SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT BY

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Bringing tools in Finnish football

General idea of this report is to create

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

JALKAPALLO PALVELUT CONDUCTS

researches to identify successful social media practices

to help football clubs to engage their communities in clubs' activities. For this purpose, a series of researches are being conducted with Facebook pages of 12 Veikkausliiga football clubs. Also, Jalkapallo Palvelut aims to promote its services of Research and Development, Social Media Promotion, and general expertise in the field of Football Management to potential clients.

CASE: FC LAHTI FACEBOOK PAGE

FAN ENGAGEMENT

Football club Lahti (FC Lahti) is the club with most partner-clubs in Finland.

General facts:

- FC Lahti Facebook page is liked by 10,371 and followed by 10,404 Facebook users. (April 2020)

- 581 posts has been published during the period of 01.04.2019 - 01.04.2020.

- 10% of those posts received over 159 likes and a little less than 5% attracted 20 or more comments.

Executive Summary

One of the main benefits of this reports is the identification of main subcategories of posts that offered FC Lahti the highest engagements in the forms of likes, comments, shares, and views. Each category was measured in terms of like-efficiency coefficients, with the following sequence appearing: Informative: 16,67%, News category: 13,33%, Games: 10,38%, Commercial: 2,5%. Clearly, Informative content could offer FC Lahti more highly-liked posts in the coming seasons. While the average importance of Informative content is evadable, the extreme cases with the highest numbers of likes illustrated the absolute dominance of the main team's victorious results.

MAIN TEAM VICTORIES

attract most of likes. 3 out of 5 most-liked posts were about FC Lahti main team winning games. 17 posts from 10% of most-liked posts simply shared the Full Time Score. As such, FC Lahti could have struggled if the main team did not have a good season. Potential solution? - Shift focus of audience towards other content.

HOW TO SHIFT THE FOCUS?

- 30 posts from News category of different kind were included into 10% of most-liked posts.
   - 10 of those News posts were about Transfer News.
- 3 most-commented posts were club's lotteries
- 2 most-viewed posts were valuable interviews + check nine Christmas calendar videos.

CHOOSE SLOW, CREATE FAST

While some posts might bring FC Lahti less likes, like 'Sponsored', those should not be spent time on. Others, like 'Transfers', should be the top priority when creating content because they can include sponsors, while generating high engagements. Choosing where to invest the energy can be found from this report.

SOCIAL MEDIA = MOMENTS

FC Lahti efficiently used Christmas calendar days for posting impressive & nostalgic video content. Overall, 9 out of 24 posts attracted attention of over 1K views per post. The number of views illustrate that this is the type of content audience wants to watch more. Read Conclusions section to get more ideas.

Introduction

Prior to this report, we had a discussion with the CEO of FC Lahti, Juho-Matti Heikari. Within the discussion, he mentioned that the main team's performance had a significant influence on his work. Generally speaking, this report proved his words, as victories appeared to be the most engaging factor for FC Lahti's Facebook community to like posts. Still, this research demonstrated the power of other tools (e.g. lotteries, interviews, heritage, etc.) on receiving high engagements in the form of comments, shares, and views. Going a little ahead, the hope to break the pattern of 'victories brings the most likes' might lay the most viewed videos. Find below the research questions for this report:

- R1: What are the main categories of posts?
- R2: What are the most popular posts?
- R3: Which posts is it possible to template?

This report is divided in five sections, including this one. The professional reader might be interested to take a look at the next part, called 'how the research has been conducted?', which represents Methodology section. The 'Results' section aims to answer the research questions, therefore, it might not be that much interesting, too. Whilst, the 'Juicy Content' section introduces the reader to practical examples of the results found, it is also relatively boring. The only part that would be interesting to have a look for a regular reader might be 'Conclusions'. This last part represents the squeeze of ideas that came up based on results and most expressive examples from this report.

How the research has been conducted?

This part aims to share how Jalkapallo Palvelut analysed the data from FC Lahti's Facebook page.

The data analysed in this research included 581 posts from FC Lahti Facebook page within the period of 01.04.2019-01.04.2020. Each of these posts were screenshotted and saved in the folder with research question 1 data. There has been formed 4 categories, including News (225 posts), Games (212), Commercial (120), Informative Data (24). Each of these categories included several sub-categories. News included five sub-categories of Club News (145), Trends (32), Interviews (22), Transfers (21), and Birthday (5 posts). Games included six sub-categories, including Game Advertisements (51), Before-Game Reports (36), Line-Ups (36), Full Time Scores (33), Game Highlights (28), and After-Game Reports (28). Commercial category included Sponsors (67), Club Promotions (40), and Match Programme (13). Finally, Informative Data category consisted of Statistics (13), Heritage (7), and Infographics (4).

The most engaging posts included posts that had over 159 likes and / or 20 comments. The reason for choosing this precise number of likes, as the minimum unit, was that precisely 10% of all posts from FC Lahti Facebook page had over 159 posts. As for the posts with the high number of comments, the minimum unit included posts with 20 comments. Altogether, 59 posts with the lower limit of 159 likes and 25 posts with at least 20 comments have been included in the final analysis.

In addition to likes and comments, this report included 14 posts with at least 10 shares and 23 posts with videos that reached over 900 views. The posts with the high number of shares was aimed to show the exposure of FC Lahti's content to outside audiences, while the number of views showed the most exciting video content for the FC Lahti Facebook community. The reason for choosing 10 shares and 900 views, as the minimum unit, for those categories was to create a certain sample of successful examples. Those samples were created artificially for the purposes of this report only.

Answering the Research Question 3, there has been artificially created three categories. First one included posts with six most successful templates that FC Lahti used throughout the year. The second consisted of 21 post that could be potentially templated in the future. Finally, the last category included 118 posts of templates that FC Lahti published during the year. The last category consisted of six sub-categories, including Birthday Template (2 posts), Game Promotion Template (27), Match Programme Template (13), Line-Ups Template (37), Statistics Template (13), Veikkaus Line-Up Template (26). FC Lahti also created three different types of templates for Line-Ups Templates: Regular Season (27 posts), Friendly Games (4), Line-Up 2020 (6).

Results

This part aims to answer the research questions.
It's boring but valuable.

Four Main Categories of Posts

|	
News	38,73%
Games	36,49%
Commercial	20,65%
Informative Data	4,13%

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All for Football
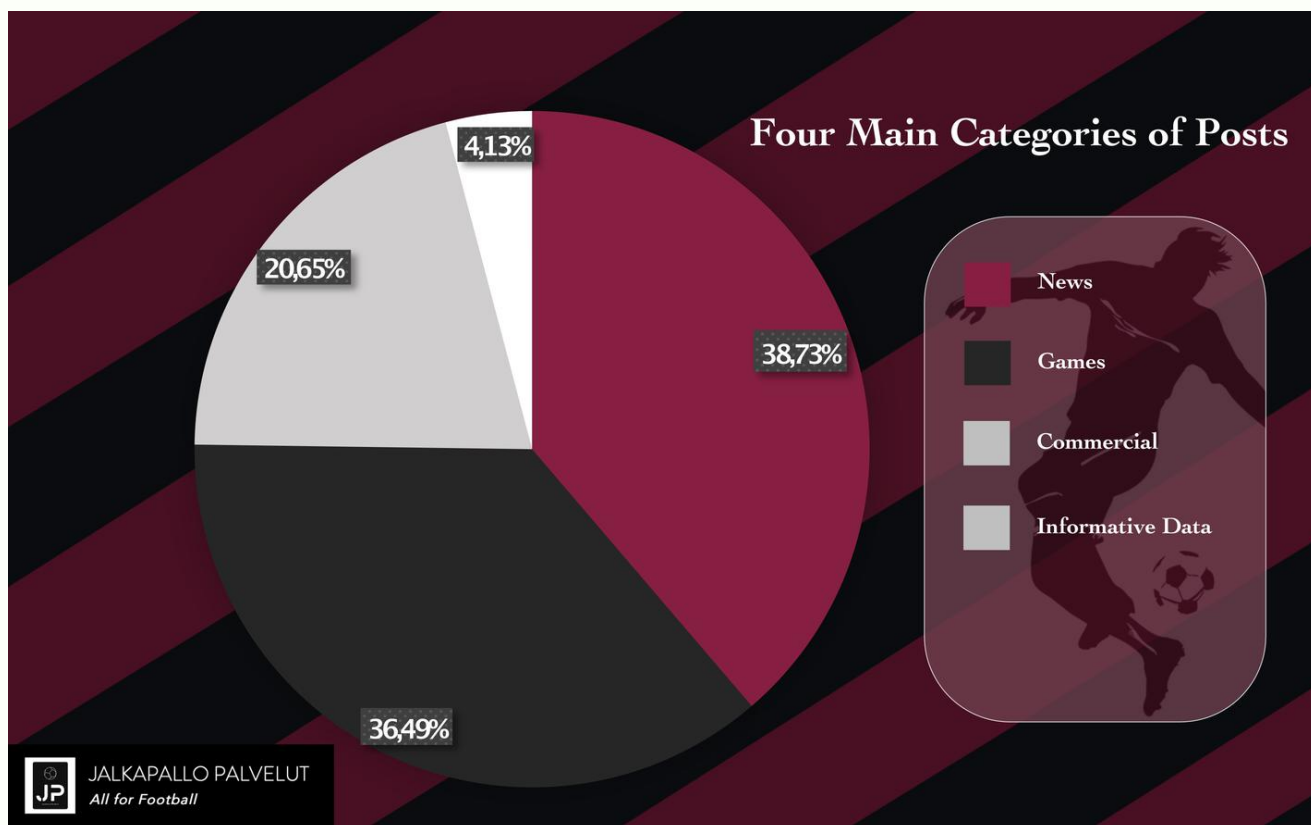
Pie Chart 1: Main categories of posts FC Lahti produced throughout the year

There have been 581 posts analysed for the purpose of this report. Based on the content of those, four main artificially-created categories of posts has been established. The pie Chart 1 illustrates the share of each category for the total number of posts. Here are the numbers of posts that each category included: News (225 posts), Games (212 posts), Commercial (120 posts), and Informative Data (24 posts).

Artificial Statistics

Infographics on 10% of Most Liked Posts of FC Lahti
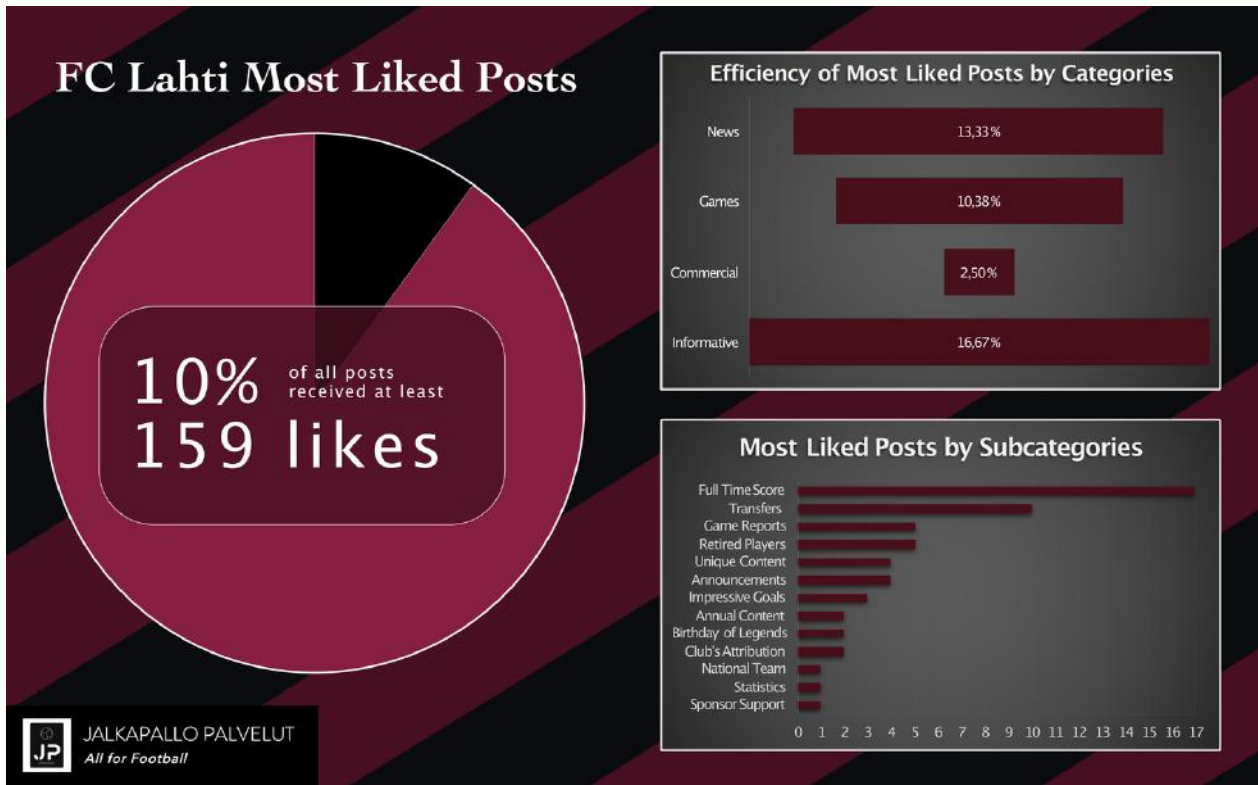
10% of all posts reached at least 159 likes. Among those 10% of posts, there were 30 posts from News category (10 posts about transfers, 5 posts about retired players, 4 posts with unique content, 4 announcements, 3 videos with impressive goals, and 2 posts with annual content). In addition, there are 22 posts related to games category (mostly victories) and 7 posts with other type of content (2 posts with birthdays of club's legends, 1 about national team, and 1 with statistics of retired player, as well as 2 posts with commercial content linked with statistics and 1 sponsor post). In terms of efficiency, four main categories can be divided in the following way: News category: 13,33%, Games: 10,38%, Commercial: 2,5%, Informative: 16,67% (percentage counted with the formula: posts with at least 159 likes divided by the total number of posts within this category and multiplied by 100, e.g. News Category (13,33%) = (30/225) * 100).

Full Time Scores from victories and last-second-draw games is ranked top one subcategory in terms of the number of posts with the phenomenal engagement — 17 posts! This proves the importance of main team's results for FC Lahti Facebook community. Moreover, posts from this subcategory generally reach higher than average post within 10% of most liked posts (the average number of likes in this category equals to 382 likes). It is also interesting that the number of likes per post was decreasing since the start of the season towards the end of it. Important to mention, the posts on victories of friendly games receive the smallest numbers of likes within this subcategory but still high enough to be in top 10% of most liked posts.

Results: Likes

4 categories. 17 subcategories. 581 posts.

While Club News subcategory takes two thirds of all posts within this category, it is not the most efficient in terms of likes. Listing these categories in terms of 'like efficiency', the following order would be applied: Transfers (10 posts with more 159 likes out of 21 OR 10/21), Club News (19/154), Trends (3/32), Interviews (1/22, other posts ranging from 11 to 91 likes), Birthday (0/5, posts ranging from 98 to 126 likes).
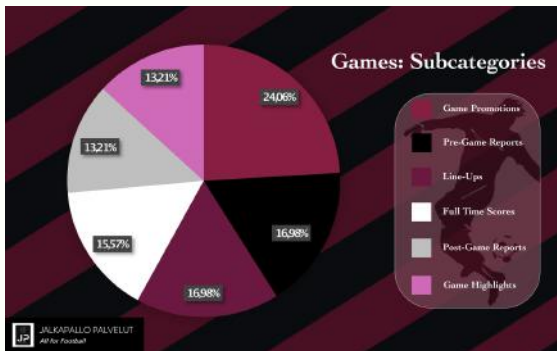
While every fifth post in FC Lahti Facebook page belongs to Commercial category, it is far from being the most engaging category. The three subcategories included Sponsors (1/67, other posts ranging from 2 to 113 likes), Club Attribution Sales (2/40, other posts ranging from 5 to 99 likes), Match Programme (0/13, other posts ranging from 25 to 88 likes).
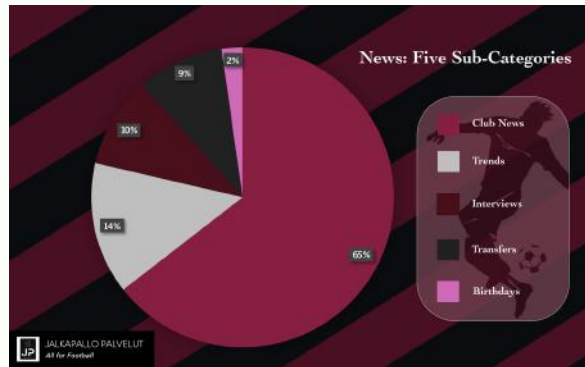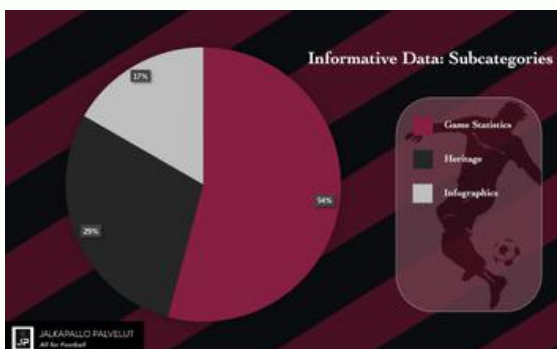
This pie chart shows relatively equal division of posts between subcategories. It is, however, different when looking at the engagement rates. There were only 2 categories: 'Full Time Scores' (17/33) and 'Post-Game Reports' (5/28) that included posts with over 159 likes. None of the rest four subcategories had posts with high number of likes: Game Promotions (posts ranging from 6 to 106 likes), Pre-Game Reports (posts ranging from 14 to 63 likes), Line-Ups (posts ranging from 25 to 101 likes), Video Highlights (posts ranging from 5 to 99 likes).
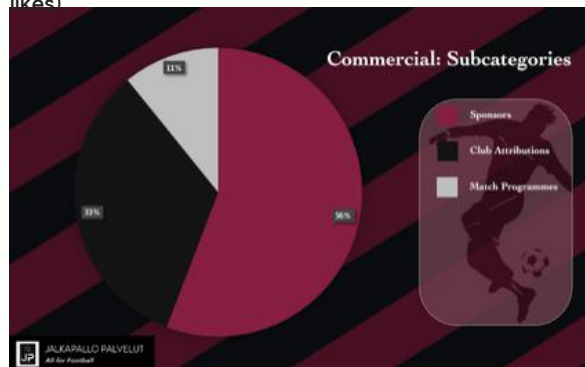
Informative Data category had the smallest share in FC Lahti Facebook page. While being the smallest, the content was also dropped into three subcategories: Game Statistics (0/13, posts ranging from 16 to 48); Heritage (3/7, other posts received 48, 81, 126, and 148 likes), Infographics (1/4, other posts received 56, 97, and 142 likes).

Results: Comments

... and a little note on Shares and Views.
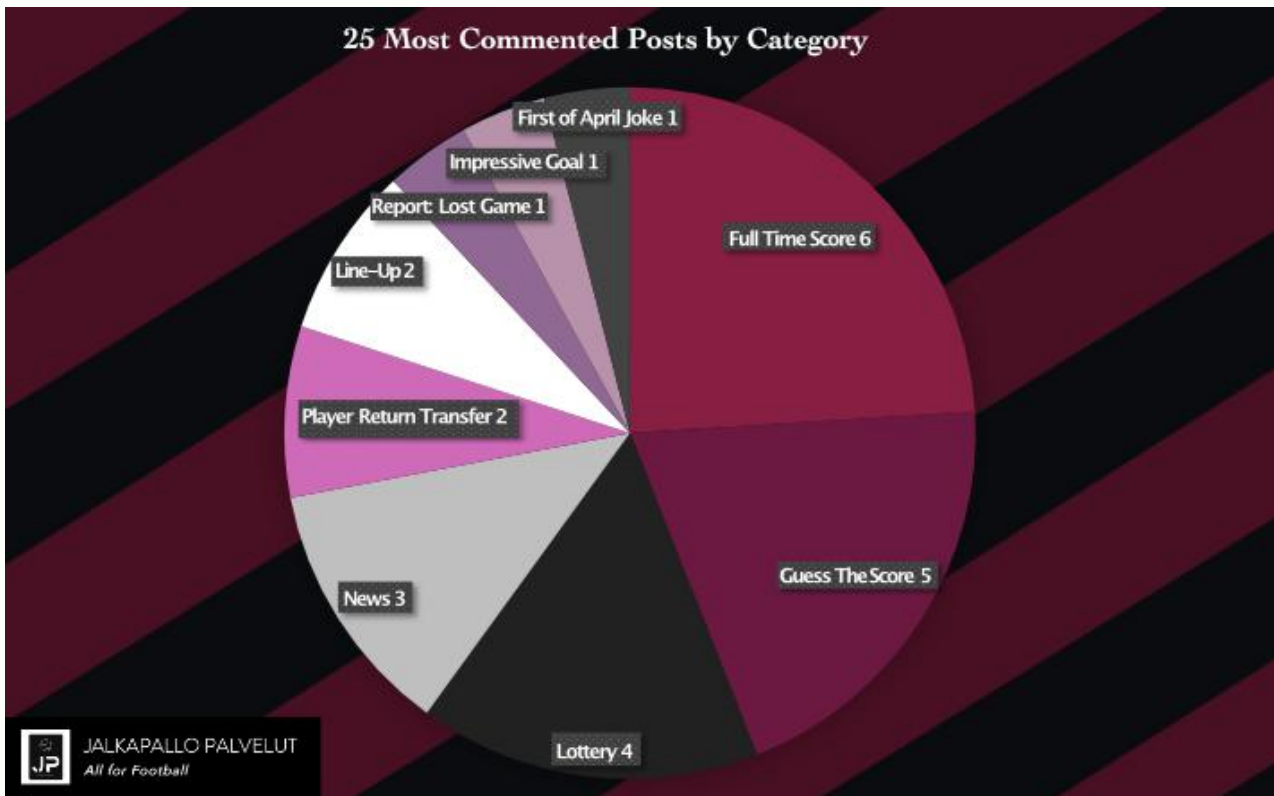
In addition to likes, 25 posts with over 20 comments has been analyzed. The pie chart illustrates those posts combined in categories based on content. 'Full Time Score' again became the most engaging category, with six posts reaching over 20 comments. Also, five posts with Guess the Score content, which belongs to Game Promotions subcategory, received over 20 comments. Most important, however, became Lottery category. This one category received phenomenal engagement rates, with three out of four posts being top commented among all posts in FC Lahti Facebook page.

In terms of shares, there were only 14 posts found with 10 or more shares by Facebook users. From those 14 highly shared posts, 10 were also among highly liked and / or highly commented posts. What is also remarkable, there were only 2 posts from all posts of FC Lahti that reached the limit of 20 shares. As the highly shared posts were mostly unique (content-wise), there is no need to create a separate pie chart with subcategories.

It is probably the most interesting to see how different were the tastes of audience in terms of views. To be mentioned here, some videos hide the number of views. However, among those videos that offer the number of views, it was possible to choose 23 videos with over 900 views. As the content of those video is highly versetile, there was not much sense to "platonize" additional categories. The only important point that worth defining here is that 9 out of 23 highly-viewed videos belonged to Christmas Calendar.

Juicy Content: Likes

The most-liked posts posts varied from 603 and 701 likes

While the official Facebook page of FC Lahti has over 10K followers, there were only 5 posts that collected over 600 likes. It is worth saying that the most liked post in the page received 701 likes, which is roughly 7% of all Facebook audience FC Lahti possesses. Also, those 5 top liked posts belong to only 2 subcategories: 'Full Time Scores' (#1, #2, #5) and 'Club News: Retired Players' (#3, #4).

Juicy Content

More examples of highly-liked posts

In addition to the top 5 most liked posts, which belonged to two subcategories, there has been found 11 other subcategories of posts that reached the 10% of most liked posts. Here are the most descriptive examples of those subcategories:

Juicy Content

and a little more of examples...

The interviews subcategory is the special one. The general interview attracts roughtly 40 likes, while the one with retiring player managed to collect significantly more. This post from the Interview subcategory serves the lower limit of likes for the top 10% of most liked posts in FC Lahti Facebook page.

Juicy Comments

Comments! - It's all about Audience Engagement

While 'Full Time Score' and 'Guess the Score' posts together bring up almost 50% of all most commented posts (11 out of 25 posts), those do not offer any exceptional engagements. That is not a surprise, as the most commented posts are the one where FC Lahti engages its Facebook community to write a comment.
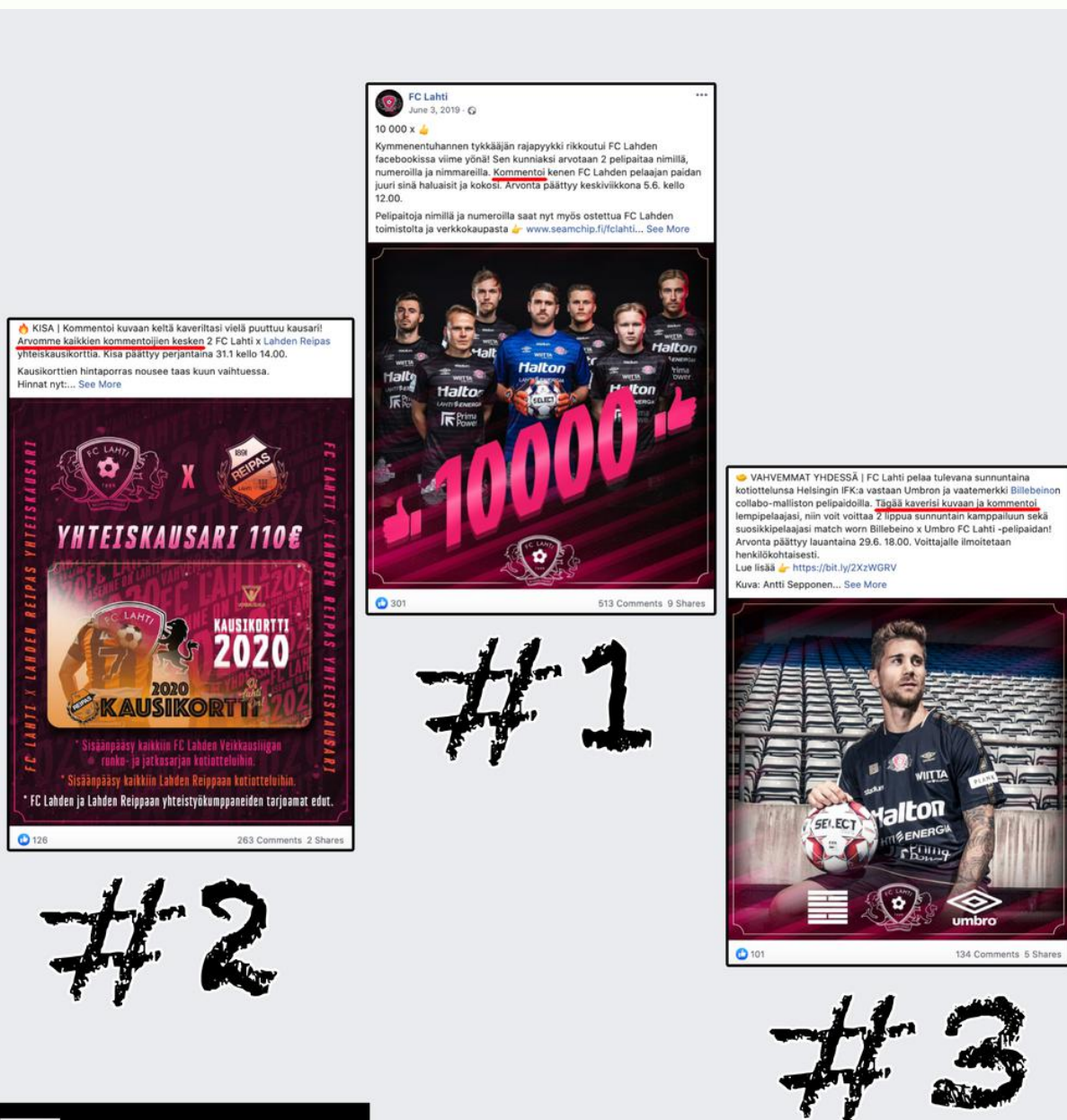
Not so Juicy Shares

The weak side of FC Lahti Facebook Page.

As for shares, there were found only 14 posts with 10 and more shares. Moreover, the absolute majority of those (10 out of 14 posts) is already presented within most liked or commented posts. It is, however, valuable to identify two most shared posts and four posts that received high number of shares but did not bring high number of likes or comments.

Juicy Content: Views

"If there was hope, it must lie in the Views"

Finally, when it comes to views, that's where victories and main team results play small part! It should be mentioned that YouTube content of FC Lahti has not been analysed within this research. As such, the main team results might still play the highest role when comparing YouTube game highlights and Facebook videos. However, within the Facebook game highlights have no power. As such, let's present top 4 videos in FC Lahti's Facebook page:

Juicy Content: Views

Christmas Calendar: the audience votes with views

It is separately important to present the 9 Christmas Calendar video posts, each of which attracted at least 900 views. As one of the hypotheses prior to this research was that Christmas Calendar's might be the waste of good content (due to media cluster in this period of the year), these results looked impressive!

Juicy Templates

TOP 5 Templates FC Lahti Used in 2019.

Finally, let's answer the Research Question 3. This would imply defining the templates that are used by FC Lahti already and bring high engagement in the forms of likes, comments, shares, or views. Those templates include: Guess the Score, Line-Ups 2019, Player Retire, Slämäri Sponsored Video Interviews, Player Transfer Template.

Conclusions

Probably the only interesting part of the whole report.

As FC Lahti aims to grow and develop its Facebook page, this report might be helpful to understand what posts attract the highest attention of FC Lahti Facebook community. Moreover, it is possible to understand what categories engage followers most and mix them together **to see what combinations can work best**. For instance, time spent on Transfer News posts could be longer in terms of production than for the simple interview post, as the chance for receiving an exceptional engagement is higher.

In terms of efficiency, **Informative Data content seems to offer higher chance of receiving likes**. The best combinations included: Birthday + Club's Legend; Statistical Data + Retiring Player; National Team + Debut Goal by Club's Player. The value of the right time momentum, as well as media cluster, should be taken into consideration when posting. Same time, keeping the share of informative data content low might be helpful for reaching the high efficiency in terms of posts' engagements. **The best feature of informative data content is usually that it can always be connected with other categories** to create the combination that has the high chance of receiving many engagements to the club's page.

While **Commercial category** takes roughly 20% of all posts, it might be the **most useless for engagement**. When categorizing posts, the main focus/message of each post is being chosen. As it is not difficult to shift the main focus of the message, it could be wise to **integrate the commercial content into News, Games, or Infographics categories**. Decreasing the share of Commercial content might offer higher engagement rates for the same posts. The high engagement for those posts is important from the perspective of **emotional connection of audience** towards partners' brands.

As for the number of comments, it felt like FC Lahti was offering way **too many engagements** in the forms of: **"Lottery", "Contest", "comment and win", "tag a friend, receive a chance"**... The audience seemed to lose their **receptivity** towards those activities. This can be seen from the amount of comments under those artificially-engaging posts towards the end of the season. The accent/focus might be shifted from engaging audience to comment towards offering them the forum for discussions, in the forms of 'polls', for example. **Empowering the Facebook community** might be the strongest engaging elements that will bring the significant number of comments.

Hard to make conclusions based on shares, as the number of highly shared posts was only 14. However, it is possible to notice that the **main values** creating a great deal of shares is the importance of being **unique, valuable, and uniting**. Both of the most shared posts included all those three values. Also, those posts that were highly shared but not highly liked or commented demonstrated some elements of uniqueness (e.g. Beer Varoitus), high value (e.g. going forward in the Finnish Cup) or being united (e.g. Vahvemmat Yhdessä slogan). This conclusion is based on the general observation and might require further analysis.

Conclusions

No engagements but Yes general interest.

Two most viewed videos in FC Lahti Facebook Page might give an idea of what audience really want to see more. While the victories of main team clearly offers the highest engagement rates in terms of likes, the Facebook audience's general interest is versatile. Users' attention is attracted by lotteries, **nostalgic videos combined with current trends**, or other valuable, unique, and / or uniting content. The Christmas calendar demonstrated that users are interested **to be reminded about glorious moments from the past**.

Moreover, FC Lahti might receive high engagements showing those who build **identity of the club**: junior teams' victories, farm club's victories, women's team, veterans, as well as Kortelli liiga members and their victories. Remembering that the main source of sponsorship usually comes from elderly groups of fans, it is necessary to create something for them: own team/ league/ events, etc. From this perspective, supporting Kortelli liiga is the good 'groundwork' for building financially stable future. Also, lacking the main team's victories, hobby and amateur club's teams come to help in shifting attention from negative results towards inside club's small victories. **Overall, 5 posts with 200 likes is better than 1 post with 500 likes.** While these are not practical implications but only ideas, it is important to remember that those might be wrong and not helpful. The point of this report was to show the ways FC Lahti engages the audience to its Facebook page, not to make conclusions on how to utilize it.

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