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Effective Lead Generation Strategy to Increase Customer Base
Capstone Project Summary

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Tőkeportál.hu is the first Hungarian website, where equity-based financing is available to retail and institutional investors as well. Tőkeportál operates both as a facilitator between entrepreneur and investor, it also provides further services in order to help entrepreneurs launch a successful crowdfunding campaign and to have a successful company later on.

The aim of this project is to identify high potential channels that serve to effectively approach Start-ups, individual and business level investors as well, and to draw them to Tőkeportál, in order to register on the Tokeportal.hu platform.

Throughout the project, I searched and found several possibilities through which more potential crowdfund users can be drawn to Tokeportal.hu. Through customer profile research, competition analysis, social media marketing channel analysis and search engine optimization I present several channels which I believe have high potential of lead generation both short- and long-term.

By researching what customers are looking for in a crowdfunding platform, I have identified the reason behind the low lead number that Tőkeportál faces. The problem – based on the results that I got from said analysis – is not the fact that people are unaware of crowdfunding as a funding type in general, as I have initially hypothesized. The problem is that people are not familiar with Tőkeportál, and the services that it provides. Because of this, several approaches can be taken to increase brand awareness of the company, both through direct marketing and through changing the kind of services that are highlighted as Tőkeportál's main "products". There is a difference between Tőkeportál and other international crowdfunding platform, one that Tőkeportál should develop, which is not only being a facilitator between the two sides but providing mentoring and further services to entrepreneurs. This message needs to be pushed forward to differentiate from competitors and to show to Hungarian entrepreneurs that Tőkeportál offers the services that they are looking for.

There needs to be a restructuring in the way Tőkeportál approaches potential customers. Furthermore, we need to take a look at how the competition acquires its customers who start a crowdfunding campaign at their platform. For example, young crowdfunding platforms allocate more than 30% of their revenue to marketing expenses. I advise to increase marketing expenses, but there is also a low-cost opportunity of marketing through social media where there is a large audience that can be converted to entrepreneurs who launch their campaign on Tokeportal.hu. I have located for groups on social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) where people have done one of

the main steps for targeted marketing where they filter themselves from the audience who have no interest in entrepreneurship and the services that Tőkeportál provides. In these four groups (three on Facebook, one on LinkedIn) there is a large audience that consistently shares their business ideas and ask funding questions and help from each other. Activity in these groups - where Tőkeportál shares its content, and their services - have huge potential of lead generation and relatively low costs as there is no huge costs for small adjustments of blogs that are already shared through the website.

I strongly believe that there is huge potential with limited costs in these groups that have not yet been capitalized on. The four social groups (Three Facebook groups and one LinkedIn group) have a total of 40000 members. Despite the fact that there is the possibility of a huge overlap between the groups, there are at least 20000 unique members that are potentially interested in Tőkeportál's services. The costs to access this targeted customer base is close to zero, as regular reshares and posts to these groups are all what is required for them to potentially reach out or visit the platform.

From customer profiling, I concluded that a high percentage of social group members are planning on starting their own start-up in the near future which makes them potential customers of Tőkeportál. They have also confirmed previous findings that they understand the concepts behind, and aware of crowdfunding and most of them are open to using crowdfunding as a funding type for their businesses. A high percentage of the group members are not familiar with Tőkeportál, which reinforces previous findings that there is a great need for marketing efforts to increase.

Partnership with other communities also have huge potential in increasing leads. Startup Maffia is a community where people can share their ideas and problems they face in their businesses. They also organize their own events, in which they first got together in smaller groups where people shared their ideas and help each other or listen to renowned lecturers from the industry. This changed due to the pandemic, as last year these events all had to move to an online place. Startup Maffia currently has around thousand followers and even with this limited number of direct followers, they average around 6000 reach every event. In the autumn they held events where young entrepreneurs came and shared their experiences, where investors shared their own perspective from the other side and there were events where people from the music industry came and talked about hardships during the pandemic and entrepreneur mindset. These events were quite successful, having around 50000 reach with each event. What can be concluded from this, is that

a low interaction does not necessarily mean low reach potential. Because of this, potential of the social groups should not be ignored even in case of them having low interaction numbers on their posts. There is a large potential audience that can be capitalized upon.

Through a survey in which other crowdfunding platforms participated, I have found out that these platforms' main marketing channel is the referral programs they use and the social networks that they build though conducting their business. The referral programs usually are about monetary compensation for the person referring the business to the crowdfunding platform, where in case of a successful campaign, the referring person receives a percentage haircut from the raised amount. The business being referred either faces lower costs of campaign launches after a successful campaign or has discounts for other services that the platform itself provides. This is something that Tőkeportál definitely needs to consider implementing.

For search engine optimization I prepare an in-depth guide on how the site itself can be optimized using keywords and putting them in places that will both be picked up by the search engine algorithm and website visitors. Also, there are several partnerships with other companies that Tőkeportál has established. However, this information is hard to find on the platform and there should be links to said companies' webpages to boost the assigned algorithmic value from the Google Search Engine. The main keywords that are additionally recommended to use for the optimization of the website are the ones that were found to be the most common mentions about what they are looking for in a crowdfunding platform. These are mentoring, social networks and Start-up support.

I also recommend restructuring the content of the website, so that there is immediately more focus on the ranges of services that are being offered for the customers, with listings of previous, successful campaigns. Lastly, the website's speed seems to be inconsistent. Several times when I have visited the webpages, I faced slow and faulty loadings of the pages which was unrelated to my own network connection. This discredits Tőkeportál, it suggests unprofessionalism which is a huge problem when the main aim is to spread brand awareness and build trust among targeted audience.