play and gaming sites’ (PGS), accounts for the fourth category, examples of this are Farmville, Cityville and Angry Birds (Dijck, 2013, p. 7).

![Figure 2: Dijck’s categorisation of social media platforms](image)

### 3.3.1 Social networking sites (SNS)
SNS promotes interpersonal contact between its users, via publications of textual and visual content (Dijck, 2013, p. 6). SNS has during the last decade experienced a superior expansion, becoming the fastest growing category within social media (Miller & Horst, 2011, p. 18). With the increasing number of individuals using SNS in their daily lives, SNS has become an essential and integrated marketing channel for companies to communicate to their prospect customers (Herrero et al., 2017, p. 209). Moreover, since SNS has great potential for online branding, the spending on SNS advertising has experienced tremendous growth (Chu & Kim, 2011, p. 50). According to Dwivedi et al (2016, p. 61) Instagram is the most effective tool for companies to reach customers and promote themselves, in comparison to other social media platforms such as e.g. Facebook and Youtube.

SNS is Internet-based services that permits individuals to create a public profile, a ‘user-profile’ on a specific site (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 210). SNS is built upon publication of user-generated content, either textually or visually as videos and photos. This visual format of communication has promoted the emergence of the SNS Instagram. Instagram allows its users to share photos and videos either publicly or privately (Hu et al., 2014, p. 595). Instagram has rapidly and consistently been growing in the number of users, since it was established in 2010 (Thoresson & Davidsson, 2017). With Instagram’s 500 million daily users (Instagram, 2018), it is now the third most used social media service in the US, right after Facebook and Youtube (Pew Research Center, 2018).

3.4 Social network marketing and SMEs

The study is limited to only investigate companies that are micro-sized. SMEs are not recognized to be a homogenous group, which means that they are different in various ways (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2). They, for example, differ in knowledge and skills, business goals, strategy, market and customer orientation (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2). Also, some SMEs are better than others to recognize the customer driven need to utilize new technology and social media (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2). Characteristics that SMEs have in common are their limited resources, time and money, due to the fact that they are relatively small and often young (Harris & Rae, 2009, p. 694).

Since the revolution of new technology and Internet, companies are now required to embrace new technology in order to stay ahead of competitors and to not fall behind. Although, SMEs is said to struggle to adapt to these new technologies, because of their limited resources, lack of skills and knowledge in comparison to larger firms (Harris & Rae, 2009, p. 694; Dahnil et al., 2014, p. 119). Nevertheless, SMEs can take advantage of social media platforms to overcome some of the struggles (Derham et al., 2007, p. 3), this because the Internet is a rather cheap way of marketing, compared to the traditional methods (Harris & Rae, 2009, p. 694; Nobre & Silva, 2014, p. 140). According to Öztamur and Karakadilar (2014, p. 511) the use of social media and the Internet has by the beginning of the 21st century become an integrated part of companies’ business strategies. The Internet has provided us with several social media platforms that companies easily can access and communicate through. Using social media as a marketing tool has a few outstanding advantages for companies; it does not require a great deal of financial investment, it is time-saving and finally also encourages engagement with their customers (Dahnil et al., 2014, p. 120; Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 512; Nobre & Silva, 2014, p. 140).
Within the field of social media, there are relatively new and increasingly popular ‘social networks’ (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2). Companies used these networks as a marketing tool to create a two-way communication between the company and their customers and from this the ‘social network marketing’ (SNM) was born (Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 513). The marketing and advertising industry has gone through a paradigm shift; from a one-way mass communication, from marketer to market, to a two-way communication which instead has become a dialogue between the customer and company (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, p.13; Pentina et al., 2012, p. 1). However, this dialogue is not necessarily controlled or initiated by the company itself and due to the nature of SNS it can even be consumer to consumer without the company directly being a part of it (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2). Pentina et al. (2012, p. 1) said that “social networks marketing involves initiating viral consumer-to-consumer communications by creating company/brand fan pages and managing promotions and public relations within most popular social networks”.

To succeed with SNM it is crucial for companies to work on their ability to engage their followers, in that way the companies can more effectively build brand awareness and also enhance their brand reputation (Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 513). Brand awareness is defined as “viewed as a means through which individuals become informed and accustomed with a brand name and recall and recognize the brand” (Barreda et al, 2015, p. 600). Companies has previously tried to create brand awareness through the limited one-way communications, although with the SNM approach is a two-way conversation now possible (Lim et al, 2012, p. 198-199). Via that two-way communication customers are a part of the development of brand image and identity (Lim et al, 2012, p. 198-199). It has been shown that SNM has a bigger impact on the company’s brand awareness and reputation, than the increase of sales (Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 513).

SNM is a marketing channel that is particularly beneficial and promising for SMEs, due to the low costs and barriers, the time saving, the minimal need for technological skills and knowledge and also the flexibility it brings (Pentina et al., 2012, p. 1; Dahnil et al., 2014, p. 124; Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 512; Harris & Rae, 2009, p. 697). Implementing a social network marketing for an SMEs does not only create a lot of opportunities but might also change the nature and shape of the businesses all around the world (Dahnil et al., 2014, p. 119). Since SMEs has limited resources SNM is a perfect choice for them. By taking advantage of SNM, SMEs can achieve and make use of it in the same way as large organizations (LOs) do (Derham et al., 2007, p. 2).

3.5 Summarizing theoretical framework

The development of the social media platforms has opened up new ways for how companies can distribute their market communication and how they can reach a larger target group than before (Devereux et al., 2017, p. 127). A company’s CI is the foundation of all the activities and communication a company constitutes, since it determines how a company communicate and behaves in the marketplace. A company’s adoption and usage of the social media platforms should therefore be conducted through the support of guidelines developed from its CI (Dreher, 2014, p. 350). The link between CI and the SNS has during the last years received attention from several researchers who has identified the interrelation between the two concepts (Devereux et al., 2017, p. 110; Bruce & Solomon, 2013, p. 308).
By companies’ utilization of Instagram’s technological connectivity and the social connectives can the CI, thus the Corporate culture, Behaviour, Communication & Visual identity and Market conditions, be mediated to the target group. When companies utilize Instagram’s technology and social connections, their CI - including the Corporate Culture, Behaviour, Communication & Visual identity and Market Condition – can be mediated to the target groups.

Figure 3: Our summarizing theoretical framework

CI relationship to SNS is a quite young and narrow field of study and there are very few, if any, conceptual models and framework developed for it. After investigating CI, social media and its SNS, we came to the conclusion to use Rode and Vallaster’s model as an inspiration and make a summarizing framework that we could base our research and findings on. What that summarized theoretical framework entails compared to Rode and Vallaster’s model, is the two-way communication that occurs via Instagram and the CI of micro-sized companies.

Our framework entails the companies’ CI and its target group, and the link that connects them is the companies’ SNS, Instagram. In this study Instagram is one of the companies’ communication channels. Although, the main focus is put on CI, which is displayed in the framework formatted as a “wheel” due to the fact that we believe the dimensions of CI to be closely linked and influenced by each other. The CI wheel is divided into four pieces; corporate culture, behaviour, communication & visual identity and market condition.

As seen in the framework there are two arrows that point back and forth from the CI wheel and the ‘Target group’, those arrows represent the link between the internal and external side. This is the communication channel companies use to reach their target group to express outwards who they are. Our framework only takes the SNS Instagram in consideration, since Instagram is the only communication channel this study examines.
It is proposed in our summarized theoretical framework that the company transmit its CI to their external target groups, no matter if it is a conscious or unconscious choice. This because micro-sized companies’ CI is rooted in the core of the organization, is intangible and represents how and in what way the company operates. We believe their CI is therefore, one way or another, transmitted via Instagram’s two-way communication, which means that the external and internal sides are not as separated as they used to be. Moreover, the target groups can interact directly via Instagram with the companies. Before the emergence of SNS, companies transmitted their CI to their target group via other communication channels, which often were one-way communication. With Instagram it is now an exchange between the customer and the company, and a dialogue is established, which means that the company’s CI somehow can be exchanged and co-created with their target group. Therefore, we believe this relatively new-founded two-way communication to have an effect on CI.

We are of the opinion that based on our constructed summarized theoretical framework we are able to draw connections and find patterns of how micro-sized companies use Instagram in order to express themselves and form their CI. Therefore, we believe that this model is a good fit to use as a foundation for our study.
Chapter 4. Practical methodology

This chapter aims to provide insights in how the research was practically conducted. The outline of the chapter starts by presenting the selected subjects of this study. Furthermore, it presents information of the data collection method and the selected interviewees, which are motivated and supported. It presents the interview process, which encompasses the interview respondents, interview guide, conduction of interviews, transcription of the interviews and its coding. In the final section the ethical and social considerations for the process of the data collection is discussed.

4.1 SME - micro-sized companies

The concept of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) captures a broad variety of companies’ characteristics (Hillary, 2017, p. 13). Based on the diversity and dimensions an SME captures, the concept has no clearly stated and unified definition (Gilmore et al., 2007, p. 234; Hillary, 2017, p. 13). A lot of research has been conducted in order to describe the concept of SME, however, there is no universal definition that describes the complexity and diversity of the concept (Hillary, 2017, p. 13). In 2005, the European Commission established general guidelines and fundamental criteria to facilitate a definition of an SME (European Commission, 2018). According to the European Commission, an SME are defined based by the number of employees and the annual turnover or balance the company has (European Commission, 2018).

Micro-sized companies are defined by a maximum employment of 10 individuals, which account for full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal employment (European Commission, 2018). Moreover, the annual turnover and balance sheet cannot exceed 2 million euros. The estimated percentage for all SMEs in Sweden, is 99.9 whereas the estimated percentage for micro-sized companies are 94.6 (European Commission, 2017). That percentage means Sweden has 660 000 micro-sized companies (European Commission, 2017).

Table 1: The three categories within SMEs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of employees</th>
<th>Annual turnover</th>
<th>Balance Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>&lt; 10</td>
<td>&lt; € 2 million</td>
<td>&lt; € 2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
<td>&lt; € 10 million</td>
<td>&lt; € 10 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>&lt; 250</td>
<td>&lt; € 50 million</td>
<td>&lt; € 43 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: European Commission, 2018

4.2 Social networking site Instagram

Instagram is a free SNS that was originally made in form of a mobile application, although it can now be reached through its website as well (www.instagram.com). It was founded in 2010 and acquired by Facebook in 2012, although the two SNS are run as separate
operations (Instagram, 2018). Instagram is designed for share visual content with other users on the site, where the visual content can be in form of photos and videos.

In order to use Instagram, the users need to create an account and then the users can choose to ‘follow’ other users, which for example can be friends, family or famous people. The users have their own ‘user-profile’ which often contain a profile picture and a descriptive text, and later the content that the user publish. The published photos and videos are stored to the users own ‘library’ of pictures. The Instagram users’ can choose if they want their content to be private or open to the public. If the user’s account is open to the public, the published content is visible for anyone using Instagram. By having a public user profile, it enables other users to view, ‘follow’ the user’s profile but also to ‘like’ and comment the published material (Lup et al., 2015, 248). By following other users, the user extends its network which provides the possibility to interact, connect and communicate. Interaction with other users is through private messages, comments and ‘likes’ on the published content. Where a ‘like’ is a quick and positive response to a published video or photo, you like a published content by either double tapping the photo or video or tap the heart icon which is located under the published content.

Instagram has 800 million unique monthly users and 500 million daily actives (Instagram, 2018). Instagram has rapidly and consistently been growing in number of users since it was founded. This in comparison to Facebook, which growth has stalled and is expected to soon have a decline in users (Pew Research Center, 2018). Instagram had the fastest increase of users in Sweden in the last years (Thoresson & Davidsson, 2017). In 2017 Instagram was the second largest SNS in Sweden, where 53 percent of all Swedish Internet users were using Instagram (Thoresson & Davidsson, 2017). Whereas in the US, Instagram is the third most used social media service (Pew Research Center, 2018). The number of people using the largest social network, Facebook, increased with three percent in Sweden during 2017, compared to Instagram’s growth of nine percent (Thoresson & Davidsson, 2017).

In the beginning of 2018, Instagram had more than 25 million business profiles worldwide with over 2 million advertisers aimed to increase the company financial results through the social network site (Instagram, 2017). According to Instagram (Instagram, 2017), 60 percent of their users discover new products through their site. Furthermore, 200 million users are daily visiting a company profile and 80 percent of Instagram’s users follow at least one company’s profile (Instagram, 2017).

4.3 Sampling

The different techniques of sampling are probability and non-probability sampling (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261). Probability sampling is a method where every individual in the population has the same chance of being incorporated in the sample (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261). This sampling technique is often applied in quantitative research when the aim is to derive a statistical analysis and conclusion to fulfil the research purpose (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 261-262). As this study is of a qualitative nature that aims to collect data to develop a deeper understanding the relationship between companies CI and its presentation on Instagram, the selection of the sampling method for this study is non-probability sampling. In the non-probability sampling the selection of respondents is not random, but the researcher can instead select respondents that are relevant for the study (Bryman, 2011, p. 350). The technique permits that some individuals have a higher
A more specific non-probability sampling is heterogeneous sampling, which has been applied in this study. This sampling method allows us to apply our own judgement and perception to determine which respondents that are relevant to fulfill the research purpose (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287). This technique was used since we needed persons who had specific knowledge and information about the concerned subjects and therefore would be chosen from the population instead of random selected ones. It is also not of interest to generalize the findings or provide statistical results, which further proves our sample method.

**Selection of sample**

When selecting which individuals to include in a study, Rowley (2012, p. 264) suggests that the researcher should focus on finding individuals that have the knowledge about the topic a study aims to investigate. According to Saunders et al., (2012, p. 287) a diversified sample is preferred if a study aims to detect patterns and describe the gathered findings. The sampling criteria constitutes as the foundation when selecting a sample (Denscombe, 2016, p. 65). This study’s sampling criteria constitutes of; SMEs which use Instagram as one of their main communication channels. Another criterion that was of importance, was that the companies had at least 5,000 followers on their Instagram account where they daily and consistently published content.

According to Saunders et al., (2012, p. 283) it is not fixed how large a sample size should be; the sample size should instead be determined by what the study aims of retrieving. This study initially aimed to investigate SMEs and therefore 40 SMEs, that fitted our criteria, were contacted via email. Of the contacted companies, five accepted to participate in this study, whereof one was used for the pilot interview. By a coincidence, all five companies were micro-sized. Thereof, the study’s delimitation was narrowed down from investigate SMEs to only investigate micro-sized companies. We are of the opinion that the sample size is sufficient in order to fulfill the study’s purpose and answer the research question.

The respondents we wanted to involve in our study needed to have extensive knowledge of the respective company besides being involved in many of the processes and stages of the operational work. This because we were of the opinion that we then could reach the purpose of this study as well as answer our research question. Therefore, were founders, owners or managers chosen to participate. We believe the chosen five respondents to have that knowledge and information we need in order to go through with this study and come to conclusions.

### 4.4 Interview Structure

The selected methodology should aid the researcher to fulfil the research purpose, where the researcher should be asking himself “Which method is the best suited for the task?” (Denscombe, 2016, p. 234). As mentioned in section 2.3 a qualitative methodology has been selected for this study. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006, p. 314) argues that one of the most frequently used research techniques is interviewing, which is applied in this study.

In this study, the primary data collection is made through interviews. The qualitative technique is one alternative to collect primary data, which aids the researcher to ask questions directly to the respondent and gain knowledge (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Ahrne,
The data collection can be categorised in three different techniques, which is decided by the interview structure and level of standardised questions, which are structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133-134; Eriksson-Zetterquist & Ahne, 2011, p. 38). Semi-structured interviews are conducted through open-ended questions, and the researcher can get guidance from an interview guide (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134). In comparison to structured interviews, the interviewer can ask questions that are not included in the interview guide, which provides further knowledge to the research subject (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 391).

As this study’s aims to investigate micro-sized companies’ CI and how they use the SNS ‘Instagram’ to present themselves, we are not seeking to collect quantitative results. Instead, we seek to gain insights about the respondents’ emotional experience, reasoning and how they act or feel about the study’s investigated subject (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133; Eriksson-Zetterquist & Ahne, 2011, p. 34). In this study semi-structured interviews have been conducted, which is coherent with our qualitative nature of research. To fulfil the research purpose the interview guide was developed on themes (CI and SNS), which made sure that the wanted insights to the study were collected. Although, the selected interview technique enables us of discussing and asking questions that are not included in the interview guide.

Furthermore, the application of cross-sectional methodology has been made, as the data gathered from the interviews was collected during one interview occasion with the respondents. According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 63) is the methodology described as, taking a “snapshot” of the investigated phenomenon (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 63).

### 4.5 Interview guide

The interview guide act as an outline for the interview, containing topics and questions which can be described as the blueprint over the interview, but it does not need to be strictly followed by the interviewer (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 130). For semi-structured interviews, the interview guide provides the researcher the assurance that all the topics in the study covered (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 473). The interview guide for this study is provided in Appendix 2. We designed the interview guide based on CI’s four dimensions (Corporate culture, Behaviour, Communication & visual identity and Market condition) and SNS, Instagram, see Appendix 3 for the interview guide with theoretical connection. The application of the theoretical supported questions was conducted in order to answer the research question. According to Rowley (2012, p. 265) the questions should be placed in a ‘natural’ order to aid the conversations’ flow with respondent. A lot of effort was put into designing the interview guide to facilitate a more easy-going conversation with the respondents. Moreover, open-ended questions were used in the interview to facilitate the conversation, gain more knowledge and insights, and to not steer the answers in any way. Prior to the interviews were performed, the interview guide was examined by some of our peers. Based by their suggestions the language in the interview guide was adapted to even further assist the respondent’s understanding of the questions.

#### 4.5.1 Pilot interview

We as researchers do not have any previous knowledge in interviewing, a pilot interview was executed prior to the sample interviews. Rowley (2012, p. 265) states that a pilot
interview should be performed with a representative that has been selected with the same sample criteria as the study’s sample. The prospect respondent for the pilot interview was therefore controlled accordingly to the sample criteria. The pilot interview was carried out via telephone and was of great assistance to us, as we became familiar with the interview setting and how to steer the conversation. The respondent provided us with insights on the interview guide’s themes and questions, where we afterwards could adjust some of the questions’ wording to work better. Initially we did not know if the data collected from the pilot interview would be usable in this study. Although, after all the interviews were conducted we came to the conclusion that the obtained data from the pilot interview was equivalent to the other interviews and therefore the decision to include the pilot interview in the study’s sample was made.

4.6 Interview process

An interview is a process, which entails the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee with the aim to generate knowledge (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 17). The interviews are performed to get insights from the interviewee (Denscombe, 2016, p. 272). The researcher’s role in the interviews should be to enhance the interviewee willingness to share his experience and insights (Denscombe, 2016, p. 272). We had limited previous experience as interviewers before this study, but with the support of the interview guide, our confidence grew along with the number of completed interviews.

Before the interviews were performed, an information letter was sent out to all the participants to ensure that they understood what their participation implied (see Appendix 4). The information letter contained information about us, the purpose of the study and the themes of the interview.

According to Saunders et al (2012, p. 405) face-to-face interviews are preferred in qualitative studies since the researcher then can acknowledge and analyse the respondents’ non-verbal behaviour. Although, telephone interviews can be applied when the data collection is impracticable or unfeasible to perform in person (Bryman & Bell, 2012, p. 488). The participating respondents are positioned in different geographic regions in Sweden, such as Umeå, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Härnösand. Due to cost and time constraints, telephone interviews were performed with the respondents who were located outside of Umeå. However, the respondents that were positioned in Umeå was performed face-to-face. Rogers (1976, p. 65) argues that the quality of the gathered data via telephone can be comparable to the face-to-face interview technique. We agree with Rogers’ (1976, p. 65) argument, since we are of the belief that the telephone interviews held the same quality as the interviews that was held face-to-face. As the communication via telephone tend to be formal (Ériksson-Zetterquist & Ahrne, 2011, p. 44), a lot of emphasis was placed upon making the respondents feel comfortable in the situation.

We started the interviews by introducing ourselves, explaining the aim of the study and the structure of the interview and its themes. Furthermore, the respondents were asked for the permission to record the interview via an audio recorder, as well as if they wanted a copy of the interview transcription afterwards to verify their answers. All of the respondents wanted a copy of the transcription, which they later were provided with. During the interviews, one of us took notes and the other held and lead the interview. Which one who held the interview was determined by which one of us who had initiated
the contact with respective respondent. We are of the belief that the already established contact with the respondents increases the probability of obtaining more in-depth insights. For the telephone interviews, this arrangement was highly beneficial since the respondents did not get confused of who of us that was asking the questions. After the interviews were completed we thanked the respondents for their time and participating.

According to Eriksson-Zetterquist and Ahrne (2011, p. 42-43) the location for the interview can have an impact on the respondents' willingness to share his insights and knowledge. For the face-to-face interviews were, therefore, the respondents given the opportunity to themselves decide where the interview was going to be held. To promote the respondents’ ability to elaborate on the asked questions were all the interviews were performed in our and the respondents' native language, Swedish.

**Table 2: Overview of respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Brand name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Length of interview</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
<th>Interview technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compass Motion AB</td>
<td>Nau</td>
<td>Co-owner &amp; Chief Operating Officer</td>
<td>60 min</td>
<td>2018-03-21</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un Cadeau De La Providence AB</td>
<td>CDLP</td>
<td>Co-founder &amp; Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>64 min</td>
<td>2018-03-22</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernö Gin AB</td>
<td>Hernö Gin</td>
<td>Head of Communications</td>
<td>43 min</td>
<td>2018-03-23</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigr AB</td>
<td>Sigr</td>
<td>Co-founder &amp; Head of Sales</td>
<td>64 min</td>
<td>2018-03-29</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivia Brand AB</td>
<td>Rivia Sports</td>
<td>Co-owner</td>
<td>41 min</td>
<td>2018-04-18</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transcription and analysis**

The transcription process accounts for a vital component of conducting research (Jenks, 2011, p. 3). In the transcription of the interviews, the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees becomes formalised in written form (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 177). According to Jenks (2011, p. 3) transcriptions can be made via different approaches, such as: line-by-line description of the interview, short narrative or video, from which visual material can be taken. As mentioned, all the conducted in interviews were audio recorded after approval by the respondents. The transcriptions of this study were made using the line-by-line approach, where all the expressed words during the interviews was written down in the transcriptions (Jenks, 2011, p. 3). The transcription approach was selected due to our interest to analyse all of the respondents’ reasonings, elaborations and insight in the asked questions in order to fulfil the research purpose. Magnusson and Marecek (2015, p. 73) suggest that the researcher should listen to short segments of the recorded conversation, which we also did. The transcriptions were made as fast as possible after completing each of the interviews, this because we then could send the transcription to the respondent and therefore also get their approval for using the transcription in our study.

As this study is written in English, the collected data was translated which was made during the analysis process of the data. According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 65), translation of the retrained data can cause issues of interpretation, which decreases the comparability. We are assured that the interpretation and translations of the interviews
have been conducted correctly because we are both fluent in English. We analysed the
data according to the themes in our interview guide, which was based on our theoretical
framework. Furthermore, the data was also analysed according to company, which
enables us to easier distinguish the difference in the answers from all the respondents.
The next step we took was to contextualize the data, which we did in a table (see section
5.3) in order to get a better holistic view of the themes, and to detect patterns among the
respondents’ answers.

4.7 Ethical aspects

When conducting qualitative research ethical issues are likely to arise, due to the
researcher’s implications with the respondents (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 312). In
order to aid the research quality, Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 128) suggest that the
researcher should take the ethical issues into consideration when conducting the study.
The ethical issues that have been taken into consideration before, during and after the data
gathering process are: lack of informed consent, harm to participants, invasion of privacy,
and the issue of deception (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 128). To ensure that our conducted
work as researchers has been performed in a desirable manner the application of the issue
researcher’s role has been made (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 74).

It is of high importance that the researcher of the study informs the participants of the
process and the purpose of the research as well as not attempting to gather information
under any misleading perceptions (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 133). From the initial contact
with the respondents they received information about us as researchers, the nature and
purpose of the study to diminish the aspects of deception. They further were informed
about how their participation in the study would be conducted, how the gathered data
would be handled and how the study’s results would be presented. The respondents were
also informed that their participation was voluntary and their approval to contribute could
be withdrawn at any time during the research process. When the respondents accepted
their participation an information letter was distributed to obtain full assurance that they
understood what their participation implied. The information letter can be found in
Appendix 4. As the information letter was distributed before the interview was scheduled,
the respondents were provided with an opportunity to ask questions. A formal agreement
between the respondent and us was not established, which do not fulfil Kvale and
Brinkmann (2009, p. 71) suggestion of obtaining informed consent. However, a written
agreement was derived through e-mail correspondence.

Before the interviews with the respondents were started, they were reminded of the
study’s purpose, that the finalized thesis would be publicly published and that they could
withdraw their participation at any time. All the respondents could select to be anonymous
in the study, which they chose not to be. To avoid that the respondent would be exposed
to harm, the transcript of the interview was sent to the respondents to ensure that company
secrets were not revealed. The respondents’ names have not been used in this study in
order to respect their privacy. Instead are the company names used, which has been
approved by all of the companies. According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 136) should
only the topics related to the study be presented to not invade the respondents’ privacy.

To ensure that we as researchers have conducted this study in an appropriate manner, a
reflection on our role as researchers has been made. The ethical aspect reflects the
researchers’ moral behaviour and uprightness throughout the study (Kvale & Brinkmann
(2009, p. 74). We have in all contact with the respondents been respectful and highly grateful for their participation and the information they have shared with us.
Chapter 5. Empirical research and findings

In this chapter, the results from the empirical research and findings, presented. Firstly, a short presentation and background of the companies is given. Afterwards is the empirical findings presented in accordance to our summarizing theoretical framework and its themes.

5.1 Company Overview

**Compass Motion AB - Nau**
Compass Motion AB is located in Gothenburg, Sweden, and was established in 2016. The company produce the energy drink Nau, targeted for e-sport enthusiasts and players. Nau is the name of their main product and communicate externally and therefore Nau will be used as their name onwards. The company was founded by three Swedish university students, which had a hypothesis that the current market for energy drinks within the gaming industry was not as suitable for the players as it could be. They instead wanted to introduce a new product, containing the same energy content as the competitive products but without caffeine and sugar. In comparison to the competitors, the company’s objective is to be transparent with the containing ingredients and its effect on the human body. Their target group are eSport players that want the same effects they get from other energy drinks but are not harmful to the human body. Today, the company accounts for six employees, including the top management. Nau is offered internationally via their website but the target market is the Nordic countries, with main focus on Sweden and Norway. The product is distributed to their target group via physical stores, virtual distributors and through their own website. Nau’s main marketing channel has since its establishment been Instagram (see Appendix 5). The company’s profile on Instagram has 14 700 followers (May 2018), which are people from all over the world. Although Nau is newly founded establishment the company had an annual turnover of 0,1 million SEK (S. Hagert personal communication, Mars 21, 2018).

**Un Cadeau De La Providence AB - CDLP**
In 2014, Un Cadeau De La Providence AB was founded by the two friends with the shared vision that males’ underwear design and quality needed to be updated, to reflect the 21st century’s ‘modern’ man. When communicating externally, they use their product name CDLP, which will be used as their name from here on. CDLP operate internationally through both physical and virtual distributors, as well as their own website. The company’s target group are all individuals that want to wear male underwear with an effortless style and sophisticated aesthetic without any patterns and distinct colours. The company’s main marketing channel is Instagram, which CDLP has used since March 2016. The company’s Instagram account (see Appendix 5), has 6 250 followers (May 2018), from all over the world. Today, CDLP have six employees, including the co-founders. All CDLP’s products are designed in Sweden, which is the company’s home market, but produced in Portugal. In 2016, CDLP had a turnover of 0,275 million SEK (Allabolag, 2018a).

**Hernö Gin AB**
The founder’s interest with gin began when he moved to London, right after graduation of High School, to work as a bartender. His passion for gin developed and he started to
travel all around the world to study gin and its production. In 2011, the founder and his wife bought a farm in Dala, Härnösand, in the High Coast of Sweden. There they built their first gin distillery was built and the dream of Hernö Gin came to life (Hernö Gin, n.d). Hernö Gin produces organic, artisan gin that is inspired by the beauty of its origin. The gin has won several awards and today is Hernö Gin the most awarded gin in Europe 2013-2016 (Hernö Gin, n.d). The company has ten employees and is operative in more than 20 countries, where the largest markets are England, Denmark and Australia. Hernö Gin’s Instagram account (see Appendix 5) is followed by 11 200 users (May 2018). Their target group are the discerning consumers, who appreciates the good in life and who rather drink less of what is good than large amounts of something else. In other words, connoisseurs. At the end of 2017, Hernö Gin had a turnover of 16 million SEK (Allabolag, 2018b).

**Sigr AB**

Sigr was founded 2016 as a trading company focusing on bike wear, which in 2017 became a limited company. It was established by four friends in Umeå, Sweden. The founders had very different background and experiences and came to the decision to start their own company, to be able to own the entire supply chain in which they each manage one respective part of. Sigr is a company which emphasizes cycling and is all about the ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’. They want biking, running and moving to be part of everyday life and are producing high performance apparel that also can be worn apart from the workout. Sigr sells their products in Sweden, Denmark, Australia, The Canary Islands and China. When talking about their target customer, two distinct customers are drawn up. The first one is the general physically active person who just realized that “biking is my thing” and starts to look for clothes suitable for the sport. For the second customer biking is a lifestyle and he or she bicycles a lot and often year-round. The latter might also compete, but then mostly against himself and not others. Sigr has 10 700 followers (May 2018) on Instagram (see Appendix 5). At the end of 2017, Sigr had a turnover of 0.4 million SEK (J. Ferry personal communication 16 May, 2018).

**Rivia Brand AB - Rivia Sports**

Rivia Brand AB was founded in 2014. The founder was a successful athlete in both volleyball and beach volleyball but detected a lack of colourful functional active- and sportswear for females. The company’s brand name is Rivia Sports, which from here on will be used as their name since that is what being used externally. Rivia Sports produces sportswear for females that works for both sport activities and as street wear. The company wants to encourage females to feel empowered and bring out their own Amazon, no matter of size and body shape. The mixture of the founder’s origin from Brazil and the minimalistic Swedish style offers Rivia Sports colourful, graphical and energetic sportswear for females. Their target group are females in the age group of 20-40 years that live in bigger cities of Sweden and who has a sport or fashion interest. The company's main external communication channel is Instagram (see Appendix 5). The company's Instagram is normally updated twice per day and has 6 650 followers (may 2018). The products are produced in Brazil, and the company is operative in Denmark, Germany, France, England, Sweden and Poland, whereas Sweden is the main market. The company entails, only the founder and one co-owner. In 2016 had Rivia Sports a turnover of 0.337 million SEK (Allabolag, 2018c).
5.2 Data findings

The data findings are presented in order of the applied themes in the interview guide, that is the different dimensions of CI and is concluded with Instagram. It is written by a combination of interim quotes, paraphrases and interpretation of the data that we found relevant and interesting, according to our research question.

5.2.1 Corporate culture

Nau

The respondent explains that there is not any pronounced established culture since he considers that to be strange. Instead, he says, “it is more about working hard and effective”. Although there are no stated ‘nine to five’ hours the employees have to be at work, they may come to the office whenever they want as long as they put in the work and the hours. He says “...and it should almost be subconsciously that you have to put in the time you can”. The respondent also explains that their internal motto is the expression “just go for it”, one common and repeatedly used term, which further proves their prevailing culture. He says that “the underlying culture is that we don’t know what we are doing and no one else knows either since what we are doing is relatively new” and continues with, “so it is really about us as a company trying to figure out where we are going, and I think that reflects in the culture somehow”. He thinks that the culture indirectly permeates the organization via the different positions everyone has. The respondent ends with, “That may develop during time, but in the state we are in, I think our performance must be derived within, because everyone has the same goal and I think that forms the culture”.

CDLP

The respondent starts by stating that the corporate culture is everything. Although, he says that they have to be aware that “we are a very small firm, where the internal culture is made, and I think the culture will be very important, internally, when we get closer to 10, 20 or 30 persons in the organization. But I think the culture as such reflects relationships. Where we build relationships”. He continues saying that they are working with their culture, no matter if they are five or ten persons, to build strong relationships with people to make them feel like they are one of the company. “Because it is really about that our factory in Portugal must feel that they are a part of us, our PR agencies in New York, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm must feel that they are a part of us, as well as our retailers says ‘Buy CDLP!’ to their customers because we have such a strong relationship with them”.

The respondent describe himself to be very customer focused, which permeates the company and its employees and reflects in the company’s culture. The respondent tells a story about how he himself drives to a customer in order to deliver one product in time, because of the company’s promise of delivering within a specific timeframe. He says, “I think that type of stories builds the culture and we take it seriously, and I think those actions are more important than what is said” and continues with,” I think activities like that, what we do for our customer, permeates our organization very well”.

The respondent says that he is probably more conscious about the importance of having a culture than the other co-founder, since he states that it is himself who build the
organization and determines the culture both internally and externally of the organization. He explains, “we try to lift and foster our culture in every way possible. I have a clear picture of the culture I want, it is pronounced but you should also show which culture, we as an organization, has”. In the interview, CDLP says that the company take their culture very seriously, how they form it and what it will take to achieve its highest level possible. The respondent further says, “Culture is not set once and that’s is, as culture collapse incredible fast if you do not work with it”...“but that is the beauty of the culture. It is impossible to copy”. He concludes by saying, “this is not the company where you work forty hours a week, but we are very transparent with that”.

Hernö Gin
The respondent states that Hernö Gin is a young and modern company with healthy corporate values and a good culture. She thinks that the delegating leadership that exists within Hernö Gin is a big part of the culture. Moreover, she says that, “they trust that the employees do their provided work and has the ability to hand it over. Not this micro controlling. If this is my responsibility, they trust you with it”. Furthermore, she says,” In the corporate culture, there is ‘handed responsibility’ from the management, which means that I, as an employee, get the responsibility to perform my tasks” and “with that, I get a lot stronger in my position, more confident in myself, which makes me act that act as well”. Additionally, she states that there is a much room for the employee to develop, do what they are good at, making suggestions and also to be listened to. The respondent thinks the culture is a reflection of how the people in the organization are as human beings. Hernö Gin has ten people in the company today, but it was just a year ago that the internal organization consisted of two people. The respondent describes the situation as two people who sat at different desks and called out “hey, let’s do this” to the other person. Therefore, she says, the structures and roles are now being developed and set together as a team and staff meetings are held on a regular basis. She does not know the company’s vision by heart but instead talks about the fundamental idea and ambition with the business.

Sigr
The respondent describes Sigr’s corporate culture to be very open, solution-oriented and familiar. It is important for the founders to have a fun and happy atmosphere within the organization, where you are able to have fun at work. She says that “we often talk about being a Sigr-family, and even if we haven’t put it in print, I think we know what kind of ‘feeling’ we want to upscale” and “We who work in Sigr, ‘lives’ the brand”. She continues with stating that the whole company is built on that described feeling and it to be the most crucial part of the organization. Sigr is a company who want their ‘down-to-earth’ approach and passion to be permeated in everything they do. She talks about how Sigr establish their vision and goals, how the company was founded and why. She is very conscious that they have corporate values although no values were explicitly mentioned by the respondent. She mentions some goals that were connected to increasing sales and brand recognition.

The company have three key values that naturally and constantly surrounds their company and its brand, which are ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’. The respondent speaks about the importance to always see to those words and working with them. When talking about the culture, the respondent states that they build their business based on Swedish values, even though they communicate internationally. The key values, happiness and joy are mentioned continuously throughout the interview by the respondent, where she states,
“our photo models never look angry in the pictures which permeate, since we who are behind the scenes never is angry either” and “We work with colours and we work with joy and it permeates the organization. Not to be confused with us not being serious about our work, I am talking about true happiness”.

Another big part of Sigr’s culture are the long and irregularly hours they are working. The respondent says that, “in a startup, it sometimes happens that you have to work at night. We are not working 8 to 5”. Sigr is strongly associated with working very much and to almost always be available to work, day as night. Although, she says that it is not going to last in the long run and is something negative that they are starting to eliminate.

**Rivia Sports**

The respondent starts with saying that they do not have an expressed vision, they instead have established a few focus areas where they work goal oriented with what is to be achieved. One of these goals, the respondent describes, is called ‘Amazeballz’ which represents the goal of having fun while running the company. One good description about Rivia Sports, the respondent states is, “A Brazilian soul, a Swedish brain and an international heart”. Rivia Sports have four core values they want to penetrate all of the company’s activities, ‘Colourful, real, adventurous and fun’. It is from these values the culture is born, according to the respondent. Furthermore, he states, “if you think purely corporate culture, it is lot about just going for it and see what happens” … “and then you learn from your mistakes, what to do and not”.

The founder is originally from Brazil and have therefore much of the Brazilian culture in her personality and everything she does, which the respondent have less of which makes it even more important that it is expressed. He says, “If you would come into our company and not know our rules or approach, then I think that quite many people would feel like ‘What is happening?’”. Moreover, he says, “this is the way we have agreed to run our company and we think it is fun this way, and I think it is only positive”. The respondent believes that the most important is that a company’s corporate culture is expressed, more than what kind of culture they have, which results in different goals and outcomes.

Another part of Rivia Sports culture is ‘the grey area’, referring to the boundaries between their personal life and what is their working hours, since there is no clear line between them. Moreover, he states, “there is no day where one says, ‘I don’t work today’. You work every day”.

**5.2.2 Behaviour**

**Nau**

When the respondent describes the corporate behaviour of the company, he paints a picture of a very open and cooperative environment. He says that all people within the organization, “want to go in the same direction and arrive at the same goal”, which thereafter shapes the behaviour. Furthermore, the respondent states, “I believe that we act according to what we say” and that he feels the culture to be shaped according to how they act and behave, which then constitute of Nau’s corporate behaviour. The respondent expresses the behaviour to be positive and good. In order to promote their overall behaviour, the respondent says that they always try to solve problems for each other and make sure that no one becomes the weakest link. The respondent says that, since they are such a small company, it is not always clear whose responsibility certain things are
because it affects everyone in the company anyhow. Therefore the company’s unwritten rule that everyone helps everyone, to make sure it is as effective as possible. He also says that they often hold shorter ‘snap-meetings’, which anyone can arrange if they are stuck and need help.

Moreover, the respondent explains the company’s work ethics to be very delegating, open and that everyone within the organization gets much responsibility. He says, for example, that the company do not have any fixed working hours, instead everyone can come into the office any time they prefer. This the respondent believe promotes a mutual behaviour and responsibility. He says, “I believe it’s about giving them the trust and responsibility, which then motivates them” ... “If you give them confidence and trust in them as human beings, I think it will be fine”. The respondent is aware of the fact that their employees do not own a part of the company, which the respondent does. The employees have to work for a salary instead, which the respondent believes means that they probably won’t have the same mindset as the founders. The respondent continues stating “You can’t expect the employees to think it’s so interesting that they will do everything and work towards the same vision. We can hope so, if you recruit the right people, but I don’t know”.

The respondent does not feel that there is a difference between the employees and the management when talking about the behaviour, he says it is because that they have found people who are similar to themselves. Therefore the management behaviour is not something that is separate from the rest of the organization and the employees. The respondent describes a situation when a CEO were to be selected and no one of the company founders wanted to take on that position due to the fact that it, for them, was only seen as more work. He continues by saying that, “I think nobody sees anyone as the leader in that way. It’s rather that you have competence in different areas, where you then lead in form of knowledge power” ... “There isn’t a ‘boss’, it’s more like everyone as a part of the team”. Additionally, he says that the management must be unanimous in order not to give different directives and confuse the employees. Although, the interaction between the management and the employees is not something the respondent has given much thought to and says that is might be something they have to think about when the company expands.

If Nau were to employ new staff, the respondent says that those individuals need to be quite similar to those already employed. He also says that they use the word ‘grit’ to describe this specific person. The words mean that they are people who “make things happen, do things, read stuff and like create a website, just to learn about websites”, where he continues by saying, “just crazy people who like to work a lot but also finds it very fun”. Furthermore, it is mentioned that the founders want to employ people who are entrepreneurial, can bootstrap and find creative solutions. The respondent also states that the potential employee’s grades is not of interest when selecting who to employ.

**CDLP**

The respondent starts with saying that the employees and the founders has very defined positions as well as roles within the company. He continues with describing the corporate behaviour to be very customer-oriented. He states, “in the way we work, the way we do things, shows how we take care of our customers”. The respondent continues by describing that he wants all the interaction between CDLP and their partners to be their partner’s highlight of their day. He believes “the way we are, reflects internally to our
employees and partners every day”. Furthermore, the respondents give an example of how far they are willing to go to make their customer happy, because of a shipping error the respondent himself drove out to the customer to deliver the product. He says, “I think that such activities, what we do for our customer, permeates our entire organization”. The respondent explains, “I think all of us agree that we have the ambition that everyone involved with us should feel that it is worth doing business with us. Not only for the product, or the business, but also because they like us”. He continues by talking about one of the company’s investors, who invested because he believed the founders of CDLP to be nice guys, not because of the product. Throughout the interview the respondent highlights the overall behaviour of working much and long hours, and he states that, “this is not a place where you work 40 hours a week”.

The management behaviour between the two founders works, according to the respondent, to hundred percent. Although, he says that “just because you share the vision, doesn’t mean you share the way of looking of the work, you work in different ways, purely operational”. The respondent says that since he and the other co-founder were friends from before the company was initialised, it sometimes is a challenge which can affect the relationship before you know how to handle it. The respondent describes it as, “I experienced after one and a half year, a challenge, since he liked to sit opposite each other and writing and talking, whereas I cannot work that way. I prefer to sit alone in a dark room and take breaks twice a day to meet people”. Thereof, the respondent says that he can sit among others if he has easier tasks to do, but not when it is something more important. For example, when the company’s CEO quit, a lot of things had to be done, then the respondent needed to sit alone and work. Furthermore, the respondent states, “I believe that things like that strengthens why we are doing this, and we get to go back to the main reason for doing this” and continues with, “I believe that we as individuals work in different ways, operatively. And I think you handle that by having a dialogue, to be able to complement each other”. The respondent says that him and the other co-founder complement each other, since some things he knows, the other founder don’t and vice versa and even if they sometimes interfere with each other, the respondent wouldn’t want to do this with anybody else. The respondent believes that it is important that the company founders as leaders symbolize a team spirit and that the management have a good harmony, where you can complement each other. Although, he says that “I believe that you can benefit from having different characteristics, although him and I need to have a shared vision in order for people to not get different messages” and “the management must be able to show the long-term goal”.

The respondent believes the difference between the behaviour of the management and the employees, is that the employees has harder to see the big picture. This he states, is due to natural reasons, since the owners constantly is working with the business. He also says that the employees don’t have the same sense of belonging to CDLP’s brand, which has to do with how long you have worked at the company. The respondent gives an example of one of their employees who work creatively and create content for Instagram and their newsletter, although she never knows the outcome from what she is doing, which creates problems. He, furthermore explains, “that it doesn’t reach everybody is a problem and we have to work with that all the time. I believe that the management must be able to give feedback on what actually are the results from what the employees are doing”.

Entrepreneurial is the number one trait a potential employee needs to have, according to the respondent. He continues with stating that that person also need to be able to take
responsibility and complete their tasks. The respondent also addresses that the company works at a high pace, which the recruit would have to be comfortable with. He concludes by saying that “there is a lot of freedom and space of what to do, but then there is very much own responsibility with comes with that”.

**Hernö Gin**
The respondents say that everyone has their specific positions and roles within the company. She furthermore explains the different roles to overlap on each other and draws a figuratively example to clarify how they overlap. Whereas, one employee who is responsible for a drink competition which he is dependent upon other individuals within the organization in order to conduct the competition. Furthermore, she states “as a communicator, I get involved in many projects since there is almost always a need of communication”.

The respondent believes the behaviour between the management and her to be open, cooperative and straightforward. She explains that when they ask each other for advice, help and feedback and states, “It’s not like I stick to my own things, but the best results appear if you work together, and I think everyone in the organization feels like this” and continue with “we have the attitude that together it will work better. We work a lot as a team and also have very fun together”. Although, the respondent claims that they do not work structured to promote the behaviour between the employees and owners, where she further says that a more systematically process might emerge, when the number of employees grows.

As the respondent mentioned when talking about the corporate culture, there is a delegation from the management to the employees. She feels that they get the confidence and trust to perform their tasks without the management watching their every move, this management behaviour is then transferred to the employees which according to the respondent, “makes me a lot stronger within my position, safer in myself and makes me act in that way as well”. Furthermore, she believes the company’s vision, corporate values and culture is reflected of how they act as humans.

When Hernö Gin are looking for new employees, is it of high importance that it is people that, “are in line with who we are as individuals so that we find someone who has the same outlook of how to work together”. The respondent says that they definitely also want people who are good at what they do, and in terms of skills they need people who can strengthen the company. Nevertheless, she says that if is of importance that they employ someone who fit in their open organization, their way of working and that the interaction between that person and the others in the organization work well. As a disclaimer she says, that this is how she sees it and she do not know if the management has some, “worked out thought” that has not been mediated down to her.

**Sigr**
The respondent emphasizes the word ‘superpower’ in the interview, whereas each of the four founder has their own ‘superpower’ in which they operate and consequently behaves from. The culture is very important and specific in Sigr and the respondent explains, in other words, that the corporate behaviour is an outcome from their culture. Sigr only consist of the four owners that are working in the company, apart from two University students that sometimes help out, and the company does not have a CEO. Therefore there is a difficulty to separate the corporate, management and employee behaviour, since the
The respondent explains that, in the initial phase of the company, the founders knew everything about everything but as the company grew it came to a point where they couldn’t know everything. She goes on to say that the owners now have different roles in the organization corresponding to their different individual competences. The respondent says, “I have noticed that we have an Achilles heel, because the owners have extremely different knowledge about what it means to be an owner versus work at a company, because that is completely different things. As an owner don’t you have to work anything, you can actually just be an owner. Some owner work practically more in the company than others and that creates a discussion about the governance”.

Furthermore, the respondent thinks the interaction between the owners works great. She refers to an event that happened that forced the founders to ‘go back to basics’, re-evaluate their corporate values and figure out how to resolve the situation. They figured it out and the respondent is happy with their solution and she therefore think they have a really good foundation in their team. The work team within Sigr works globally, which means that they are not located in the same place. Nevertheless, when asked about it, the respondent states, “We have worked globally from day one. As I usually say, if you don’t know any other reality, you don’t know any other alternative. We think it’s fun to work globally, it’s one of our ‘fun-stuff’”.

Sigr has two University students that sometimes do consulting work for them, although they are not employed. The relation between the students and the four owners she thinks is good and also that, “it gives us practice on how to delegate and cooperate”. Although, the respondent says that in time sensitive situations where something has happened, they are very anxious to drag in the students, because as she explained “we can’t just call one of the students in the middle of the night and be like: ‘Can you fix this?’ Even if it sometimes is like that”. She comes back to the topic of working a lot and irregular hours and states that they sometimes have to think that they work in different time zones, for example, “you don’t work with sales in Sweden on Wednesday, because then you might be working in Australia”. The respondent states that the consultants do not need to work as much as the company owners, however she emphasizes that is the only difference between the consultants and the owners. She says, “We are equals. Just because you are a part-owner, don’t mean you have more to say in the operations than any other”.

four owners constitutes of all the three categories. Although, they live and breathe their three key values ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’ within the organization, which according to the respondent is reflected in their way of behaving. She further describes it as, “to build those ‘pretend-companies’ that do not stand for anything can others do if they want to. But we want people to see that we are a company that really does this with passion”. Moreover, another key value that is mentioned by the respondent, the company is trying to eliminate is, “work as the devil”. The respondent explains it to be a bad mentality but claims that Sigr is a startup company and continue with stating that “that is how it is in startup companies, many startups end up there, it has to go fast”. Nevertheless, she states, “we talk more and more about this ‘work ourselves to death’ is not sustainable so we are working on that”. Sigr mentality is that they work hard together as a team, while still having fun. The co-owners are dependent on each other, which the respondent believe to be a great advantage because they handle one part of the value chain each (designer, producer, web and sales) since, “we then understand that these parts must bind together. We depend on each other”.

The respondent explains that, in the initial phase of the company, the founders knew everything about everything but as the company grew it came to a point where they couldn’t know everything. She goes on to say that the owners now have different roles in the organization corresponding to their different individual competences. The respondent says, “I have noticed that we have an Achilles heel, because the owners have extremely different knowledge about what it means to be an owner versus work at a company, because that is completely different things. As an owner don’t you have to work anything, you can actually just be an owner. Some owner work practically more in the company than others and that creates a discussion about the governance”.

Furthermore, the respondent thinks the interaction between the owners works great. She refers to an event that happened that forced the founders to ‘go back to basics’, re-evaluate their corporate values and figure out how to resolve the situation. They figured it out and the respondent is happy with their solution and she therefore think they have a really good foundation in their team. The work team within Sigr works globally, which means that they are not located in the same place. Nevertheless, when asked about it, the respondent states, “We have worked globally from day one. As I usually say, if you don’t know any other reality, you don’t know any other alternative. We think it’s fun to work globally, it’s one of our ‘fun-stuff’”.

Sigr has two University students that sometimes do consulting work for them, although they are not employed. The relation between the students and the four owners she thinks is good and also that, “it gives us practice on how to delegate and cooperate”. Although, the respondent says that in time sensitive situations where something has happened, they are very anxious to drag in the students, because as she explained “we can’t just call one of the students in the middle of the night and be like: ‘Can you fix this?’ Even if it sometimes is like that”. She comes back to the topic of working a lot and irregular hours and states that they sometimes have to think that they work in different time zones, for example, “you don’t work with sales in Sweden on Wednesday, because then you might be working in Australia”. The respondent states that the consultants do not need to work as much as the company owners, however she emphasizes that is the only difference between the consultants and the owners. She says, “We are equals. Just because you are a part-owner, don’t mean you have more to say in the operations than any other”.

38
When talking about which kind of individual Sigr would employ, the words the respondent used when describing their culture, was once again mentioned. Thus, it would be of importance that the individual was happy, could work with the others and to have fun while working. The respondent says that numerous people got the competence that they need and want, therefore are the personality of the potential employee the most important aspect. Furthermore, she mentioned that, “It will be very hard to work with the brand if you can’t stand up for it” and “if you don’t feel like the world is a wonderful place, you can’t work here. You just have to love the world, it’s really important”.

**Rivia Sports**

The company’s four key values are Colourful, Real, Adventurous and Fun, which is also how the respondent would describe themselves in the organization. The respondent explains, “we cannot go around dressed in suit all the time. It is about living the way you learn, it should be fun to run a company” … “You should be ‘real’ and if we ourselves do not radiate that, then it becomes a distorted message”. He continues by stating that they both would not be working with Rivia Sports if they did not to ‘lived as they learned’. The respondent stresses the importance of having fun while working, which he adds gets too important sometimes.

Before the respondent became a co-owner of the company, the founder and he were friends. He continues by saying that the interaction between them works really well and states; “We try to have a transparent and straight communication with each other, which goes hand in hand with what we stand for and what we do” and continues, “so far have there not been any problems, you discover new sides of each other when you are working together, but I would say that is just a positive thing”.

If Rivia Sports were to hire an employee, the respondent explains that the individual would have to be, “initiative-taking, responsible and of course have competence or experience, but I would still say that those comes after the other two. And since it is such a small company the personality can’t clash with us who already work here”.

**5.2.3 Communication & visual identity**

**Nau**

To facilitate the corporate communication, the respondent stresses the importance of the internal communication, via usage of physical meetings and virtual communication channels. The respondent express that the virtual communication systems integrate with each other and are automatically reminding the employees to update their current working situation. The obtained information is thereafter distributed to the co-workers to aid the internal communication and detect possible problems. The respondent describes the use of virtual communication systems as beneficial since not all the personnel are positioned in the same geographic location. However, the respondent continues, the company has daily meeting which he states are “not long ones, they should be conducted fast”.

In terms of Nau’s executed external communication, the respondent describes that the company have tried physical communication channels, such as advertisement in various Internet cafés. The outcome of those activities was that the target group was not reached. Instead the respondent states that ”We must be where our target group are”. Nau is currently carrying out all their external communication through SNS, where Instagram
accounts as the company’s main communication channel. He states, "because there is where people are, and especially in the Nordic countries".

The respondent describes that the company founders have from the company’s initial establishing phase selected to develop Nau’s Visual identity with a different approach compared to their competitors. He continues by saying that the visual approach, the product design, has also been reflected upon and worked "...to make the product a little bit more modern". Further he states, "Because the person that is buying our product should not have to hide it at home". Nevertheless, the developing phase of the Visual identity was categorized based on a many internal discussions among the co-founders, as all of the co-founders recognize themselves as members of the company’s target group. Then a big number of trials were performed before the selected visual identity was determined. Today, Nau’s visual identity can be classified to have a Scandinavian minimalistic approach, which the respondent expresses will benefit the company in pursuing their long-term strategic plan to become a well-recognized energy drink. In terms of the company have applied the visual identity in the company’s internal communication, answers the respondent that the is not. Instead is the Visual identity only applied as guidance for the company’s brand managers, designers as well as external consultants to promote a coherent marketing communication.

With regards on how the product name was developed, the respondent answers that he does not know. Instead the respondent emphasizes that all of the co-founders thought that the product’s logotype and the selected colour scheme should have the minimalistic and modern format. The selection was determined in order to distinguish the product from the existing competitors even further. Nevertheless, the respondent emphasizes that the company have encountered problems with the products’ association to their industry, energy drink for eSports. The problematic situation boils down to that the products lacks a descriptive product name nor explains which industry the product is associated with. The respondent makes clear that the market Nau is penetrating is highly competitive, where their competitors are visually branding their products to have a strong association to the eSport industry. The respondents describe that Nau’s problematic situation is derived through the absence of evident associations to eSport. He states, "Because it could be anything, it could even be a yoga carpet and not an energy drink", and, “this is the problem we are trying to overcome”. The respondents end with, "Our dream is that eSport drinks or energy drinks would be directly associated with Nau. It is the dream, but it is also a financial cost to get there”.

**CDLP**

The respondent of CDLP expresses that the companies’ managerial communication to the company’s employees is determined by the level of time the co-founders have. He explains that in situations with intense workload or and tough deadlines, the interaction with the employees is the first thing that deteriorates. The co-founders’ focus is then instead on resolving their situation. Even though CDLP is a small company with only three employees, the respondent admits that not all of the internal communication is transmitted to everyone in the organisation. Instead, the respondent states that he thinks activities with the company’s employees outside of the office are very important. He describes a common understanding of what the company represents, which operational goals the company founders strive to obtain, as well as it promotes a coherent corporate communication. The respondent summaries his view on coherent corporate
communication by "I think this is crucial, which I believe our organisation and many others are not taking seriously".

CDLP’s marketing communication was developed as a response of the company founders’ perception that the society today was only portraying young trained models for the advertisement of male underwear. The company founders thought that the illustration of timeless and intellectual masculinity was missing in the advertisement. The respondent describes CDLP marketing communication by "it does not need to be these young cool models that are displayed, we are instead trying to communicate something attractive, which the observers can be a part of". The respondent emphasizes that the company’s marketing communication does not have a distinct product focus, but instead illustrates a mixture of "timeless masculinity with humour". He continues by accentuating that the company aims to communicate a coherent presentation of CDLP. Furthermore, he describes that in order to maintain a consistency in the company’s communication, and the displayed imagery, the marketing communication is founded upon the company founder’s story of a man. Nevertheless, the respondent underlines that the man himself is not of interest but instead it is his lifestyle that is of importance and what CDLP want to portray in their marketing communication. The respondent expresses that CDLP want their marketing communication to rise their customers’ interest of the company, without feeling that they have to buy the CDLP’s products. He instead express that the company strives to communicate ‘emotionally-driven’ communication instead of ‘sales-driven’.

In terms of how CDLP value their Visual identity, the respondent states that the selected company logotype and the colour scheme in their Visual identity are of high importance. He continues by explaining that the selected colour that is displayed on the company’s logotype has been the key element of the company’s marketing communication. CDLP’s logotype colour is yellow, which has become the company’s signature colour. The respondent explains that the company’s formal company name, Un Cadeau De La Providence, and the colour scheme was not selected with a clear thought behind it. Despite this he argues that the selected company name and the colour on the logotype have benefited the company in terms of increased brand awareness. It has created a high level of curiosity about the company and its products among their target group and influential individuals within their industry, such as fashion editors. CDLP applies the Visual identity both within the internal organisation and in the external marketing communication. The respondent expresses the choice of the Visual identity’s internal and external usage as; "I think everything is connected, if you want to create a credible communication". He continues with saying that he thinks a brand’s credibility and brand awareness can be derived through a symbiosis of a company’s internal and external side. Therefore he expresses that the employees need to know what the company represents, in order to externally communicate it to the target group. But also, to make the target group understand what the company stands for and want to be recognized as.

**Hernö Gin**

Hernö Gin distributes their internal information at scheduled monthly physical meetings and via a virtual newsletter. The two communication forms are used by the management to distribute information to the employees as well as facilitating the interaction between all the employees. The respondent emphasizes that Hernö Gin’s internal communication has developed as the company has grown and employed more personnel. She says that when the company only had a few employees, the internal communication was performed in a more informal manner and was executed via face-to-face conversations.
In the discussion about whether Hernö Gin has developed a reliable external communication to the target group, the respondent stresses the company’s wish as “*others to write about us instead of us writing about ourselves, because if others do it, it provides us with a stronger credibility and trustworthiness*”. Nevertheless, a big part of her role is dedicated “*to become friends with the journalists*”. On the question on which Hernö Gin’s main communication channels are, she expresses that it is SNS, due to that the channels enables them to directly communicate with the company's target group.

To communicate a consistent imagery about the company externally, a professional photographer is employed by Hernö Gin. The respondent describes that the selected imagery the company want to display is founded in the company’s Visual identity. She expresses this as, “*the dream of the Scandinavian way of living, the natural, the nature and the beauty we have here and the simple life in the small village of Dala*”. The respondent states “*this is the picture we want to communicate to the world, which has been very successful*”. She continues with that the external communicated imagery published at their Instagram account has influenced individuals from all over the world, to come and visit the company. The respondent summarises by describing their successful Instagram account and saying, “*I think that is a great example of a successful communication*”.

Hernö Gin's Visual identity has, since the company was established, been applied in the company's internal and external communication. The respondent explains that the company did not have an employed communicator before her, wherefore the Visual identity was developed by a PR-agency. The company’s Visual identity has been applied both internally and externally of the organisation. Its internal use is to communicate a consistent perception of the company. She continues by saying that as the company grows bigger, it is even more important that the Visual identity stays coherent.

The respondent explains that the ambition is that the colours of the production should be reflected in the visual appearance of their products. Therefore they chose to incorporate the colour of their distillery's burners and boilers into the Visual identity. The colour can be seen on the company’s limited-edition products.

**Sigr**

To avoid communication barriers or disruption between the employees, Sigr’s internal communication is conducted via virtual communication channels. The respondent describes the virtual communication channels as the company’s “virtual office”. Not all of Sigr’s company founders are located in the same geographical positions and by using the virtual communication channels the respondent describes it as, “*it feels like we are sitting in the same place*”.

The marketing communication to the company’s target group is performed using virtual newsletters and SNS. In addition, the company also participates in different cycling competition events by sponsoring them. The respondent describes that by participating in these events the company increases their target group’s curiosity of Sigr as well as it increases the company’s brand awareness. She further explains that the SNS is a source where the company’s target group can obtain more knowledge about the company, their products and offerings. All executed marketing communication is made using the company’s Visual identity that constitutes of three key values, ‘Swedishness, Elegance and Joy’. The respondent emphasizes that all communication material is examined before
displaying it to the target group. It should be relevant to the target group as well as promote Sigr’s key values. If the material is not in line with company’s key values, it is not published.

On the question on how Sigr created their Visual identity, the respondent explains that the company founders started to formulate the Visual identity one year before the company was started. She continues with that the company want to be recognized and obtain the market position as a Nordic sportswear brand for cycling. She does however not think that the company has fully obtained that market position yet, but also adds that she believes no other company have obtained that position either. In order to enhance the company’s associability to the wanted market position, the selection of the company name was a natural choice for the company founders. The company name, Sigr, means ‘victory’ in old Norse. The company have developed a tagline, “everywhere is biking distance”, which represent their belief that regardless of the accomplished cycling distance it should be seen as a victory. Sigr’s Visual identity is both applied in the company’s internal and external communication. The reason is, according to the respondent, due to that the company want to distribute a consistent communication to their target group.

**Rivia Sports**

Rivia Sports’ internal communication is performed as physical meetings and virtual communication channels, such as email, private chat forums, via SNS and external communication platforms. As the company does not have any employees, the corporate communication is managed by the two co-owners. However, the respondent states that the communication between the co-owners are performed via several virtual communication channels. He continues with describing that they do not have a clear structure over the information that is distributed in each channel.

Rivia Sports’ website is the center for the company’s marketing communication. He describes that the performed communication via Instagram aims to increase Rivia Sports’ brand awareness. Rivia Sports marketing communication is also executed via Facebook, which according to the respondent act as an extension to the website as purchases can be made also there. Another thing that the respondent also brings up is that Rivia Sports also utilize physical marketing communication, which is displayed in events where the company’s target group is active, such as training festivals and camps. He explains that the physical marketing communication aims to increase brand awareness and sales.

Rivia Sport’s visual identity is developed based by the company’s key values, which are ‘Adventurous, fun, real and colourful’. The respondent addresses that the key values are directly transmitted to the visual identity’s components, such as the logotype and the selected colour scheme. He continues with describing the logotype; “it is about daring to take place. The attitude“. The respondent continues with describing that the visual identity is consistently applied both internally and externally of the organisation, in all the performed communication. Rivia Sports official logotype is the initial letter of the company name, which is consistently applied in the product design and external communication. The development of Rivia Sports’ corporate imagery is endowed in the Visual identity, which displays and portrays what the company want to radiate. The respondent states, “when we are communicating with imagery outward, we try to let the picture speak for itself”.
5.2.4 Market condition

Nau
In the discussion whether the industry Nau is operating within has affected the company’s development of the corporate and marketing strategies the respondent answers, "Our entire product exists due to the changes in the industry". In Scandinavia we have experienced a market shift; as an effect of influential individuals within eSports have started to emphasize the importance of physical training and a healthy lifestyle, a demand for healthier food and drinks has been created. The respondent continues with stating that existing companies within the industry have not acknowledge the customers’ new interest of healthier products. Since it did not exist a product that fitted this need, it created the possibilities for their company to be established. Nau’s corporate strategies is, therefore developed to continuously meet their customers’ need of healthier energy drinks.

The respondent emphasis that Nau's marketing strategy is informal, implying that the company’s strategy is developing in line with the company itself. He explains that Nau’s marketing activities are evaluated and benchmarked against other companies’ activities. This evaluation process of their marketing activities aids the development of improvement possibilities.

CDLP
The respondent of CDLP emphasises that the industry the company is operating within has not affected the company’s organizational structure and formalisation. However, he describes that the majority of the employees are working with the company’s creative department rather than its product development or sales. The respondents end by stating, "We are a creative-minded company and I think when you have a strong visual expression, it is otherwise difficult to create that level quality and magnitude of material as we do".

The respondent describes CDLP’s marketing strategy as informal and the process for the company’s marketing communication is organic and based on the employees’ own opinion of what is beneficial for the company to communicate. However, he emphasizes that the company’s marketing strategy also includes making the company visible in the right context, which he thinks they have achieved.

Hernö Gin
Hernö Gin’s respondent express that the industry the company operates within runs under a great magnitude of governmental rules and regulations, which constraint their communication to the customers. She says that Hernö Gin’s corporate strategies have been influenced by those constraints. However, she thinks the industry constraints serves a good purpose. The company focuses on deliver a high-quality product rather than a high volume, which is reflected throughout the entire organisational construct. The respondent adds that the industry constraints has also influenced the content and the selected imagery that is used in the company’s marketing strategies. She also states that those constraints are in line with the company's core value, “Drink less of what is good”. She further explains that Hernö Gin’s marketing strategies serves the purpose of “spread the knowledge of the good flavour and a solid drinking culture”. Hernö Gin’s marketing strategies is not strictly formulated and have a lot of room for improvisation. Even though Hernö Gin does not follow a strictly formulated marketing strategy, all its distributed
content is embedded with the company’s mind and heart, which act as the foundation of Hernö Gin’s communication.

**Sigr**

The respondent of Sigr describes the industry the company is operative within as being conservative or anonymous. The industry’s characteristics are highly beneficial for Sigr as it allows the company to differentiate themselves from their competitors. The respondent describes the situation by, "We enter an environment determined by a Zlatan-mentality. We in Sigr are instead happy". She continues with explaining that Sigr’s joyful approach is different from their competitors, where the competitors either perceives Sigr as admirable or odd. She describes the competitors’ opinion by stating, “Some think it’s really strange, but then they may think so”.

Sigr’s marketing strategy is formally developed and thought through, and the respondent means that it has been so since the company was established. She further explains that the content of Sigr’s marketing strategies is based on the company’s key values, ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’, which is applied to present a coherent external presentation of Sigr. However, she continues by describing Sigr’s work with the marketing strategies by stating, “The marketing strategies is what we live and eat. That is what we are all about. All the time”. Sigr has adopted a two-year perspective for their marketing activities, which the respondent describes is due to building a company is highly associated with a financial cost. The marketing plan is developed in sync with the financial resources the company have and is reviewed together with the sales strategies and the financial statement quarterly.

**Rivia Sports**

The respondent stresses that the industry Rivia Sports is operating within is categorized as highly competitive. In the discussion if the internal strategies of Rivia Sports have been affected by their industry, the respondent says that it has. The company has developed strategic plans for reaching new customers and for how Rivia Sport wants to present themselves. So far, the respondent says, the company has not been required to apply the strategies, since the distributors has instead been contacting them. However, the respondent states that Rivia Sports does not participate in any partnership and have rejected multiple business opportunities because they did not share the values as the prospective partners had. Instead he states, “We know where we want to go and which retailers we want to be associated with.”

Rivia Sports’ marketing strategies has been affected by their industry as well. He says that they have developed a strategic plan for integrating with the company’s prospective and current customers. The marketing plan is divided into four phases, ‘reach, act, buy and engage’, which represents each of the phases the target group go through before they become a returning customer. The respondent stresses that the four phases of their marketing plan outline the different activities the company performs in order to present themselves to the target group in a wanted manner, thus representing what the company want to radiate. Rivia Sports marketing strategies are executed intuitively, which the respondent argues facilitate the company’s ability to being close to the industry’s shifting requirements. The respondent provides an example and explains that the company cannot foresee if they are going to get a large order or lose one, and therefore the conducted operations need to be agile. However, ends the respondent, the company has a long-term strategy in terms of the wanted turnover as well as acquiring larger market shares.
5.2.5 Instagram

Nau

Instagram constitutes as Nau main communication channel. The respondent argues that the virtual channel enables them to cost-efficiently communicate the story about Nau and that they want to present. Nau is not only executing their marketing communication via Instagram but also on the SNS Twitter and Facebook as well as the community site Reddit. He describes foundation for when the company initially started to communicate via social network sites by stating, “We started with a hypothesis that Instagram would be the best. But we did not know that Instagram would be so in the end”. The respondent describes that they initially invested an equal amount of resources on each of the mentioned SNS, whereas Instagram returned the most value and response from the target group. He continues saying, “Instagram allows us to display how the work in the office is conducted, who we are, what we represent and for us to see how the company is evolving with time”.

When asking the respondent if Nau applies their corporate culture in their communication via Instagram, the answer is that they do, which he describes by stating; "We just do things and test what works". He continues by explaining that the company’s initial marketing strategy on Instagram was based on the company founders’ initiative. They published visual content on the social network site and detected what published content that provided the most response from their followers. In order to increase the target group’s awareness of the company’s presence on Instagram, the company founders used their own Instagram accounts to direct users to the company account. The company founders’ behaviour resulted in a high level of response, more followers and an increased company awareness among the target group.

Instagram enables, according to the respondent, Nau to directly communicate what the company represent and offer to the company’s target group. In addition the company also obtains a lot of comments and questions from their target group. The interaction with the target group via Instagram increases Nau’s ability to present what they represent to the target market. He continues by describing that through the executed communication on Instagram Nau has been found by individuals that are not included in the company’s primary target group, eSports players, and this has increased the scope of members in their target group.

The respondent tells that Nau receives both negative and positive responses from their target group on Instagram. On the question if the company is adjusting the organisational structure or strategies based on the obtained responses from the interaction with the target group, the respondent answers that the interaction only affects Nau’s product development.

Nau applies ‘hashtags’ in their marketing communication on Instagram. The respondent describes that the use of the hashtags serves two purposes. Firstly, to communicate the company products to a broader mass of Instagram users and to increase Nau’s awareness among prospect members of the target group. Secondly, to make it easier for the members of Nau’s target group to refer to the company in their own publications on Instagram. The respondent describes ‘hashtags’ as a communication tool to establish and maintain relationships with members of the target group. He states, "Our idea is to get customers
Nau’s communication on Instagram uses, according to the respondent, a homogeneous imagery. He states "if an Instagram user see a picture from Nau in his Instagram flow, then he should not have to check who has posted the picture but instead know that it is from Nau"..."It does not have to be because the product is viewed in the picture, but instead because of the whole style and feeling of the picture, which we are always trying to display". Nau’s imagery is, according to the respondent, selected to communicate a consistent presentation of the company. He continues by explaining that since Nau’s product is not clearly associated to its industry, the company consistently need to communicate the connection to their industry. On the question how they are achieving a homogenous imagery, the respondent answers that they have engaged a professional photographer that is producing all the visual material in their marketing communication.

The respondent believes that Instagram is the best SNS for the Northern European market, whereas he thinks Twitter is the best SNS for companies penetrating the American market. He explains that Nau is regularly measuring, quantitatively and qualitatively, the target group’s response on Nau’s marketing communication. The quantitative measurement is based on the number of 'likes' and comments each of the company’s publications receives from the target group. Whereby, the qualitative response measures what the executed communication results in, which he summarizes as, "To find out how well it is actually functioning". The combination of the two measurements provides the company with a broader perspective of what the communication via Instagram generate for Nau in a long-term perspective. However, the respondent ends by stating, “But naturally if all the eSport gamers in the world would move to another online platform, then of course we would be there”.

**CDLP**

CDLP is actively operating on four SNS; Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Pinterest. On the subject of why CDLP is operating on those specific SNS the respondent answers; "that's where our customers are, and we are able to present who we are to them". He continues by expressing that the highest level of reach and response for the target group is on Instagram and Facebook.

He explains that CDLP’s communication via Instagram has provided the company with an enlarged awareness on their prospect customers. Furthermore the application of Instagram has provided CDLP with the ability to visually express themselves to their target group. He continues by telling that the company’s Instagram followers consist of individuals that identify themselves with what CDLP presents via their communication on the SNS. Furthermore CDLP has, according to the respondent, been referred to as 'the boxer rebellion' and 'the underwear disruption', which is how the company identify themselves. He continues by stating, "I think that many of the individuals that are following us, feel that we are filling a gap that has been missing before".

The company’s Instagram account is followed by several international influential individuals, the respondent tells, "so if someone is looking at our account, they will automatically see who is following us, which then provides us with a certain type of legitimacy” ... "Instagram is functioning as a legitimacy platform." He argues that Instagram is equally important as any of the company’s other communication channels to...
their target group. The company is answering all the received comments or questions from their Instagram followers. According to the respondent CDLP’s creative department is responsible for the company's Instagram account, where the department creates, publishes and interact with the company’s target group. Also he himself as CEO is interacting with the company’s target group via Instagram. The respondent continues by saying that CDLP also receives 'tags' via other Instagram’s users published content, which CDLP then engage and interact with. He says, "I believe, for a visual company, the strategy is to publish content that leads to a two-way communication".

He expresses that the feedback they get via Instagram affects the company’s internal organisation and the products' development, but it can also affect CDLP’s strategies. However, the majority of the obtained feedback from their Instagram followers is about the product design. Furthermore, emphasizes he that it is not only CDLP’s followers that interact with them, the company is also using Instagram to interact with other Instagram users as well. In addition, the company uses Instagram to detect and directly communicate with prospect members of their target group or partners for future collaboration.

When discussing CDLP’s selected imagery used on Instagram, he explains that the imagery is based on the company’s perception of intellectual masculinity. CDLP is trying to communicate that focus should not be placed on the abs of the individual male person but instead on his intelligence. According to the respondent the visual content is the most important component of the Instagram market communication. He states that it is the picture that their Instagram followers are interested in.

CDLP is mainly selling and distributing their products through their website. The company is therefore dependent on allure their target group to the website. The physical advertisement implies a longer purchase journey for their customers, he states; “to see the advertisement, to feel something, pick up the smartphone, enter and search for our company name, go into the website, see the products to complete the purchase”. Where, the SNS offers a shorter purchase journey, from observing directly to buying the product through the website. He states, “I believe, if your business is an E-commerce then I think it is a natural choice to use social media, in order to get people to enter your website”. He also highlights that CDLP is still a small company, but through the published marketing communication via Instagram, the company receives the ability to show their target group that CDLP is an efficient company. He describes it by stating, “where things are constantly happening”. He further reinforces CDLP decision of using Instagram as a communication channel to execute their marketing communication by stating, "It is a highly suitable channel to display what you have to offer and especially if you have the level of creative competence in creating content as we do".

**Hernö Gin**

The respondent stresses that SNS are unbeatable communication channels for Hernö Gin’s marketing communication. Furthermore, the respondent continues by saying that the social networking channels provide, at a low cost, a worldwide distribution of Hernö Gin’s marketing communication, which makes it highly cost-efficient.

Hernö Gin is using four SNS for their marketing communication; Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. They serve Hernö Gin different communicative use; Facebook and LinkedIn constitute the company’s virtual news site, where the company distributes their latest new to their target group, Instagram accounts for Hernö Gin’s main virtual
communication channel, where they distribute their visual communication. The respondent describes the visual communication on Instagram by stating, "it allows the imagery and photos to speak".

Hernö Gin responds to all comments and questions they receive on their account from their followers. The respondent states, "You cannot ignore the negative comments"… "you have to respond to it as well". The respondent emphasizes that Hernö Gin also engage in discussions about the company which is performed via other Instagram account that the company’s own. However, Hernö Gin does not have a system to aid the information search of what is being virtually discussed about them. The respondent continues by describing that two of the Hernö Gin’s organisational members, herself and the company founder, are responsible for distributing the marketing communication via Instagram and the interaction with their Instagram followers. They are also responsible to monitor what is being discussed about Hernö Gin. In total the interaction with the target group on Instagram is performed by three or four of the company’s employees. Nevertheless, Hernö Gin does not have a system of how to handle to feedback they get from their target group.

The respondent emphasizes the importance of not distributing any marketing communication which is not consistent with what Hernö Gin represents. Hernö Gin’s imagery displays the history of Hernö Gin, which focuses on the Scandinavian nature and the company’s geographic location, Dala. She thinks that the individuals who follows Hernö Gin’s Instagram account do it because they are interested in what Hernö Gin express with their communication. However, the industry that Hernö Gin’s operates in rules under communicative constraints, which affects the company’s communication via Instagram. The company is therefore delicately displaying the company’s products in the company’s marketing communication. To provide a coherent imagery and marketing communication on the Hernö Gin’s Instagram account the company has employed a professional photographer. When discussing what is more important, the visual or the textual components of the published content the respondent answers that she thinks it is the combination of them both "because everything we communicate, photos and text, substitutes as pieces that builds the story of Hernö Gin".

Hernö Gin’s company founder did not initially think that the visual communication could drive emotions. Nevertheless, Hernö Gin and the city the company is located in has turned into a tourist destination based on Hernö Gin's Instagram followers' wish to experience what they have observed on the company’s Instagram. The respondent states, "We are not only a distillery, we are contributing to the development of our region and its tourism"... "That is also one reason why our Instagram account is so important".

**Sigr**

Instagram is one of the Sigr’s main communication channels. The respondent states that Sigr communicates via Instagram since the company’s target group is active there. “Pictures are a strong platform today”, she says, relating to the visual communication. However, there is a cost of the virtual communication channel; “It is definitely not cheaper than other channels, which others might think”.

The respondent emphasis that the members of the company’s target group are active on Instagram. The company’s Instagram followers constitute as Sigr’s target group, which are their current and prospective customers. She further explains that the members of
Sigr’s target group are typically photographing themselves when they are cycling wearing Sigr’s clothes. The target group’s members then distribute the photos via their own Instagram accounts, which further increases the reach of Sigr’s products. The respondent describes the members of the target group action by stating, “These are the ones who communicates our company”. The respondent emphasizes that Sigr’s usage of Instagram provides the company with the ability to increase their brand awareness among their target group. The company is interacting with their Instagram followers, as they are answering to questions and comments. She describes the company’s selected approach of interacting with the followers by, “we are not that company that they should wait on”. She continues that Sigr’s has a reputation of operating at a high speed which is the perception the company want to display to the target group.

The interaction with Sigr’s Instagram followers the company with feedback. She expresses that there is a difference in the type of feedback the company receives, where 90 percent of all the feedback are shout-outs about the products. This type of feedback or information is not essential for the organisation of Sigr, she says. In comparison, Sigr values and work differently with constructive feedback. An example provided of constructive feedback could be regarding the products’ construction or design. Nevertheless, the received constructive feedback does not affect Sigr’s organizational construct or strategies. Instagram is managed by the respondent herself and one of the co-founders, which is also responsible for maintaining the company’s website.

Regarding the marketing communication Sigr distribute via Instagram, the respondent emphasizes that everything is founded in their key values, ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’. An example of this is that the company has a monthly meeting with their photographer to plan what will be published on Instagram the coming month. If the visual material is not in line with the key values, the material is not published. The respondent states, “The photos should represent our company”. The respondent continues with describing that the components; photo or video and text, that they publish on Instagram should be associated with each other. The visual material, photo and video, accounts for the most important components of the communication. The respondent emphasizes that the visual material is the components that generate the highest conversion rate. The conversion rate is the percentage of Instagram followers that visit Sigr’s website after viewing the company’s distributed material on Instagram. The use of Instagram, instead of physical communication channels, provides their target group with a shorter process of completing a purchase. Furthermore, the respondent means that the Instagram users that are not familiar with Sigr and their products beforehand, do not read the textual material that is distributed with the visual material, they instead only observe the photos or video.

**Rivia Sports**

Rivia Sports is active on several SNS but Instagram account as their main communication channel. The respondent explains that the selection of the SNS is based on that the Rivia Sports target group is active there. Rivia Sports target group consists of female individuals that are in the age of 20-40 years and lives in one of Sweden’s larger cities, and this matches their followers on Instagram. He compares Instagram and Facebook and tells that the members of Rivia Sports’ target group on Facebook constitutes an older age group. Where Instagram’s users are younger people that are no longer using Facebook, which he describes by stating, “it is instead the parents that are using the Facebook”. The older of their target groups does not yield a high conversion rate. He describes Rivia
Sports usage of Instagram by stating, "to reach out to many and make them interact with us, as well as establishing a contact with them"... "then we try to direct them to our website, and hopefully convert them into customers".

Rivia Sports displayed imagery on Instagram is based on the company's key values. In fact, the respondent says that the company’s key values are not written in the published content but instead visually displayed through the imagery. The communicated content on Instagram does not display the company’s office but is instead focused on displaying Rivia Sports’ products in use. In response to who the company selects to wear their products in the marketing communication, he answers; “The best communication is actually when we publish pictures on our customers who are wearing our products. It becomes very authentic”. He tells that the company is searching for potential models or collaboration partners via Instagram on a daily basis. Then Rivia Sports only approaches individuals which has an Instagram account with a displayed imagery that reflects what the company represents and stands for.

Rivia Sports’ Instagram account is managed by the company’s founder, but also the respondent is involved in the interaction with the company’s target group on the SNS. The company replies to all received communication from their Instagram followers, including both negative and positive. He stresses the importance of the interacting with all of Rivia Sports’ followers since it "personalizes the brand in a completely different way".

The company follows the usage of their “hashtags” to detect the amount of spread and reach their communicated Instagram content receives. Nevertheless, expresses he that the company do not know what is being discussed about them if the company is not referred to in the Instagram followers’ published content. He continues by expressing that Rivia Sports are consistently trying to embrace the obtained feedback from the interaction with the company’s Instagram followers, and the obtained feedback is essentially affecting the product development or design.

5.3 Concluding chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Corporate culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Nau              | The culture is about working hard and effective, with a given freedom as long as you put in all the time you can.  
|                  | They are always trying to figure out where they are heading and just ‘goes for it’. |
| CDLP             | They have a very customer-focused culture and always looks for the best for the customers. Whereas their culture reflects relationships, where they build relationships.  
|                  | They work hard and long hours.                                                    |
| Hernö Gin        | They have a youthful, modern, healthy, cooperative and good culture.               
<p>|                  | It is very supportive culture where responsibility is delegated, and they trust their employees. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sigr</strong></td>
<td>Much room for the employees to develop, do what they are good at, providing suggestions and be listened to. They have a very open, solution-oriented, family-like culture, which is built on Swedish values. The atmosphere is fun and happy, and they consider themselves to be a Sigr family, who &quot;lives&quot; the brand. They work very long and irregular hours and is always available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rivia Sports</strong></td>
<td>Their culture is a lot about just doing things and see what happens and having fun while working. Colourful, real, adventurous and fun are the core values which they live after. They work every day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behaviour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nau</strong></td>
<td>The overall behaviour is very open and cooperative, which is positive and good. Their behaviour is derived from their culture. Employees get much responsibility and trust, to promote a mutual behaviour and responsibility. No big difference in behaviour between employees and management, because the employees are similar to the founders. Everyone is part of the team. The management’s behaviour needs to be unanimous not to give different directives and confuse employees, although not much though is given to this aspect. Recruitment: The individuals need to be quite similar to the founders in order to be hired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CDLP</strong></td>
<td>The corporate behaviour is very customer-oriented. There is a difference in the behaviour between employees and founders, where the employees have harder to see the big picture and don’t have same sense of belonging to the brand. This is due to the limited time the employees have worked at CDLP. The management behaviour reflects internally to their employees. The interaction works well even though the founders have another behaviour, they complement each other. Important that they have a good team spirit, harmony and a shared vision. Recruitment: An entrepreneurial person who can take responsibility and complete their tasks, as well as be comfortable with the high pace that is prevailing in the company.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hernö Gin

The behaviour between the management and employees are open, cooperative and straightforward, and the overall behaviour matches this as well. The feeling of being a team, working together and helping each other is important in the company. Also, to be able to have fun together is highlighted.

There is a difference in the behaviour between the management and employees. The employees get the confidence and trust to perform their tasks without management watches their every move. Management’s behaviour is in that way transferred to the employees.

Recruitment: The most important is that they hire an individual that are in line with them as individuals, fit in their open organization. Their way of working and that the interaction between that person and the others in the company works well.

Sigr

The corporate behaviour is an outcome from their culture. They work a lot much and irregularly hours. They live and breathe the ‘Swedishness, elegance and joy’ within the organization, which translates into their way of behaving.

The interaction between the owners works great. Their mentality is that they work hard together as a team, but at the same time have fun.

They see everyone as equals. Owners don’t have more than the employees.

Recruit: they should hire someone that is happy, can work with the others and to have fun in his work.

Rivia Sports

Their key values are colourful, real, adventurous and fun, which is how they act in the organization.

They are all about “living as they learn” and being “real”. Much emphasize is also put on having fun while working.

The interplay between the co-owners works well. They have a transparent and straightforward communication.

Recruitment: The individual needs to be willing to take initiative, responsible and have competence or experience. It is also of importance that the person fits with the co-owners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication &amp; visual identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nau</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management communication is conducted via scheduled physical meetings and virtual communication channels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing communication is founded in the core values and is executed via virtual SNS. Selection of which communication channels to use is determined by customer presence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual identity was developed before the company was established. Nau’s core values is displayed in the product name, logotype and colour scheme. It reflects the company founders’ perception of their industry’s evolving needs and is used as the foundation for all marketing communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDLP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernö Gin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivia Sports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Market conditions**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Nature of industry</th>
<th>Corporate/Marketing strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nau</td>
<td>Nature of industry provided the opportunity for the company to be established. Corporate/Marketing strategies is affected by the industry’s characteristics. Nau’s strategy is informal and is developing in line with how the company is evolving. They evaluate and benchmark their marketing activities to other companies to detect improvement possibilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDLP</td>
<td>Nature of the industry is not affecting the company. Corporate/Marketing strategies are informally developed and originates from the company founders’ perception of what is beneficial for the company.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernö Gin</td>
<td>Nature of industry is affecting the company due to many governmental rules and regulations. Corporate/Marketing strategies is influenced by the industry. Strategy is embedded in the company’s core values, but is not strictly defined, which enables responses on market changes. The marketing strategy account as foundation for all external communication.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigr</td>
<td>Nature of the industry is affecting the company based by it allows the company to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Corporate/Marketing strategies is developed to operate in the opposite manner as the actors within the industry. Marketing strategies is based on the company’s key values but are formally developed and are in sync with the company’s financial resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivia Sports</td>
<td>Nature of the industry is highly competitive which is affecting the company. Corporate/Marketing strategies is developed to reach new customers and reflects how they want to present themselves. They only collaborate with companies that share the same values as themselves. They have a long-term strategy for with target on turnover and market shares.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>Instagram is their main communication channel, which they use because it enables direct communication with the target group where they can visually communicate what Nau represents and offers. Moreover, the respondent states that Instagram generates increased brand awareness and larger reach of their target group. The content that is published is based on their homogeneous imagery, and what they want to represent. The company says it helps them to distinguish themselves from their competitors and raise their brand awareness. They have an employed professional photographer that produces all the visual material in their marketing communication.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CDLP      | Instagram is one of their main communication channels. The respondent states that Instagram increases the brand awareness and provides the ability to visually express themselves to their target group and sharing what they have to offer.  
The content that is being published is based on their imagery and what they want to represent.  
The imagery is based on the CDLP’s perception of intellectual masculinity. The visual content is the most important component of the Instagram market communication.  
CDLP’s creative department is responsible for the company’s Instagram account, where the department creates, publishes and interact with the company’s target group. |
| Hernö Gin | Instagram is their main communication channel, which they use because it provides, at a low cost, a worldwide distribution of Hernö Gin’s marketing communication, which makes it highly cost-efficient.  
On Instagram, they respond to all received comments and questions and engage in discussions about the company on other’s accounts.  
The imagery is displaying the history of Hernö Gin, the Scandinavian nature and the products.  
The content (pictures and videos) that are being published on Instagram, is taken by an employed photographer to heighten the quality and consistency of the content. |
| Sigr      | Instagram is one of their main communication channels which they use because their target group is active on that site. The respondent states that Instagram cost equally much as other channels, but it generates a shorter customer purchase process which leads to increased sales and brand awareness.  
The company is interacting with their Instagram followers, as they are answering questions and comments.  
The displayed imagery is based on their key values (Swedishness, elegance, joy), which is what they want to display. The respondent states that the photos should represent their company.  
The content (pictures and videos) that they publish on Instagram is taken by an employed photographer. |
| Rivia Sports | Instagram is their main communication channel, which they use because their target group is active there. Furthermore, the respondent states Instagram generates increased brand awareness, high conversion rate to the website and detects possible partners for collaboration.  
The respondent stresses the importance of the interacting with all of Rivia Sports’ followers since it "personalizes the brand in a completely different way".  
The imagery is based on their key values (Colourful, real, adventurous and fun) which is visually displayed through the photos. |
Chapter 6. Data analysis and discussion

In this chapter the empirical findings are analysed and discussed. It is structured according to the themes addressed in our summarized theoretical framework in Chapter 2, although two of the dimensions have been altered. Consequently, the analysis and discussion for each theme is connected and derived from the theoretical frame of reference. This chapter ends with a presentation of our developed theoretical framework based on the empirical findings.

6.1 Corporate identity

After compiling the empirical findings, a decision to change the dimensions of CI was made in order to make our interpretation clearer. It was decided to merge the two dimensions Corporate culture and Behaviour into one, as well as divide the dimension of Communication and Visual identity into two separate dimensions. This allowed us to conduct a better analysis which formed into our developed concluding theoretical framework explained in section 6.3.

When interpreting the collected data, it was obvious that the boundary between Corporate culture and Behaviour was not clear. All respondents had a hard time trying to distinguish those dimensions and they were often spoken about as if they were the same. In the theoretical chapter, the Corporate culture is described as the company’s shared beliefs, values and behaviour, which then formulates the behaviour of the employees of the company (Downey, 1986, p. 7; Guiso et al, 2015, p. 61). Thereof, the decision to merge the two dimensions of Corporate culture and Behaviour together was made. This decision is supported by the outcomes from the empirical findings, and our belief that Corporate culture is something that lays unconsciously and consciously within the organization, which then forms the behaviour of the entire organization.

Furthermore, the dimension Communication and Visual identity were divided into two individual dimensions. The decision is supported by the empirical findings, which showed that the Visual identity and the Communication are not developed in an integrated manner. Instead the empirical findings showed that the companies’ Visual identity was developed before or during the companies’ establishment phase, whereas the companies’ communication develops as the company itself develops. The final argument is that Communication and Visual identity is affected by each other but not dependent on each other.

6.1.1 Corporate culture & behaviour

In the empirical findings, all the respondents enthusiastically explained how the company came to life and the story behind it. Much emphasis was put on the founders of the respective company, how they started the company and what they wanted it to represent. When the respondents further elaborated on the companies’ core values and how they were operating, it was clear that the founders first thought, and personality was strongly affecting the company’s culture and behaviour. From the outcome of the empirical findings it was found that in the initial phase of the establishment of a company, the founders of the company “are” the organization. The characteristics and traits the founders have, become what the company stands for, namely the Corporate culture.
Furthermore, we believe that the culture turns into the behaviour of the organization, thus the corporate, managerial and employee behaviour. As one respondent (Hernö Gin) said, “I believe the company’s vision, corporate values and culture is reflected of how we act as humans”.

The subconstructs within Corporate culture are ‘goals, philosophies & principles’ and ‘nationality’ (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 81). Our interpretation is that the goals, philosophies and principles entail the company's founders’ characteristics that set them. Although, ‘nationality’ is a subconstruct that can be separated from the founder, the foundation of the nationality is something that we mean exists in, at least, three of the companies. One of these companies build their organization upon Swedish values (Rivia Sports) even though they communicate internationally and the two other companies, emphasized their home country’s heritage and mentality (Hernö Gin and Sigr).

The respondent of Rivia Sports said that it was more important that the culture is expressed than what kind of culture you have. Nau was of the opinion that it would be strange to have an expressed culture but, when topic was further elaborated, he could still describe their culture as if it was expressed. The majority of the companies had not given much thought to the importance of having a culture, while CDLP believed it to be everything. They took their culture very seriously and the respondent thinks of the culture as something that is established by himself, both internally and externally. He furthermore states that he has a clear picture of the culture he wants and that the picture is clearly expressed in the organization, but also how the prevailing culture should show. Although, the respondent believes it to be of more importance to have a culture when the employees in the organization increases. The empirical findings showed that two of the companies had formulated core values that they believed their culture was born from. We interpret it as the Corporate culture is something that is underlying in the organization.

The dimension Behaviour is built up by its subconstructs ‘corporate behaviour’, ‘management behaviour’ and ‘employee behaviour’ (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 8). When talking about the different positions and how management was distinguished from employees, it was explained that everyone has their specific ‘role’ within the organization with different competences. This does not necessarily mean different positions, but because some of the individuals has knowledge within a specific area it can sometimes overlap with other roles and positions. This is something all the companies talked about and confirmed. All the companies also emphasised the importance of helping each other out and working as a team rather than having a hierarchical structure. Although, all companies in this study found it hard to separate the corporate-, management- and employee behaviour due to the small amount of people in the organization. These empirical findings, we believe, prove that there is no distinct division between the management and the employees in these companies.

The empirical findings showed that all of the companies in this study agreed unanimously about the importance of new employees’ personality. Interestingly, it revealed that the personality characteristics was even emphasized higher than the individual's level of experience and expertise. When talking about potential employees, the empirical findings illustrated that the founders want to employ individuals that have similar characteristics as themselves.
The ‘corporate behaviour’ is described as the “body-language of the organisation” in a wide sense (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84), which is performed by individuals in the organization (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83). Rivia Sports and Sigir, which do not have any employees, emphasized that the company founders’ “live and breathe” the companies’ core values all the time. They further emphasized the importance of how the companies’ managers behave. In both of these companies, it is important for them to have fun while working. In comparison to the other three companies that has employees, their overall behaviour by all was described in the same way, since they often stressed it to be open, cooperative, delegating, relying on each individual’s own responsibility as well as having a high degree of independence. This they thought would promote employee motivation, a mutual behaviour and responsibility, make them more effective and thus, lead to a better organization. CDLP stands out regarding their corporate behaviour, which the respondent explains to be very customer service oriented. We translate this into the argument that it probably is because of the founders’ personality and how they like to operate in their work which permeates the organization which becomes the corporate culture and thereof the behaviour.

The ‘management behaviour’ arises from the top management and also from the interaction between employees and managers (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 83). The empirical findings clearly displayed that in order for the employees to not get different messages and get confused, it was imperative that the individuals in the management team shared the same vision and were unanimous in their communication. The founder’s management behaviour is reflected throughout the entire organizational behaviour (Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007, p. 35). What confirms this is for example what one respondent said, “the way we are, reflects internally to our employees every day”. Based on the empirical findings we are of the belief that parallels between the ‘management behaviour’ and the ‘employee behaviour’ can be drawn. The ‘employee behaviour’ reflects how the company “thinks, feels and behaves” (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002, p. 83). However, the only distinct data that was collected on the subconstruct ‘employee behaviour’ is from Hernö Gin, since the respondent is the only employee interviewed in this study. She confirmed the insight that the way Hernö Gin’s management acted, was reflected to her and the other employees. This further proves Brexendorf and Kernstock (2007, p. 35) argument that founder’s management behaviour is reflected throughout the entire organizational behaviour. However, it is worthwhile to notice that all studied companies are small with a flat and open organization, thereof the blurred boundary between the management behaviour and employee behaviour.

6.1.2 Communication

Communication have the subconstructs ‘corporate communication’ and ‘uncontrollable communication’ (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). The subconstruct ‘corporate communication’, entails management and marketing communication (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). The management communication accounts for a company’s top managers interaction with the employees (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). All the companies, with employees, revealed that their founders communicated organizational information to the employees. In order to facilitate their management communication, the empirical findings also showed that all the companies used virtual communication channels. Melewar and Jenkins (2002, p. 82) argues that the management communication is the most important aspect of the corporate communication, because it is the primary way top managers distribute the organization’s objectives and goals to the employees. The
empirical findings showed that this was an important aspect for the majority of the companies. Further proof of this was made by CDLP by describing that their employees never know the outcomes from their work, which creates problems. He states that the management communication does not reach everybody in the organization and believes that they have to work on this and “the management must be able to give feedback on what actually are the results from what the employees are doing”.

Melewar and Jenkins (2002, p. 82) describes marketing communication as the communication that is provided to all the company’s external stakeholders. In contrast to this argument Melewar and Jenkins make, the empirical findings revealed that all of the companies’ marketing communication was directed to their customers. They wanted to communicate a consistent representation of themselves via their communication channels. CDLP, Sigr and Rivia Sports, executed their marketing communication via both physical and virtual communication channels.

Throughout the interviews, all the respondents were more thorough describing their marketing communication than their management communication. This is in line with Melewar and Jenkin’s (2002, p. 85) result that illuminates that marketing communication received most attention under the subconstruct ‘corporate communication’ in their study. We believe that this is similar in our study but mainly because of the majority of the companies are in the early stages of their business lifecycle and much attention is therefore placed on marketing and advertising.

‘Uncontrollable communication’ constitutes of unplanned and informal communication, which is externally distributed by a company's employees or via a third party (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 82). We are of the belief that uncontrollable communication is the communication that the companies do not know they make. Thereof, not surprisingly, the respondents could not elaborate on this subconstruct. We are of the opinion that due to the few employees the companies have, the amount of uncontrollable communication is also less than it would be if the companies were larger.

6.1.3 Visual identity

All the participating companies stated that they had a corporate name, logotype and a selected colour setting that represented their core values. This is in accordance with what Melewar and Saunders (1989, p. 291) describes the Visual identity to be. The empirical findings revealed that all of the companies developed their Visual identity before or in the initial phase of their establishment, and it was done by the founders.

It was showed that the Visual identity represents how they wants to be perceived and recognized, which was based on their core values and the company characteristics. This is proved by Olins (1995, p. 11) that argued that the Visual identity is used “to present the central idea of the organization with impact, brevity and immediacy”. We interpret this as the Visual identity enhances the companies’ uniqueness and provides a visual presentation. In the empirical findings, Nau states they developed their Visual identity in order to distinguish themselves from the competitors, which further provides support of our belief.
6.1.4 Market Condition

The subconstructs of Market condition is ‘nature of industry’ and ‘corporate/marketing strategies’ (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 85). ‘Corporate strategy’, is the process itself and not the content of it. Thinking of it that way, it retains some continuity over time and, therefore, makes the strategy closely related to the core of the organization and has its roots deeply embedded within its corporate activities (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84). When looking at the empirical findings, we can see that all companies work intuitively and short-term in the daily operations with a mindset of "right here, right now". Although every company has strategies they establish for long-term use, it is mentioned that the strategies also have room for improvisation and are informal. Sigr even states that “working with the marketing strategy, is what we are living and doing all the time. Every night and day”. This we believe goes in line with what Melewar and Jenkins say with the strategy being closely related to the core of the organization and its corporate activities (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002, p. 84). This we propose is because all the companies are in the initial phases of their business life cycle and that the founders personify the company.

Every company in the study, are operative in different industries. Based on the empirical findings on what was said about the company’s ‘nature of industry’, it was noticed that the companies had very different thoughts and opinions about the nature of their industry. From this, we believe that the industries have different characteristics that influences the companies in various ways and to different extent. The companies describe different ways their industries have forced them in acting in a way they otherwise would not. Hernö Gin, which is operative within the alcohol industry, emphasizes that that industry’s special laws and regulations have limited them in their work. Moreover, we believe the companies have been and are influenced by the nature of their industry, whether they are aware of it or not.

6.2 Instagram

Self-presentation theory
According to Goffman (1959, p. 26) the self-presentation theory encompasses individuals’ desire to present themselves with what is in line with their own perception of their identity. In the empirical findings, all of the companies addressed that the published content are in line with what they want to represent and be recognized as such as their key values. Whereas, all of the companies expressed that Instagram allowed them to visually present this. Therefore, Instagram provides the companies with the ability to control how and in what way they convey themselves to the target group.

Two-way communication and Social Network Marketing
When discussing the companies’ reasons for choosing Instagram as one of their main communication channel, the typical answers were that it; is cost-effective, enables direct communication with their customers, increases brand awareness, and the site has high presence of their wanted customers. As said in the theoretical chapter, it is stated that Internet is a rather cheap way of marketing (Harris & Rae, 2009, p. 694; Nobre & Silva, 2014, p. 140), based on the respondents’ statements we are of the opinion this is true. By using social network marketing (SNM), which every company in our study state they do, a two-way communication between them and its customers occurs (Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 513). This two-way communication several respondents mention as an advantage and also one of the reasons for using Instagram as a marketing channel.
Moreover, CDLP mentions the exact phrase ‘two-way communication’, while the other companies described it but in other words. This dialogue is not always controlled or initiated by the company itself according to Derham et al., (2007, p. 2). The majority of the companies said that they do not know everything that is being said about them on Instagram and are not always a part of the conversations that is held about them. Derham et al., (2007, p. 2) states that the dialogue can be consumer to consumer without the company directly being a part of it, which goes in line with the empirical findings. Another advantage SNS provides SMEs, according to our theoretical assumptions, is that it encourages companies to engage with their customers (Dahnil et al., 2014, p. 120; Öztamur & Karakadilar, 2014, p. 512; Nobre & Silva, 2014, p. 140). This is something all studied companies use Instagram for. They all respond to received comments and messages on Instagram, which we believe is further proof of the two-way communication.

6.3 Developed summarizing theoretical framework

From the empirical findings, our analysis and discussion, we came to the conclusion that our initial summarizing theoretical framework is in need of development and modification in order to enhance its usability and be coherent with what the empirical findings showed.

CI is displayed in our framework as a ‘wheel’ due to the fact that the dimensions of CI are highly influenced by, and in need of each other, thereof closely linked together. Although, we recognized the dimensions Corporate culture and Behaviour to be specifically related to each other. This is partly due to that the respondents could not really distinguish between them and spoke about them as if they were the same thing, which made it difficult to differentiate the empirical findings into two different dimensions, and partly due to our belief that Corporate culture is something that lays consciously and unconsciously in the organization and within the founders, which then forms the behaviour of the entire organization. Therefore we came to the decision to merge the dimensions Corporate culture and Behaviour of CI together.

Furthermore, we also decided to divide the dimension Communication & Visual identity into two individual dimensions. The reason for this is that Communication and Visual identity are affected by each other but not dependent on each other. The companies discussed Communication and Visual identity as different topics in the interviews.

The CI wheel is now divided into four equal pieces, the dimensions, Corporate culture & behaviour, Communication, Visual identity and Market condition. In the section below, it is described of what we believe to be the key points of our analysis and discussion.

Corporate culture & behaviour

We believe that in the initial phase of a company, the founders defines the entire company, which means that the founder’s persona reflects directly to the organization. As to speak, the characteristics, traits and belief the founders have, becomes what the company stands for and its values, thus the Corporate culture. Therefore, the company will be established according to the founders’ own nature.

Furthermore, we believe the Corporate culture then turns into the behaviour of the organization. It is still proposed that the founders’ actions, their way of doing things and behave, becomes the overall behaviour in the organization. We believe that there is no
distinct division between the corporate-, management- and employee behaviour due to the low number of people in the studied organizations, and they operate, generally speaking, in the same way. Thereof, our belief is that there is an overall behaviour in micro-sized companies that everyone in the company exhibit.

Communication
The management communication is the most important aspect when it comes to foster the overall communication within the organization. This is because the companies are micro-sized and the company founders compound for a large part of the companies' organizational members. All the companies used virtual communication channels in order to facilitate the management communication. All companies also put more focus on their marketing communication than their management communication. One of the companies’ main communication channels is Instagram.

Visual identity
The company’s Visual identity was created before or in the initial phase of the companies’ establishment, therefore it is the founders that decides the company’s Visual identity. Companies’ Visual identity is the most tangible dimension of CI; it represents what the company wants to present and be recognized as. Moreover, the Visual identity is used consistently in the external communication.

Market condition
The companies work short-term in their daily operations and has a mindset of thinking “right here, right now”. Although, they all have established long-term strategies, that have room for improvisation and changes, which are followed. Their strategies are closely related to the core of the organization and its corporate activities, which we believe reflects the corporate culture and behaviour. The nature of different industries has different characteristics, which influences all the companies that operates within that industry. Therefore, our belief is that the companies are influenced by the nature of their industry, and have been from the start, whether they are aware of it or not.

Figure 4: Our developed summarizing theoretical framework
After conducting the analysis, we believe CI to be something companies are born with and rooted in the core of the organization and it is under constant development and change. Furthermore, companies’ CI is something truly unique and difficult to copy, and it is both consciously and unconsciously transmitted out to their target group via their SNS.

In our framework, two arrows are displayed as being pointed back and forth between the CI wheel and the ‘Target group’, which represents the link between the internal and external side of the framework. This is the communication channel, the SNS, companies use to reach their target group to communicate and show outwards who they are. In our framework, Instagram is the SNS that is taken in consideration, since the influence of Instagram is what this study aims to examine.

The companies are, via Instagram, able to display what they want to present to their target group. This means that their CI are being transmitted through Instagram, even if it is a conscious choice or not. With Instagram’s two-way communication, the target groups can directly interact and communicate back and forth with the companies, which creates a dialogue between the company and its customers. Therefore, we believe that this SNS has created an opportunity to be the digital extension of companies external CI.

Our belief has come to be that our findings and results is due to the fact that all companies that was used in this study was micro-sized companies, and thus has less than ten employees. Our analysis is that the founders personifies the entire company, since they have the fundamental idea of what they want their company to be and stand for. With support from the empirical findings we can see that what the founder stands for, and their personality, is reflected directly to the company.
Chapter 7. Conclusion

In this chapter the study’s main findings and conclusions are addressed. The general conclusions will first be presented and thereafter the recommendations, limitations, future research and contributions.

7.1 General conclusions

Based on existing information and knowledge, this study was made with the aim to fulfil the purpose as well as the research question. Interviews were conducted with micro-sized Swedish companies, from which valuable insights were gained. From the empirical findings, we were able to answer our research question as well as fulfil the purpose of the study. The purpose was to create an understanding of micro-sized companies’ CI and how they use the SNS ‘Instagram’ to present themselves. The research question was, “How and in what way are micro-sized companies showing their corporate identity on the SNS Instagram?”

Based on the interviews, the theoretical frame of reference as well as our summarizing theoretical framework are we able to come to the below main findings and conclusions.

Corporate culture & behaviour
- Founders persona reflects directly to the organization. The characteristics, traits and belief the founders hold, becomes what the company stands for and its values, thus the Corporate culture.
- The founders’ actions, behaviour and way of doing things, indirectly reflects the overall behaviour in the organization.
- There is no distinct division between the corporate-, management- and employee behaviour.
- There is an overall behaviour that everyone in the company exhibit.
- The culture and behaviour of the organization is inseparable from each other.

Communication
- The management communication is very important in order to foster the communication within the organization.
- More focus is put on their external communication than their management communication.

Visual identity
- It is created in the initial phase, or before, the founding of the company and it is the founders who decide the company's Visual Identity.
- It represents how the company wants to be perceived and recognized.
- It is used consistently in all the internal and external communication.
- This is the most tangible dimension of CI.

Market condition
- Their daily operations are characterized by the mindset “right here, right now”.
- The companies have long-term strategies, that has room for improvisation and changes.
The strategies are closely related to the core of the organization and the corporate activities, which reflects as the corporate culture and behaviour. The companies are influenced by the nature of their industry.

**Instagram**
- The companies’ display what they want to represent and be recognized as, via Instagram.
- The ‘two-way communication’ enables a dialogue between the company and its customers on Instagram.

All companies used in this study are micro-sized. Thereby, we can expect that many of the findings is due to the small number of people in the organization and that the founders are embodying a large part of the organizational members. Thereof, the conclusion that founders of the micro-sized company personifies the entire organization, because they have the fundamental idea of what they want their company to be and stand for.

We came to the conclusion that all dimensions within CI are linked together. Every company has their own CI, which makes it unique and difficult to copy. We have come to the conclusion that what and how micro-sized companies present and display on Instagram, is a consequence from their CI. Thereof, their use of Instagram is a digital extension of their CI.

### 7.2 Practical recommendations

We are of the belief that companies need be aware of the fact that they have a unique CI, which then differentiates them from other competitors. Furthermore, they need to understand what the different dimensions CI is constructed upon. Companies can then identify if some of the dimensions do not work well, and work towards solving the addressed issue. In addition, it is of high importance that the founders of micro-sized companies are aware that their own persona and behaviour is being directly reflected to the organization and its members. Therefore, we recommend that the founders learn how to work with this knowledge and take advantage of it, in order for the organization to improve.

This study has been made to create an understanding of micro-sized companies’ CI and how they use the SNS ‘Instagram’ to present themselves. In this fashion, we recommend that companies should increase their own awareness of what they display and how act on Instagram reflects how they are perceived by their target group.

### 7.3 Limitations and suggested future research

For semi-structured interviews, Saunders et al. (2012, p.283) argues that the minimum sample size should be 5-25 respondents. Nevertheless, as this study is not focused on a specific industry, the relatively small sample size (five companies) of this study has been viewed as a limitation. Therefore we propose that future research should include a larger sample size to be able to analyse more different perspectives and experience.

The interviews within this study was with either founders, owners or managers, the perspective on the companies’ CI was only seen from their side. Whereas, we have not
gained any insights from the companies’ target groups. Therefore, we propose further studies should investigate how the target groups, e.g. the customers, perceives the company’s CI. This we believe would be beneficial in order to extend the knowledge and gain new insights and findings.

Furthermore, as this study only considers micro-sized companies, we suggest further research should consider all categories within SMEs, thus micro-, small- and medium-sized companies. In bigger companies, the number of employees often rises, and we have, in this study, interviewed respondents from companies where they have very few, if any, employees. Therefore, future research should be based on larger companies where it is possible to interview the employees as well and not only the founder/owner. That way further conclusions can be drawn and possibly provide outcomes that concern more companies.

7.4 Contributions

This study’s aim was to find out about micro-sized companies’ CI and how they use the SNS ‘Instagram’ to present themselves. Micro-sized companies are characterised by limited amount of resources which makes social media a perfect marketing channel for them (Narula, 2004, p. 153). SNS is a relative new and highlighted subject in the society and a lot of research and studies has been made within this area. Whereas, it has been found that since social media is a rather easy and cost-effective way for SMEs to market themselves to their target group. How they market themselves is made through their presentation and expression on these sites. Their chosen approach and presentation on the SNS, is a consequence from their CI.

The previous research and studies on CI is extensive, although very scattered and not unanimous which makes it harder for companies to actually grasp the concept and understand it. In order to reach the purpose of the study, it was imperative that we came to a definition of the concept to then investigate and create an understanding for micro-sized companies’ CI. We gained insights about companies CI and the process around it. The link between CI and SNS is very current and relevant, although no previous research has been made within these two subjects, thereof our purpose of the study. Another objective with this study was to give researchers within this research field some guidance and foundation for future studies in how companies’ CI can be communicated via Instagram. This study therefore contributes with something that previously have not been studied, or at least is a very scarce field of research, the relation between CI and Instagram.

7.5 Societal implications

In the discussion of the societal implications of micro-sized companies’ CI in relation to their presentation of themselves on Instagram, we first thought the implications would be of a positive nature. In further discussion, we came to the conclusion that the social implications could be both positive and negative. This study aims to investigate the relationship between micro-sized companies’ CI and how they use Instagram to present themselves. From a societal viewpoint, a company’s use of Instagram raises their probability of increased brand awareness among Instagram’s users. Increased brand awareness enhance the company’s chances of retaining new and returning customers.
leading to more sales and the increased payment of tax income to the country the company is operating within. By an extended amount of sales, the company’s chance of growth increases, leading to further employment, which can reduce a country’s unemployment rate that, in the end, improves the country’s welfare.

In contrast, a company’s marketing communication on Instagram, can also be viewed from a less beneficial perspective. Instagram can, via Internet, be accessed at any time of the day by all its users. Companies’ marketing communication on Instagram, therefore, have no restrictions of when, where and by whom it can be viewed, which can encourage individuals to purchase and increase their spending. Companies communication can, therefore, act as ‘triggers’ for individuals’ spending behaviour. From a societal viewpoint, increased individual spending behaviour is beneficial, if it is under control, but if the individual loses his financial ability to pay for his purchase it will lead to a strain on society.
Chapter 8. Truth criteria

This final chapter focuses on determining the quality of the study by the truth criteria. We have selected to assess the criterions credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as they capture the ability to determine the quality of truthfulness in qualitative studies.

The most eminent criterions to assess the quality of research is reliability and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 399). According to Lecompte and Goetz (1982, p. 32) addresses the criteria of reliability that the study's findings can to be derived again. In contrast encompasses validity the accuracy of the findings, which should be able to authentically represent the phenomena of study as well as the findings should be able to compare between different groups (Lecompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 32). Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 400) argue that the application of the criteria should be applied in qualitative studies with the consideration, due to the criteria are related to findings which encompass measurement (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 400). Since this study does not aim to generalize nor measure the study’s findings, application of Guba and Lincoln's (1985) criteria for qualitative studies have therefore been made. In the following section will the criterions, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability be applied and evaluated to our research process and findings.

Credibility refers to the acceptance of others (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 396). To attain credibility a qualitative researcher should be able to present the performed activities in the process of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 301) The researcher should be able to display that the retrieved data is confirmed by the participants in the study and present that the findings of the study reflect the reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 401). The process of conducting this study has been well grounded in our will to ensure that our actions have been performed in a desired manner as well as our understanding of the methodology of conducting interviews. The presented and analysed material in this study have been gathered via interviews with five respondents. To ensure that all the presented data in the study would be what the respondents’ expressed during the interviews an audio recorder was used by the approval of the respondents. According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 396) can credibility of the presented data and findings be achieved through that the participants in the study verifies that the material is interpreted correctly. In line with what Bryman and Bell argues, all of the interview transcriptions were distributed to the respondents for approval. The addressed action was of high importance for us, based our motivation to present a consistent representation of the respondents' answers but also to show the respondents our gratitude for their participation in the study.

Transferability refers to how well a study’s findings can be carried out in another setting or group (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 279). Nevertheless, qualitative research findings are often gathered from a small group of individuals that shares characteristics or knowledge of a certain phenomenon, which increases the uniqueness of the research context (Bryman & Bell, 2012, p. 398). Guba and Lincoln (1985, p. 316) summarize the limitations of the criteria by arguing that the findings of the qualitative research are relevant to the context. Thereof, the transferability of the findings of this study are dependent on the contextual similarities the new research setting attains. As this study is not limited to one industry but instead that the companies in the study are micro-sized and using Instagram as a communication channel to reach their target group. To support our belief that the study and the findings are transferable we are of the belief that all
companies have a CI, which are affecting what and how they present themselves on Instagram. Nevertheless, in order for the study to be transferable, a similar research setting and characteristics of the respondents would need to be applied in the new study.

To ensure dependability, the researcher should consistently present how the gathered data has been measured (Lapan et al., 2012, p. 29). Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 403) further argue that the researcher should present how the formulation of the research problem was derived, the selection of the respondents, how the interviews were conducted as well as the transcription and the analysis of the gathered material. In this study, two methodological chapters have been included to provide transparency and guidance for the reader’s understanding of the research process. At the end of the research process has this study been overseen by peers, which helped us to get a holistic perspective of the study.

Confirmability refers to the researcher’s own personal values or opinions which influenced the presented findings, which should be presented (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 400). The subjects of this study have been selected from our curiosity of the subject. We have conducted the research with open minds and have not let our personal beliefs or values interfere with the research process.
Reference list


Appendix

Appendix 1 - Strathclyde Statement

This is the revised version of the original Strathclyde Statement on corporate identity by the ICIG. It was drafted as a collaborative effort by leading academics and identity consultants at Strachur, Loch Fyne, Argyll, Scotland, UK, on 17 and 18 February 1995:

"Every organisation has an identity.

It articulates the corporate ethos, aims and values and presents a sense of individuality that can help to differentiate the organisation within its competitive environment. When well managed, corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating the many disciplines and activities essential to an organisation’s success. It can also provide the visual cohesion necessary to ensure that all corporate communications are coherent with each other and result in an image consistent with the organisation’s defining ethos and character.

By effectively managing its corporate identity an organisation can build understanding and commitment among its diverse stakeholders. This can be manifested in an ability to attract and retain customers and employees, achieve strategic alliances, gain the support of financial markets and generate a sense of direction and purpose.

Corporate identity is a strategic issue.

Corporate identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organisation’s stakeholders and the multi-faceted way in which an organisation communicates."
Appendix 2 - Interview guide

Interview Guide - *English version*

**Opening questions: The company:**
1. How was the company founded?
2. What does the company have for vision and values?
3. What individuals consider the company is part of their target group?
4. How many countries is the company operating in?

**Theme 1: Corporate culture**
5. Can you tell us about corporate culture?
   a. How important do you think your corporate culture is?
   b. How do you work for the corporate culture to permeate everything in your organization?

**Theme 2: Behaviour**

*Corporate behaviour*
6. How do you apply your corporate visual, values, culture and business goals in your corporate behaviour?
   a. How do you work to promote your corporate behaviour?
   b. How do you perceive that the behaviour within the company is?
   c. How do you work to maintain your corporate behaviour?

*Management behaviour*
7. How do the interaction between your company founders/leaders work?
8. How does the company’s founders/leaders affect the rest of your organization?

*Employee behaviour*
9. If you were to hire a person today, what characteristics would you prefer the individual to have?
10. Tell us about the differences / similarities between the company's founder / leader and employee behavior?

**Theme 3: Communication and Visual identity**
11. How do you work with the communication within the company?
12. How do you communicate with your target group?
13. Would you like to develop your thoughts on the work with the company name, logotype and colour scheme?
14. How does the company use its visual identity?
   a. Would you like to develop of your visual design is used as an internal or external communication tool?

**Theme 4: Market conditions**
15. How do you work with your marketing strategies?
   a. Please develop if your marketing strategies has a long-term or short-term perspective? *Please develop if your marketing strategies are informal or formal?*
16. How has the industry you are active in, affected your organization?
   a. Could you please elaborate on your internal strategies and decision?

**Theme 5: SNS: Instagram**
17. Why did you select to use social media as a marketing communication channel?
   a. Which SNS do you use?
18. Why did you select to use Instagram as a channel for your marketing communication?
19. What do you consider the use of Instagram as a marketing channel generates your company?
20. Can you elaborate on your selected imagery on the visual content you communicate on Instagram?
   a. Regarding your published/communicated material on Instagram: What do you think your Instagram followers pays most attention to, the picture, text or the combination of them both? Why do you think so?
   b. What are your thought about the relationship between image and text?
21. Who are you targeting your communication on Instagram to?
22. Who or whom are responsible for managing your Instagram account?
23. How often do you integrate with your followers on Instagram?
24. Please develop on the use of ‘hashtags’ in the published material on Instagram.
   a. Please develop if you have an idea what Instagram users are discussing about your company on Instagram?
25. How do you work with feedback, positive and negative, you receive from Instagram users?
   a. Does the received feedback affect the internal organization? Why? How?
   In what way?

**Intervjuguide - Swedish version**

**Öppningsfrågor: Företaget**
1. Hur grundades företaget?
2. Vad har företaget för vision och värderingar?
3. Vilka individer anser ni ingår i er målgrupp?
4. Hur många länder är ert företag operativt inom?

**Tema 1: Corporate Culture**
5. Kan du berätta om er företagskultur?
   a. Hur viktig anser ni att er företagskultur är?
   b. Hur arbetar ni för att det ska genomsyra er organisation?

**Tema 2: Behaviour**

*Corporate behaviour*
6. Hur appliceras och utspelas er vision, företagsvärderingar, kultur och målsättningar i ert företagsbeteende?
   1. Hur arbetar ni för att främja ert företagsbeteende?
   2. Hur ser ni på ert beteende inom företaget?
   3. Hur arbetar ni för att bibehålla ert företagsbeteende?
Management behaviour
7. Hur fungerar samspelet mellan företagets grundare/ledare?
8. Hur påverkar företagets grundare/ledare den resterande delen av organisationen?

Employee behaviour
9. Om ni skulle anställa en person idag, vilka karaktärsdrag skulle ni föredra att den individen har?
10. Berätta om skillnaderna/likheterna mellan företagets grundarens/ledarens och anställdas beteende?

Tema 3: Communication and Visual identity
11. Hur arbetar ni med kommunikation inom företaget?
12. Hur kommunicerar ni med målgruppen?
13. Utveckla gärna om era tankegångar gällande arbetet med företagets namn, logotyp och färgsättning?
14. Hur använder företaget sin visuella design?
   a. Vill du utveckla hur ni använder visuella design, används den som ett internt eller externt kommunikationsverktyg?

Tema 4: Market condition
15. Hur arbetar ni med marknadsföringsstrategi?
   a. Utveckla gärna om ni arbetar efter en långsiktig eller kortsiktig marknadsföringsstrategi?
16. Hur har branschen, ni är verksamma inom, påverkat organisationen?
   a. Utveckla gärna om interna strategier eller interna beslut?

Tema 5: SNS: Instagram
17. Varför väljer ni att använda sociala medier som en marknadsföringskanal?
   a. Vilka sociala nätverk använder ni er av?
18. Varför valde ni att använda Instagram som marknadsföringskanal?
19. Vad anser ni att användningen av Instagram som en marknadsföringskanal genererar ett företag?
20. Hur tänker ni angående bildspråket i ert kommunicerade material via Instagram?
   a. Vad tror ni att erna Instagram följar uppmaršerar mest, bild, text eller kombinationen av dem båda? Varför tror du det är så? Varför tror du det är så?
   b. Hur tänker ni på förhållandet mellan bild och text i ert kommunikation på Instagram?
21. Vilka riktar ni er till på Instagram?
22. Vem eller vilka är det inom ert företag som hanterar ert Instagramkonto?
23. Hur ofta inte integrerar ni med erna följare på Instagram?
24. Utveckla gärna om ert kommunikation av ‘hashtags’ i ert publicerade materialet på Instagram.
   a. Utveckla gärna om ni har en uppfattning vad Instagram användare diskutera om ert företag på Instagram?
25. Hur arbetar ni med positiv och negativ feedback som ni får via Instagram?
   a. Påverkar den mottagna feedbacken er intern organisation? Varför då? På vilket sätt?
# Appendix 3 - The interview guide connected with theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Subconstructs</th>
<th>Questions (with each Theme)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The company</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. How was your company founded?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Goals, philosophies and principles Nationality</strong></td>
<td>a. History, objectives, establishment plan, significant stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. What does your company have for vision and values?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Can you tell us about corporate culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melewar and Jenkins, 2002)</td>
<td><strong>Goals, philosophies and principles Nationality</strong></td>
<td>a. How important do you think your corporate culture is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. How do you work for the corporate culture to permeate everything in your organisation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. How do you apply your corporate visual, values, culture and business goals in your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Corporate behaviour</strong></td>
<td>corporate behaviour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. How do you work to promote your corporate behaviour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. How do you perceive that the behaviour within the company is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>c. How do you work to maintain your corporate behaviour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melewar and Jenkins, 2002)</td>
<td><strong>Management behaviour</strong></td>
<td>7. How do the interaction between your company founders/leaders work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. How does the company’s founders/leaders affect the rest of your organisation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Employee behaviour</strong></td>
<td>8. If you were to hire a person today, what characteristics would you prefer that the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Tell us about the differences / similarities between the company’s founder / leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Visual identity</td>
<td>**Corporate communication Uncontrollable</td>
<td>and employee behaviour?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communication**</td>
<td>10. How do you work with the communication within the company?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11. How do you communicate with your target group?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Visual identity | 12. Would you like to develop your thoughts on the work with the company name, logotype and colour scheme?  
13. How does the company use its visual identity?  
   a. Would you like to develop of your visual design is used as an internal or external communication tool? |

| Market conditions | 14. How do you work with your corporate/marketing strategies?  
   a. Please develop if your marketing strategies has a long-term or short-term perspective?  
   b. Please develop if your marketing strategies are informal or formal? |

| Corporate/marketing strategies | Market conditions  
(Melewar and Jenkins, 2002) | 15. How has the industry you are active in, affected your organization?  
   a. Could you please elaborate on your internal strategies and decision? |

| Nature of industry | 16. Why did you select to use social media as a marketing communication channel?  
   a. Which social networking sites do you use?  
17. Why did you select to use Instagram as a channel for your marketing communication?  
18. What do you consider the use of Instagram as a marketing channel generates your company?  
19. Can you elaborate on your selected imagery on the visual content you communicate on Instagram?  
   a. Regarding your published/communicated material on Instagram:  
      What do you think your Instagram followers pays most attention to, the picture, text or the combination of them both? Why do you think so?  
      b. What are your thought about the relationship between image and text? |

| Social networking site – Instagram | 20. Who are you targeting your communication on Instagram to?  
21. Who or whom are responsible for managing your Instagram account?  
22. How often do you integrate with your followers on Instagram?  
23. Please develop on the use of ‘hashtags’ in the published material on Instagram.  
   a. Please develop if you have an idea what Instagram users are discussing about your company on Instagram?  
24. How do you work with feedback, positive and negative, you receive from Instagram users?  
25. Does the received feedback affect the internal organization? Why? How? In what way? |
Appendix 4 - Information letter to respondent

Information letter to respondent regarding interview - *English version*

Purpose of interview
We are two master students who are studying our last year at the Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics, in the International Business Program and Service Management Program respectively.

The study is within the academic fields of management and marketing, with the aim to find out about micro-sized enterprises’ corporate identity and how they use the SNS ‘Instagram’ to present themselves. The study has an inside-out perspective, which aims at creating an understanding of how the companies’ work with their corporate culture, behaviour, communication, visual identity and corporate/marketing strategies. These subjects account for the themes and guidelines in our study. In order for us to gain access to empirical material, we will conduct semi-structured interviews.

Interview participation
The participating companies in this study are geographically dispersed and distributed in different regions of Sweden. Therefore, the interviews will be conducted by either physical meeting, telephone or via Skype. The estimated time for the interview is approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be led by one of us, Ida or Sara, who will present and ask the interview questions, while the other person will record the ongoing conversation with the permission of the respondent. The gathered material forms the interview will be transcribed and be used as empirical data for the study. The transcription will be distributed to the participating companies for confirmation. After receiving confirmation from the respondent, the audio recordings will be deleted.

Participation in the study is optional for the respondent and questions asked during the interview can be avoided.

Handling of data
The gathered material from the interviews will only be of access for us, Ida and Sara. Once the study has been approved by the Grading Committee at the Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics, it will be published on "Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet – DIVA". Upon publication at DIVA, the study will be on public display.

For further questions contact us by email:
s.fredriksson@live.se
Ida linneahansén@hotmail.com

Best regards,
Ida Hansén and Sara Fredriksson
Informationsbrev till respondent avseende intervju - Swedish version

Syfte för intervju
Vi är två master studenter som studerar vårt sista år vid Umeå Universitet, på civilekonomprogrammet, inom respektive inriktningar såsom Service Management och international business program.

Denna studie är inom de akademiska områdena management och marknadsföring, med syfte att undersöka mikro-stora företags identitet och hur de använder det sociala nätverket, Instagram, för att presentera sig för sina kunder. Studien har ett ”inifrån och ut perspektiv” som syftar till att undersöka hur företag arbetar med sin företagstekultur, beteende, kommunikation, visuell identitet och företags-/ marknadsstrategier. Dessa ämnen verkar som intervjuens teman samt riktlinjerna i vår studie. För att vi ska få tillgång till empiriskt material ska vi genomföra halvstrukturerade intervjuer.

Medverkan innebär
Eftersom de medverkande företagen för denna studie är geografiskt utspridda och baserade i olika regioner i Sverige, kommer intervjuerna genomföras via telefon, fysiskt möte eller via Skype. Uppskattad intervjuatid är cirka 60 minuter. Intervjun kommer ledas av en person, Ida eller Sara, som kommer presentera och ställa frågor medan den andra personen kommer genomföra, med tillstånd av den deltagande respondenten, inspelning av intervjun.
Intervjun kommer därefter transkriberas och användas som empiriskt material för studien. Det transkriberade materialet kommer distribueras till respondenten för verifikation. Efter transkriptionsprocessen är avklarad kommer ljudinspelningen raderas.

Deltagande i studien är frivillig och uppkommande frågor under intervjun kan undanbedes.

Informationshantering

För ytterligare frågor kontaktas vi via e-post:
S.fredriksson@live.se
Idalinneahansén@hotmail.com

Vänligen,
Ida Hansén & Sara Fredriksson
Appendix 5 - Screenshot of the companies’ Instagram accounts