

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Languages



Bachelor Thesis

**Pay-per-click Marketing Strategies to Increase Online
Brand Awareness**

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BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Artem Ivanov

Business Administration

Thesis title

Pay-per-click marketing strategies to increase online brand awareness

Objectives of thesis

The main aim of the bachelor thesis is to identify strategies in social networks to increase brand awareness through targeted advertising.

Methodology

The work consists of two parts – theoretical and practical. The theoretical part will be based on the study of secondary sources. The empirical part will be compiled on the basis of outputs from quantitative/qualitative research.

The proposed extent of the thesis

30 – 40 pages

Keywords

Strategy, targeted advertising, pay-per-click marketing, social media network, leads, conversion, advertising mock-up, target audience, goals of advertisement

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BERKE, Adam, Gregory FULTON and Lauren VACCARELLO. The Retargeting Playbook: How to Turn Web-Window Shoppers into Customers. B.m.: John Wiley & Sons, 2014. ISBN 9781118881163
JAFFE, Joseph. Flip the Funnel: How to Use Existing Customers to Gain New Ones. B.m.: John Wiley & Sons, 2010. ISBN 9780470487853
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RUDDOCK, Andy. Understanding Audiences: Theory and Method. B.m.: SAGE, 2001. ISBN 9780761963448
SMITH, Mike. Targeted: How Technology Is Revolutionizing Advertising and the Way Companies Reach Consumers. B.m.: AMACOM, 2014. ISBN 9780814449011

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Pay-per-click Marketing Strategies to Increase Online Brand Awareness" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 31.11.2023

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Pay-per-click Marketing Strategies to Increase Online Brand Awareness

Abstract

The objective of the bachelor thesis is to evaluate the implementation of pay-per-click strategies for increasing brand awareness online. Effectively, a company operating in the hospitality segment – Marriott, was selected. The sub-goal of the thesis is to propose a strategy involving the pay-per-click strategy for the aforementioned company that will help the organization to become more visible, popular and prosperous, ultimately leading to better brand awareness. The goal is reached with the help of quantitative and qualitative techniques. The quantitative technique used in the thesis is the multiple-criteria decision analysis. As for the qualitative techniques, PESTEL and SWOT are used.

In the end, it is suggested that the company should focus on just two specific platforms that are expected to offer the company the biggest competitive advantage out of the 10 analyzed platforms. Those platforms are Google and Youtube, which should be explored by the company and used for increasing its brand awareness.

Keywords: strategy, targeted advertising, pay-per-click marketing, social media network, leads, conversion, advertising mock-up, target audience, goals of advertisement

Marketingové strategie s platbou za kliknutí ke zvýšení povědomí o online značce

Abstrakt

Cílem bakalářské práce je zhodnotit implementaci Pay-per-click strategií pro zvýšení povědomí o značce online. Efektivně byla vybrána společnost působící v segmentu pohostinství-Mariott. Dílčím cílem práce je navrhnout strategii zahrnující strategii pay-per-click pro výše uvedenou společnost, která pomůže organizaci stát se viditelnější, populárnější a prosperující, což nakonec povede k lepšímu povědomí o značce. Cíle je dosaženo pomocí kvantitativních a kvalitativních technik. Kvantitativní technikou použitou v práci je rozhodovací analýza s více kritérii. Pokud jde o kvalitativní techniky, používají se PESTEL a SWOT.

Nakonec se navrhuje, aby se společnost zaměřila pouze na dvě konkrétní platformy, u nichž se očekává, že společnosti nabídnou největší konkurenční výhodu z 10 analyzovaných platforem. Těmito platformami jsou Google a Youtube, které by společnost měla prozkoumat a použít ke zvýšení povědomí o značce.

Klíčová slova: strategie, cílená reklama, pay-per-click marketing, síť sociálních médií, potenciální zákazníci, konverze, reklamní maketa, cílové publikum, cíle reklamy

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1 Introduction

To begin with, it is essential to start by stating that more and more companies around the globe lately started to consider the Internet and its digital landscape as one of the best tools for promoting products, and services and also increasing brand awareness. Undeniably, this is believed to have yielded significant results for the majority of companies who managed to crack the code and understand the mechanism of how digital marketing works and what they can do in order to become more prosperous. Despite the fact that digital marketing and the Internet in the context of marketing both offer companies an omnichannel, where they can think of countless many different options for engaging with people, not every company manages to do it successfully.

Marriott Hotels, or just Marriott is one of the biggest hotel chains, or, to put it more professionally, one of the biggest companies specializing in hospitality. At the same time, despite its widely acclaimed reputation and fame, the company, just like any other company in the industry, found itself in a very complicated financial situation due to the pandemic of coronavirus. Yet, with the end of the pandemic, the business environment was not able to recover relatively quickly as the world economy was hit by another huge crisis – the outbreak of the War in Europe, which significantly disrupted supply chains and resulted in soaring rates of inflation all around the globe damaging purchasing power of consumers all over the world and quite logically resulting in lower revenue for transnational corporations.

In light of the aforementioned circumstances, the thesis is dedicated fully to the identification of potentially profitable and beneficial strategies of marketing associated with the implementation of the pay-per-click strategies that are expected to help the company to improve its brand awareness and finally result in a full recovery from the two recent crises that left a huge toll on the organization. The bachelor thesis implements both quantitative and qualitative techniques, which perfectly complement each other. All analyses used in the thesis are based on the relevant scientific framework, which is meticulously analyzed prior to the academic contribution and business advice to Marriott company. All in all, this thesis is expected to become a manual or guideline on how to evaluate different pay-per-click strategies and how to spot the best-fitting one in light of current business circumstances. The

findings of the analytical part are also compared with prior discoveries and pieces of advice from scholars and scientists specializing in the same domain.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The objective of the bachelor thesis is to evaluate the implementation of pay-per-click strategies for increasing brand awareness online. Effectively, a company operating in the hospitality segment – Marriott, was selected. The sub-goal of the thesis is to propose a strategy involving the pay-per-click strategy for the aforementioned company that will help the organization to become more visible, popular and prosperous, ultimately leading to better brand awareness.

2.2 Methodology

The methodology of the work is mainly represented by both quantitative and qualitative methods. However, it is essential to mention that the analytical part is heavily based on secondary data, which was collected from business reports and government sources, as well as analytical agencies dedicated to the subject of digital marketing and marketing as a whole.

When it comes to the analysis itself, the practical part relies on the multiple-criteria decision analysis for the evaluation of potential alternatives for Marriott, where the following techniques are implemented:

- 1) Lexicographic method.
- 2) Order method.
- 3) Score method
- 4) Simple Additive Method.

For the identification of weights for individual criteria, Saaty's matrix is used, which involves the calculation of geometric mean for eventually finding weights to be assigned to selected criteria. Apart from the quantitative approach represented by multiple-criteria decision analysis, the company's situation with regard to the proposed strategy is analyzed with the help of PESTEL analysis. Finally, the proposed solution is once again evaluated, but this time with the help of one of the most widely used frameworks for the evaluation of strategies considering both internal and external factors – SWOT analysis. The usage of the

aforementioned methodology is expected to yield high results in terms of accuracy and precision of recommendation considering the current business environment.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Concept of Digital Marketing

To this day, 82% of people who use the Internet are members of social networks. Members of these networks connect with one another, make new friends, publish images online, and offer other advice and ideas. Additionally, each of these individuals has the potential to become either actual or prospective consumers for the company. Social Media Marketing (SMM), or marketing in social media, is a technique that may be used to establish audience loyalty in online communities such as social networks, blogs, and forums. Other online communities also fall under this category (Chaffey, 2019).

The experimentation phase of using SMM for the promotion of commercial offerings on the Internet is quickly transitioning into the need phase for many different types of firms. SMM promotion on social media is rapidly considered one of the most successful strategies for recruiting buyers for a growing number of enterprises, particularly on a national scale. This is especially true for federal-level organizations. In contrast to traditional media such as television, newspapers, and magazines, where everything is constrained to a certain number of flat millimetres or seconds of air, for which users need to pay a significant amount, indirectly proportionate to their number, social media allow the information to be communicated in its entirety to the consumer of the data if indeed the consumer of the data ends up going to the Internet website in which it is accessible. This is the primary distinction between social media and other sources of data (Bala & Verma, 2018).

Social networking platforms offer an abundance of chances to publicize a product or service without incurring major additional financial expenses; as a result, businesses make extensive use of these platforms as a component of their marketing strategies. One is able to generate content via the use of networks, as well as build private contact with the target market, engage directly specific members of the intended audience, investigate the interests of the target audience, conduct events, and just communicate (Desai & Vidyapeeth, 2019).

The subject is particularly pertinent in light of the fact that, in modern-day Russia, an increasing amount of focus is being placed on the process of informatization, both in terms

of society as a whole and the business sector in particular. Every day, a growing number of commercial and non-profit organizations come to the understanding that they simply need to have their own internet presence in social media. This includes having a website and maintaining a presence on social networking sites. Managers that are truly competent make it their mission to use every information opportunity offered by the Internet in order to increase brand awareness for their firm and maximize their financial gain (Bala & Verma, 2018).

Through the use of social networks, blogs, forums, and communities, SMM promotion is an efficient method for attracting audience members to a website. When people talk about non-traditional approaches to promotion, it refers to SMM advertising. The most promising approach to promotion is marketing done through social media. It enables businesses to interact directly with the audience while at the same time being quite inexpensive. Especially for first-time business owners, the cost of SMM advertising is manageable. The use of a telephone, a fax machine, and a personal computer are now considered essential components of a person's day-to-day existence (Wind & Mahajan, 2002).

The same can be said about the Internet. Any commercial organization does not operate in isolation but rather within a multi-faceted and complex environment. This environment can include partners, competitors, investors, specific intended viewers, the internet, government and community authorities across a particular region, the entire country, and even the entire world. Therefore, it is becoming clearer and more apparent that businesses that make active use of the Internet in their operations enjoy a variety of benefits in their competitiveness that cannot be denied (Kannan, 2017).

The customer is able to acquire knowledge about the company and the product as a direct result of being purposefully informed about the particulars of the company and its capabilities, as well as the capability of the product to fulfil a particular requirement. There is a diverse selection of media via which an organization and its wares might be presented. But in the present day, when there is a great deal of competition, every commercial firm (particularly a young one) is attempting to make its name recognized in a modern information environment that is as powerful as the Internet (Sawicki, 2016).

3.2 Digital Marketing Landscape

Simply put, "marketing" refers to the process of determining how to make one's own marketing efforts more successful than those of one's competitors. The primary purpose of marketing is to create a functional network of relationships between the provider of a thing or service and the end user of that product or service. In fact, all marketing operations are evaluated from the perspective of the consumer's knowledge, perception, and behaviour processes. This is done in order to ensure maximum effectiveness. And this is true regardless of whether the customer is a final consumer, a middleman, or an industrial purchase. A company that focuses on marketing cannot survive if its employees are unaware of the products or services they are offering to customers in the market. The way in which customers evaluate a product is the most important factor in determining whether or not it will be successful in a market that is highly competitive (Kingsnorth, 2022).

Regrettably, in today's oversaturated marketplaces, having an excellent product is a required requirement, but it is not sufficient to guarantee success. It requires more publicity. Promotion is a collection of actions intended at acquiring a possible target audience, retaining a current one, and sustaining popularity through communications with consumers, partners, and sponsors (Yasmin et al., 2015). These goals can be accomplished in a variety of ways:

- Content marketing;
- SMM;
- SEO;
- Email marketing;
- paid advertising;
- placement on trading sites;
- analytics. (Charleswoth, 2018)

Each of these categories comes with its very own set of implements. Analytical tools can include things like Google Analytics and Yandex.Metrica for instance. In the following paragraphs, an in-depth analysis of each of the categories, discussing both the positive and negative aspects of each method will be conducted. It is essential to be aware of the fact that

each of the various sorts and methods of marketing is a kind of distinct science in its own right, with a plethora of circumstances, laws, and strategies unique to itself. As a result, it is essential to identify the primary responsibilities and benefits associated with each of the strategies that have been chosen (Veleva & Tsvetanova, 2020).

It is important to begin the very first, and this is known as **content marketing**. Content refers to a wide variety of informational items, including but not limited to the following: site content, landing pages, blog entries, presentations, infographics, webinars, and podcasts. The fundamental idea behind content marketing can be summed up as follows: as prospective consumers view, read, and interact with business material, their level of trust in the business grows. As a result, these individuals are more likely to become customers in the future. It is essential to be aware of the fact that each of the various sorts and methods of marketing is a kind of distinct science in its own right, with a plethora of circumstances, laws, and strategies unique to itself. As a result, it is essential to identify the primary responsibilities and benefits associated with each of the strategies that have been chosen. Content marketing is distinct in that it operates in a way that is both gradual and organic. First, it attracts users and piques their interest. Next, it converts the target audience into the audience of a particular brand. Finally, and most importantly, it converts the target audience into buyers, ideally permanent buyers. In spite of the fact that content marketing is not the same as advertising, it is able to tackle very particular issues that are faced by businesses (Rowley, 2008).

Promoting and disseminating one's own material, often known as distribution, is an essential part of content marketing. Before a customer may provide feedback on an article or infographic, they must first view the content in question. As a result, content marketing is typically practised in close combination with other marketing strategies and technologies, such as social networks, paid advertising, mailings sent by email and instant messengers, and online push alerts in the browser (Kois-Kanttila, 2004). The following is a list of the many things that users are able to do with the help of content marketing:

Raise the level of brand awareness. When someone takes in the information provided by the brand, the name becomes ingrained in his mind. After that, they will recall, whenever someone hears or sees the name, "Oh, but I have already heard/seen/read about this brand, I

know it." This is acknowledgement, the initial step on the path to loyalty (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007).

Develop a constructive image for the brand. The user's level of confidence in the brand increases in proportion to the quantity and quality of useful, engaging, humorous, and memorable material that the brand provides (MacInnis et al., 1999).

Demonstrate the brand's experience. Work that is considered competent in the field of content marketing involves the creation of educational and visual materials. These resources allow brand professionals to demonstrate how much they know about their product and how much useful information they are prepared to deliver to clients (Percy & Rossiter, 1992).

Grow the size of the company audience. Blog entries that have risen to the top of organic search results, postings on social networks that include a request for users to subscribe to the community - all of these things assist expand the company's social networks and contribute to the outcome of all other jobs (Bilgin, 2018).

Make feedback channels available. One may uncover growth spots, enhance the service, polish the product, and develop a better unique selling proposition by examining these evaluations, which can be found in social networks or on the website, as well as comments on articles and posts (Sasmita & Suki, 2015).

Attempts should be made to **raise the site's standing in the various search results.** When a corporation uploads publications on third-party websites and includes a link to its own website in those publications, the company is building its profile of external links. In addition, this is one of the most crucial elements that determine where websites end up in the organic search results (Chandon, 2003).

Increase sales volumes. The ultimate objective of content marketing in SMM, as well as in general, is to increase sales. A trusted brand in addition to content that is interesting, up-to-date, and of excellent quality is a solid alternative to secure sales growth.

The following illustration is of email marketing, which is a method of promoting goods or services via the use of email newsletters. Email marketing is a powerful tool that can not only bring in new consumers and keep the one company already have, but it can also enhance client loyalty to the company. Email marketing is a channel that may be used everywhere. It is utilized in business-to-business transactions, online retailers, services, web services, and even the entertainment industry. And returns on investment from mailing lists are the highest (Barnanto et al., 2020).

The following are some of the many additional significant roles that newsletters play, in addition to direct sales:

1. Show customers around the establishment. Quite frequently, everything takes place automatically, even in the absence of engagement from an email marketer.
2. Must include vital details regarding the order and the expected delivery time.
3. Provide company subscribers with instructions on how to utilize the product.
4. They reawaken inactive users, who then start taking an interest in the firm and making purchases as a result.
5. Spread the material company created on the blog to different media (Hartemo, 2016).

The goals of email marketing, just like the goals of practically every other kind of marketing, are aimed at accomplishing the same thing, which is to increase profits while also advancing the growth of the firm in both the domestic market and the social sphere. The next strategy is known as search engine optimization (SEO), and it involves working on the website of the organization. The primary purpose of this activity, from a technological standpoint, is to get the site to the top of search results and increase the number of visitors it receives. Therefore, the primary focus of search engine optimization marketing should be on luring clients or targeting visitors from within search engines (Enge, 2012). Utilizing search engines to achieve business goals, namely, those listed below is its mission:

- attract consumers, staff, or partners;
- boost the company's reputation inside the search engine results pages (SERM);
- enhance the number of orders placed for certain goods or services;
- boost the confidence of the audience company trying to reach;

- guarantee maximum brand coverage (Enge, 2012).

Work is done not only on the website itself but also on other resources where the firm may be featured, such as search engine services like Google My Business. In this scenario, traffic sources can include not just organic issuance but also other search engine services like Google My Business. Techniques such as paid advertising, placement on trading floors, and analytics are relatively specialized fields; as a result, they can be grouped together under the canopy of a single category. Because there aren't that many sites like that, paid advertising is one of the most common methods when analytics is rather performed with almost every technique indicated in this work. Paid advertising is the placement of a brand on trading platforms, and since there aren't that many sites like that, paid advertising is one of the most common methods. When a corporation grows larger, it will have access to a higher quantity of information from a wider variety of sources, and this information will need to be gathered from a wider variety of those sources. It is vital to perform an analysis of the data obtained in order to have an understanding of what is going on with the company and how the procedures function within. Business intelligence systems are utilized so as to accomplish these aims. The fact that they are meant to analyze data and bring it to a universal form in order to compile an integrated analytical report and continue the right work with it is their defining characteristic (Lee & Cho, 2020).

The analytical function of business intelligence is more descriptive in nature. The program provides a look back at the situation and enables users to determine what aspects of the current state can be enhanced in terms of the activities and procedures carried out by the marketing and sales department in order to boost the overall performance of the business and the return on investment. In other words, it draws attention to issue areas inside the company, but it does not address the question of what the organization anticipates will happen in the future in response to shifting market conditions (McStay, 2017).

Analytics in marketing are utilized to make projections on the likely course of events. In this scenario, one of the responsibilities of a marketing analyst or any other type of professional in the field of marketing is to conduct an active examination of the current state of the market as well as what is typically taking place in the environment that the firm

operates in. In and of itself, company analytics is a very important trait, and it possesses a great many advantages, such as the following:

- **Observations on the current state of consumer attitude and promotion.** In this scenario, all novelties currently available on the market are investigated, along with how they are perceived by the audience in question, what they talk about, what qualities consumers concentrate on, what topics and messages elicit a high response from them, the factors that contribute to this, which communication platforms are evolving into the most common.
- **An examination of the similarities and differences between the items offered by the firm and those of its competitors.** In order to do this, the characteristic of the many alternatives offers already available on the market, their pricing, their market shares, the characteristics and costs of advertising promotion, positioning, customer perception, and so on are researched.
- **Analysis of the market.** In this particular situation, the focus is on the potential of customer demand, its change over time, the amount of competition, the activities of other enterprises, the possibility of new players, and so on
- **An examination of the efficiency of several marketing tactics.** Planning any advertising project involves doing analytic research to determine what outcome is anticipated to be acquired from its execution, how many new consumers will be brought in, how many old customers will come back, and what return on investment is likely to be obtained.
- **Analyzing the success of marketing campaigns** in connection to online promotion is the focus of web analytics, which is a subset of traditional marketing campaign evaluation. Due to the fact that it may be used for a diverse selection of activities, it is recommended to put greater attention to it (Taylor, 2009).

The discussion between a social group and the topic of a company's marketing may be facilitated via the use of a technology called social media marketing. Direct work in communities that are comprised of the users to be targeted is what SMM entails. Interacting with a target audience in a modern setting can be accomplished through the use of social media platforms. The fields of journalism, sociology, advertising, trade marketing, and public relations all cross in social media marketing, making it an interdisciplinary field.

Advertising is a tool that may be used to both garner and purchase the attention of consumers. The trust of one's target audience cannot be purchased; rather, it must be gained by one's actions. Journalism is more important to social marketing than "blogging or publishing," in my opinion. These are instruments for direct and open or covert connection with the target audience, as opposed to "dumping" on the public what the firm or the writer of the postings deems to be interesting and relevant (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2012).

Tasks that can be solved with the help of SMM:

- PR;
- branding, brand promotion;
- mass non-personal advertising with elements of social significance, in order to ensure advertising coverage;
- trade marketing - holding promotional activities among the social community;
- social and online support for offline marketing activities;
- social support for online marketing activities;
- group dialogue with a group of active consumers or adherents of the company's marketing subject;
- social dialogue with an audience interested in solving problems and discussing tasks, problems and prospects that are close to the subject of marketing;
- social promotion - popularization of the social value of the company's marketing subject and the company itself;
- cross-promotion with non-competitive companies and brands within their common social target group;
- verification of the views and aspirations of the social community with the plans and strategy of the brand and the company;
- increase in traffic to the company's Internet resources. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2012).

Even though it is only one of the non-standard marketing engagement methods available, social media marketing is now the most promising. Large corporations and other industry leaders aren't the only ones interested in social media marketing; small and medium-sized enterprises, that utilize SMM for their own promotion and to build contact with their

customers, are also in demand for the service. SMM does not have an instant impact, but it does produce a long-term benefit, provided that it is used in the appropriate way and with certain targets in mind. The cheap cost of investments in comparison to the potential effect of the activities that are carried out is the primary benefit that it offers (Patruti-Baltes, 2016).

3.3 Modern Marketing Tendencies

Advertising is seen as subordinate to and less effective than promotion in the context of modern marketing, according to the opinions of several industry professionals. The exception to this rule is huge brands, the primary focus of which is the sale of consumer and retail items. Given this context, marketing via the Internet and social media platforms have emerged as crucial components of the contemporary marketing mix (Kalyanam & McIntyre, 2002).

Additionally, one more very important aspect of the impact on the level of an interactive relationship between the company (brand) and its audience should be mentioned, and that is the holding of press conferences, briefings with the participation of a wide range of people, business meetings, and negotiations. All of this may be thought of as an activity with the overarching goal of comprehensively arranging major events to draw the most attention possible from prospective purchasers as well as partners interested in working together. In today's market for the provision of services for holding large-scale events, there is a considerable number of specialized companies with a lengthy history and extensive experience. As a result, industry experts do not quite attribute such businesses to the realm of "traditional marketing," even though such businesses have a significant presence in the market. Although there are those who disagree with the view that conventional marketing is ineffective in the modern day and should not be used in these circumstances, no one believes that it should be entirely ignored. It is simply progressing at a quick rate and has already been achieved, because of its combination with smart marketing, the ability to expand into new products, new media initiatives, and Internet-based endeavours. The modern practice of marketing has grown more quantifiable and more effective, both in terms of the economic results it produces and the way it zeroes in on specific consumers (Wise & Sirohi, 2005).

The marketing of today is vastly distinct from the marketing of even only ten to twenty years ago. This distinction is due to the introduction of a variety of old and new methods that are employed in the construction of marketing strategies that are closely tied to one another. Even though it is primarily focused on the "unobtrusive" appeal of focus to the product, accompanied by the converting of visitors to the site into real buyers, modern marketing is known as inbound marketing. However, inbound marketing still relies on traditional marketing, which is known as outbound marketing. This latter strategy, which is by far the most common and may even be described as rather hostile toward prospective customers, continues to hold sway in the advertising and marketing landscape. The projection of such a ratio can be represented as a pyramidal figure, in which the chosen marketing strategy serves as the basis for all later actions to encourage a specific brand; marketing communication will become a logical extension - a concrete block construction; and the top of the pyramid will be inbound marketing, one of the goals of which will be the final analysis of the results of the entire advertising campaign. In other words, the chosen marketing strategy serves as the foundation for all subsequent actions to promote a particular brand (Jain & Yadav, 2017).

When looked at more closely, it is obvious that contemporary marketing is mostly centred on the Internet and social networks rather than on conventional forms of outbound marketing. If, on the other hand, advertising is seen as an opportunity to disseminate knowledge, then the goal of contemporary inbound marketing is not just to sell a certain item but also to promote a particular way of life. For instance, a marketer will initially pay attention to desires while assessing the values held by today's young. These desires can include the wish to engage in an engaging pastime or career, to dress in a fashionable manner, or to have wireless Internet access everywhere. Considering this, the marketer of today will describe the young man of today by his desire to be autonomous and stylish (Rahnama & Beiki, 2013).

4 Practical Part

4.1 Marriott Hotels

Figure 1, the logo of the Marriott group



Source: Marriott, 2023

The Marriott Company, whose logo is presented in Figure 1, was established in 1927 by J. Willard Marriott, and it has since developed into a multinational hospitality and accommodation conglomerate. Marriott has established itself as a leader in the extremely competitive hospitality business by virtue of its long and illustrious history as well as its broad portfolio of well-known brand names. An academic overview of the Marriott Company is provided in this article. Topics covered include major milestones, an examination of the company's financial performance, a discussion of strategic objectives, and an analysis of the company's current state of affairs.

The first location of what would become Marriott Hotels was a modest nine-seat A&W Root Beer stand that was progressively extended into the hotel industry in the 1950s. Because of the significant expansion and diversification that the firm underwent, it was finally able to create Marriott International as a publicly listed organisation in the year 1993. In 1995, Marriott Corporation made a strategic move by expanding its brand portfolio by purchasing the illustrious Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company. The merger of Marriott Hotels with

Starwood Hotels & Resorts in 2016 was a momentous event for the firm since it resulted in the creation of the largest hotel company in the world and an expansion of its presence on a worldwide scale.

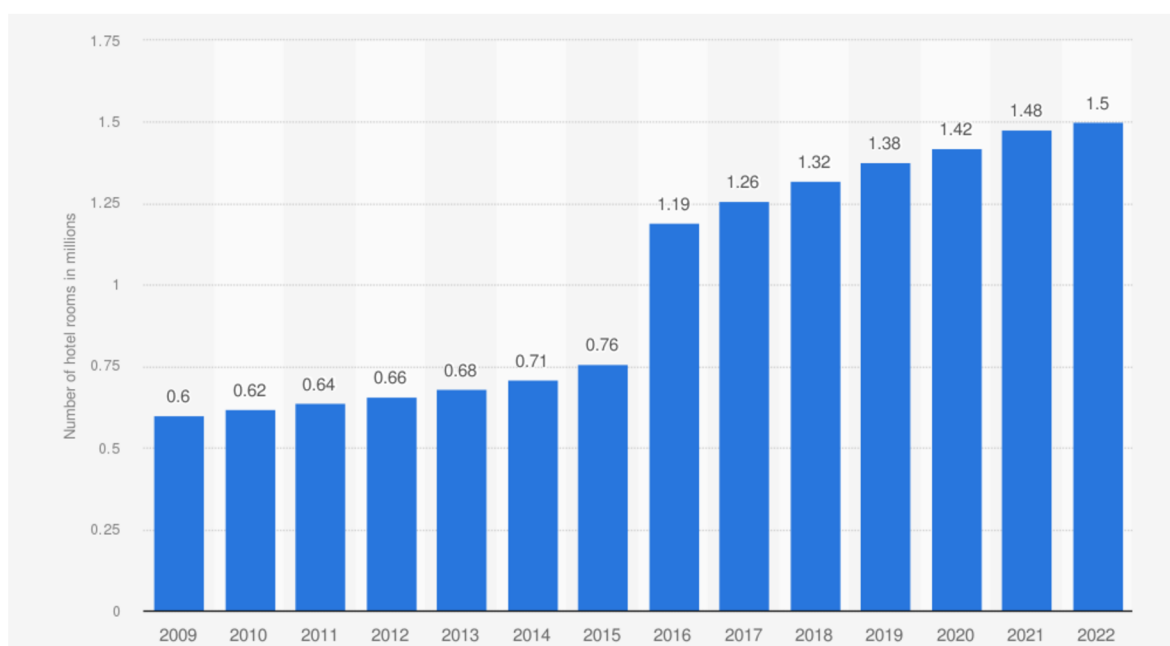
The Marriott Company has an unbroken record of achieving highly successful financial results. The consistent increase in revenue that the firm has seen over the years has been driven by both organic expansion and smart acquisitions of other businesses. The capacity of Marriott to respond effectively to shifting market conditions while simultaneously maximising the value of its brand has been a significant factor in the company's overall financial success. In addition, the Marriott Rewards loyalty programme has been a significant factor in both the retention of existing customers and the growth of the company's income.

Marriott has launched a number of different strategic initiatives in order to keep its advantage over its competitors. The corporation has made efforts to diversify its brand portfolio by launching new brands that cater to a variety of different types of customers. For instance, the St. Regis, which is focused on luxury, and the Moxy, which is focused on lifestyle, have both effectively seized specialised market niches. In addition, in order to meet the rising demand for travel and capitalise on new markets such as China and India, Marriott has been actively expanding its operations across the world. Additionally, the organisation has embraced digital transformation by utilising technology to improve the overall visitor experience and to expedite operational procedures. Not only have innovations like smartphone check-in and keyless access improved the convenience for customers, but they have also increased the effectiveness of business operations.

Due to the depth and breadth of its brand portfolio, Marriott has established itself as the industry leader in a variety of market subsets. The corporation offers a variety of different brands, ranging from those that are more accessible to consumers' financial constraints, such as Courtyard by Marriott, to those that are more exclusive, such as The Ritz-Carlton. Because of this versatility, Marriott is able to serve a wide variety of consumers, which enables the company to capture a variety of market groups and geographic regions. The expansion of Marriott's client base and further fortification of the company's footprint around the globe are both direct results of its acquisition of Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, The Marriott Company, like many other businesses in the hotel industry, has been confronted with severe hurdles. The limits placed on travel across the world, as well as a general drop in demand for lodging, have contributed to a fall in both revenue and occupancy rates. On the other hand, Marriott has promptly responded to these difficulties by developing tactics for decreasing costs and improving safety standards to safeguard the well-being of guests and workers alike. The corporation has also ramped up its digital transformation efforts in order to respond to the shifting customer market. These efforts, which are focused on contactless services and new technology, have been intensified. In spite of the current difficulties, Marriott is in a strong position to bounce back once global tourism begins to gradually pick up again. The sturdy business strategy, extensive network, and varied brand portfolio of the company create a solid platform for the company's further expansion in the future. Marriott is in a position to capitalise on the power of its brand and its presence throughout the world to regain momentum and increase income when economies begin to recover and travel restrictions are lifted. To support the claim about the company's strong stance even despite the recent pandemic of coronavirus, readers are prompted to take a look at the development of the number of available rooms in Marriott hotels worldwide, which was rapidly increasing over the last decade. The chart is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2, the number of Marriott's hotel rooms worldwide



Source: Statista, 2023.

4.2 Multiple-Criteria Decision Analysis

4.2.1 Variants and Criteria

Before proceeding to details and specificities of the calculation and evaluation, it is essential to specify that a total of 10 different social media platforms are evaluated, where every single one of them offers a chance to host a specific pay-per-click campaign. In addition to those 10 different media platforms, 4 different criteria are implemented. Both variants and criteria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1, the dataset for analytics

Variant/Criteria	Rate, USD	Number of users, millions	Main Target Group	Popularity in the EU
Google	2.32	4,300	All	High
Facebook	1.35	2,958	All	High
Instagram	3.56	2,000	Younger Generations	High
Twitter	0.38	556	Writers/Politicians	High
Linkedin	5.26	135	Professionals	High
Pinterest	1.5	445	Artists	Medium
Amazon	0.89	197	All	Medium
Tiktok	1	1,051	Younger Generations	High
Snapchat	2.95	635	Younger Generations	High
Youtube	0.65	2,514	All	High
Nature	min	max	max	max

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

It is essential to start by specifying that online markets such as Amazon are equally considered potential options for Marriott due to their reach and popularity. It is surely possible to say that the selected online media platform represents every imaginable specialization, where the platform focuses on a specific target audience or a group of audiences. In addition to these 10 platforms, where every single one is considered as an option, 4 criteria according to which these platforms are compared are introduced. The first criterion is the most straightforward one as it describes the average cost per click on a given platform – this criterion has a minimization nature due to the fact that all companies are focused on decreasing their expenses. Consequently, the second criterion is also pretty self-

explanatory as it shows the total number of monthly users – the criterion has a maximization nature as companies want to maximize the total number of people, they will be able to reach. The third criterion reflects the main target audience of a given platform, where specialization in all segments is surely preferred – the criterion has a maximization nature since instead of nominal values, specific scores will be assigned during the calculation process. Finally, the last criterion is dedicated to the popularity of the platform in Europe, since it is considered that Marriott will mainly be targeting that region – the criterion does also have a maximization nature since scores will be assigned instead of nominal values.

4.2.2 Weights

Undeniably, given the utilization of 4 different methods and also because of the presence of different criteria that all have different importance, it is downright essential to first start by assigning different weights to the selected criteria. Based on the literature review and the analysis of the current business environment of Marriott, as well as its current strategic vision, the order of criteria presented in Table 2 is suggested.

Table 2, the order of criteria

Rate	Users	Target	Popularity
1	1	2	3

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

It is considered that both the rate for clicks and the total number of monthly active users are regarded as the most important criteria since the minimization of the cost and the maximization of the reach are the most important elements of every marketing strategy. Alternatively, the extent to which the target audience of a platform fits into the context of the business strategy of the company is placed in second place, which is in turn followed by the popularity criterion, which is regarded as the least important one. Finally, based on the order, it is possible to proceed to the identification of weights, which are computed with the help of Saaty's matrix presented in Table 3.

Table 3, Saaty's matrix

	Rate	Users	Target	Popularity	Geomean	Weight
Rate	1	1	3	5	1.97	0.35
Users	1	1	3	5	1.97	0.35
Target	0.33	3	1	3	1.32	0.24
Popularity	0.2	0.2	0.33	1	0.34	0.06
				Sum	5.59	

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

Based on the calculated geomean and proportions of each criterion, it was identified that the two most important criteria will have the same weight of 0.35 or 35%, while the target criterion will have 0.24 or 24%, and the final one will have just 0.06 or 6%. Finally, after finding all criteria's weights, it is possible to proceed to individual methods of MCDA selected for the analysis, starting with the lexicographic method described in the following sub-chapter.

4.2.3 Lexicographic Method

The lexicographic method is the simplest one of the selected varieties of 4 methods. This method is concerned with the principle that once a particular variant is deemed to be worse than other ones according to more important criteria, that variant is excluded from the decision-making process. An obvious downside of this criterion is the fact that it does not really consider the contribution that less important criteria make. Nevertheless, the result of the evaluation according to the method is presented in Table 4.

Table 4, the lexicographic method

Variant/Criteria	Rate, USD	Number of users, millions	Main Target Group	Popularity in the EU
Google	2.32	4,300	All	High
Facebook	1.35	2,958	All	High
Instagram	3.56	2,000	Younger Generations	High
Twitter	0.38	556	Writers/Politicians	High
Linkedin	5.26	135	Professionals	High
Pinterest	1.5	445	Artists	Medium
Amazon	0.89	197	All	Medium
Tiktok	1	1,051	Younger Generations	High
Snapchat	2.95	635	Younger Generations	High
Youtube	0.65	2,514	All	High
Nature	min	max	max	max
Weight	0.35	0.35	0.24	0.06

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

According to the principle of the method, it is essential to first start from the rate criterion, where the best variant according to the rate charged is Twitter. Given that the second criterion has the same weight as the first one, it is essential to continue with the algorithm. For the second criterion, the best option is Google, so now Google and Twitter will both continue the evaluation to the third criterion, where the fate of the most suitable platform will be decided. Google has a specialization for all target groups, which is definitely better than the narrow specialization of Twitter for writers and politicians. Henceforth, it is possible to conclude that according to the simplest and least sophisticated method, the best-fitting platform for Marriott is Google.

4.2.4 Score Method

The score method is more complex than the lexicographic since it involves the implementation of simple calculus. The logic of the technique is pretty simple – variants are evaluated according to every criterion, where the best variants are assigned the highest score of 10, and the worst variants are assigned the lowest score of 1. For nominal values, more preferred options will get the highest score – 10 and then the score will descend from more

preferred options to less preferred ones. In the end, a weighted sum is computed, where the variant with the best score wins. The result of applying the method, as well as calculations, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5, the score method

Variant/Criteria	Rate	Users	Target	Popularity	Score
Google	4	10	10	10	7.89
Facebook	6	9	10	10	8.24
Instagram	2	7	7	10	5.42
Twitter	10	4	9	10	7.65
Linkedin	1	1	9	10	3.43
Pinterest	5	3	8	9	5.25
Amazon	8	2	10	9	6.42
Tiktok	7	6	7	10	6.83
Snapchat	3	5	7	10	5.07
Youtube	9	8	10	10	8.94
Nature	min	max	max	max	
Weight	0.35	0.35	0.24	0.06	

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

All in all, according to the score method, the best variant for Marriott is Youtube, which has a stunning score of 8.94, which is almost equal to 10. Facebook is ranked as the second-best option with Google residing in the third place. The absolute worst alternative for Marriott is Linkedin, which has a score of just 3.43. In the next sub-chapter, the order method is presented.

4.2.5 Order Method

The order method has a relatively similar algorithm to the previously discussed technique, where instead of scores, ranks are assigned following the same logic – the best variant according to given criteria gets the rank of one, and the sequence continues from the best to the worst, where the worst variant will be given the rank of 10. The result of the implementation of the method is presented in Table 6.

Table 6, the order method

Variant/Criteria	Rate	Users	Target	Popularity	Order
Google	7	1	1	1	3.11
Facebook	5	2	1	1	2.76
Instagram	9	4	4	1	5.58
Twitter	1	7	2	1	3.35
Linkedin	10	10	2	1	7.57
Pinterest	6	8	3	2	5.75
Amazon	3	9	1	2	4.58
Tiktok	4	5	4	1	4.17
Snapchat	8	6	4	1	5.93
Youtube	2	3	1	1	2.06
Nature	min	max	max	max	
Weight	0.35	0.35	0.24	0.06	

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

Both methods are quite similar in terms of the eventual result they yield – according to the order method, the best platform for hosting a pay-per-click campaign for Marriott is Youtube, which is once again followed by Facebook and only then by Google. In fact, the algorithm behind two lately used methods is quite similar even despite the reversed calculation. Nevertheless, the final method is expected to yield the most accurate result as the simple additive algorithm has a more solid mathematical foundation than the other three implemented techniques.

4.2.6 Simple Additive Method

The simple additive method or SAW is a method that has two different stages – the first stage involves the transformation of all criteria into the same nature (either to minimization or to maximization), and the normalization, where utilities are calculated. After calculating utilities, global utilities are calculated, which are found according to the same logic used before – the weighted sum of all utilities, or rows. First, it is essential to transform the criterion of rate from minimization to maximization, which will be done by finding the maximum and then subtracting all cells from the column from the maximum. By doing so, the nature of the criterion will change as it will indicate not the cost that is being spent by the company but the amount that is being saved once a particular alternative is accepted.

Table 7 presents the dataset after the normalization procedure, as well as calculated H and D, which will be used for the calculation of the final table and finding utilities.

Table 7, the SAW table after the transformation

Variant/Criteria	Saving	Users	Target	Popularity
Google	2.94	4,300	3	1
Facebook	3.91	2,958	3	1
Instagram	1.7	2,000	0	1
Twitter	4.88	556	2	1
Linkedin	0	135	2	1
Pinterest	3.76	445	1	0
Amazon	4.37	197	3	0
Tiktok	4.26	1,051	0	1
Snapchat	2.31	635	0	1
Youtube	4.61	2,514	3	1
Nature	max	max	max	max
Weight	0.35	0.35	0.24	0.06
H	4.88	4300	3	1
D	0	134.5	0	0

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

Finally, after performing the step and finding all maxima (denoted as H) and minima (denoted as D), it is possible to perform the last step where utilities will be found, and weighted sums with global utilities will also be calculated. The result of the final calculation is presented in Table 8.

Table 8, the SAW table after the normalization

Variant/Criteria	Saving	Users	Target	Popularity	Global Utility	Rank
Google	0.60	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.86	1
Facebook	0.80	0.68	1.00	1.00	0.82	3
Instagram	0.35	0.45	0.00	1.00	0.34	8
Twitter	1.00	0.10	0.67	1.00	0.61	4
Linkedin	0.00	0.00	0.67	1.00	0.22	10
Pinterest	0.77	0.07	0.33	0.00	0.38	7
Amazon	0.90	0.02	1.00	0.00	0.56	5
Tiktok	0.87	0.22	0.00	1.00	0.45	6
Snapchat	0.47	0.12	0.00	1.00	0.27	9
Youtube	0.94	0.57	1.00	1.00	0.83	2
Weight	0.35	0.35	0.24	0.06		

Source: own processing based on Business of Apps, 2023

Finally, it is possible to come up with the ultimate result of the SAW algorithm – the best possible alternative for hosting a pay-per-click campaign for Marriott is Google, which is then followed by Youtube, and Facebook residing in the third place. All in all, it is finally possible to continue the PESTEL analysis and the evaluation of the proposed alternative with the help of SWOT.

4.3 PESTEL

For the PESTEL analysis, the regional level, or the level of the European Union is considered for Marriott. In addition to the identification of factors influencing the company, their nature is also identified, where the green colour in the table indicates a more positive effect, the blue colour indicates a neutral effect (both negative and positive aspects) and the orange colour indicates a negative effect on the company. The overview of the PESTEL analysis for the regional level (the EU) is presented in Table 9.

Table 9, PESTEL analysis

<i>P</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>L</i>
Political climate	Exchange Rates	Changing preferences	Automation	Sustainability imperative	GDPR
	Inflation	Strikes	Digital Economies		Employment Rules
			Rental Startups		

Source: own research

Based on the result of the PESTEL analysis, it is definitely possible to conclude that the company today faces a lot of serious threats arising from different factors from the macro-environment, where the overwhelming majority of those factors are affecting the company in a negative way in the EU on a daily basis. Nevertheless, it is essential to continue with the SWOT analysis in the final chapter of the analytical part of the thesis.

4.4 SWOT

The framework of the SWOT analysis is composed of internal and external components, where weaknesses and strengths are the internal ones, while threats and opportunities are the external ones. However, it is first vital to specify what is being evaluated and what is the ultimate piece of advice made to Marriott. Based on the empirical analysis and evaluation of variants, it is suggested to focus on both Google and Youtube as the main foundation for pay-per-click campaigns since both platforms will offer the company a competitive advantage and an effective way to increase its brand awareness. Henceforth, the evaluated phenomenon is a campaign that could be launched by Marriott in the future, when the company will explicitly focus on designing adverts and launching them on Google and Youtube. The complete overview of the SWOT analysis is presented in Table 10.

Table 10, SWOT analysis

	Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Internal</i>	Increased awareness	Huge expenses
	Foundation for future campaigns	Need for hiring additional staff
<i>External</i>	New EU regulations	Usage of viral marketing
	Lower interest in tourism	Cooperation with other brands
	Drop in purchasing power	
	Threats	Opportunities

Source: own research

In fact, it is possible to say that the proposed campaign is as beneficial for the company as risky, but it is still believed that the ultimate result for the company will be positive since it will create room for future innovations and usage of more advanced types of marketing, such as the buzz marketing or the viral marketing.

5 Results and Discussion

Before proceeding to the ultimate answer about the best platform for hosting a pay-per-click campaign and about the proposed strategy as a whole, it is essential to first recall what were the results of the analytical part of the bachelor thesis. In the practical part, different platforms that could potentially host a pay-per-click campaign for Marriott were evaluated. According to the specified set of criteria, it was identified that the best platform according to the lexicographic method is Google; the best platform, according to the score and order methods is Youtube, and the best platform according to the simple additive method, is Google. In the PESTEL analysis, it was identified that the current macro-environment is rather an adversary for the company since the overwhelming majority of identified factors influence the company in a negative way.

Yet, despite the negative tone of the previous paragraph, it is still logical to suggest that aiming for a new digital marketing campaign that would involve heavy use of the pay-per-click is expected to yield good results for the company in terms of the reach and also in terms of achieving better brand awareness, especially among representants of younger generations, who just start to travel on their own. Based on the evaluation of different criteria, it is identified that it would be better for Marriott to focus on 2 platforms and use them in tandem rather than just going for one. Those two platforms are Youtube and Google, which got the highest score for the majority of techniques used. By focusing on Youtube and Google simultaneously, Marriott will be able to significantly increase its presence online since those two platforms today form the basis of digital habits of ordinary people, who tend to always rely on those two helping friends belonging to Alphabet corporation. Similar findings, where Google and Youtube are also evaluated so high are made by Sawicki (2016), Sasmita (2015) and Yasmin et al. (2015).

For the final recommendation to the company's upper management, it is suggested to significantly improve the operations of the division dedicated to digital marketing and marketing as a whole since modern technologies allow companies to use astonishingly productive and effective techniques of marketing, such as viral marketing, buzz marketing

and even guerrilla marketing, which, to some extent, can be used in the online world and lead to incredibly good results in terms of conversion and brand awareness.

6 Conclusion

The bachelor thesis was focused on the evaluation of different pay-per-click alternatives, notably the packages offered by the world's most popular and widely used platforms on the Internet. In addition to the evaluation, the extent to which a platform or a number of platforms could fit in Marriott Group's marketing strategy was evaluated, where it was suggested that the giant specializing in the hospitality industry should focus on getting the most from the omnichannel that the Internet offers transnational companies like Marriott. Ultimately, it is recommended that Marriott, given its complicated situation and many adverse factors putting pressure on the company, should consider the idea of hosting new marketing campaigns on two platforms that are expected to bring the biggest competitive advantage to the company.

The best platforms for such objectives are Youtube and Google, which had the highest score according to multiple methods of multiple-criteria decision analysis. Those platforms offer the best combination of cost and benefit, so it is suggested that Marriott should meticulously prepare their new marketing campaigns and put a large emphasis on cooperating with Alphabet corporation in their biggest products – Youtube and Google.

In the end, it is suggested that Marriott should put a larger emphasis on the digital marketing concept as a whole due to the fact that younger generations rely heavily not on references or physical evidence when making a purchase or no purchase decisions, but they rely heavily on the extent to which a particular company is known on the Internet, and also the way in which a given company positions itself on their favourite social media platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc. Henceforth, potential marketing campaigns Marriott should not end and finish on Google and Youtube – once the business environment will allow the company to increase the volume of their expenses, the company should focus on targeting all platforms simultaneously, especially putting a stronger emphasis on younger generations who will soon become independent consumers.

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8.3 List of Abbreviations

PESTEL	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
MCDA	Multiple-criteria decision analysis
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
PR	Public Relations
SAW	Simple Additive Method
EU	European Union