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**THE ROLE OF MARKETING ACTIONS WHEN NEW MARKETS ARE
BEING SHAPED: A STUDY ON EDIBLE INSECTS IN FINLAND**

Master's Thesis in International Marketing
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Title: The role of marketing actions when new markets are being shaped: a study on edible insects in Finland
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Abstract: <p>The world is constantly changing, and so are different markets. As markets are human-made, one can argue that they also can be shaped with corresponding actions as to when they were constructed. This thesis will investigate the process of shaping a new market, focusing particularly on the field of edible insects in Finland.</p> <p>The purpose of this thesis is to research how marketing actions have helped in shaping the market for edible insects in Finland after it was created. The paper will examine why Finland appears to be a forerunner when it comes to edible insects and how marketing was used to shape the up and coming market. The theoretical part will focus on what a market is and how a marketing strategy aids in the market shaping process and will further dive deeper into the concept of market shaping. The methodological focus lies with edible insects in Finland.</p> <p>Companies can either carefully analyse the market and the direction it is moving in and compile their marketing strategy accordingly, or they can act proactively and create a strategy that will not only take the company forward but also develop the market. After Finland decided to change the interpretation of the Novel Food Regulation by EU, it has since November 2017 been legal to market and sell insects as food in Finland and, partly because of the change in legislation, a new market has taken form. Insects have previously not been a part of Finnish gastronomy, but this might change as the novel market is being shaped. The thesis aims at answering how a new market is shaped after it has been created, what the marketing strategy behind market shaping looks like, and how marketing actions participate in shaping the market. Market making can be considered as one form of market shaping, which is why both phenomena are recognised.</p> <p>The empirical study is conducted with qualitative research methods by interviewing actors in the field. A total of eight interviews supports the theoretical material and together aims at answering the research questions of the thesis. The actors were chosen based on either their activity in producing insect products for customers via their company or because of their extensive experience in the field together with actively being a part of the market. The interview results are first presented and analysed based on the main topics in the interview guide being background, strategy, customers and competition, and then further against the research questions first presented in the introduction. The results will critically be examined based on the theoretical framework. Focus is placed on marketing actions and market shaping actions.</p>
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1 Introduction

Markets are made by humans and can hence be changed and shaped by humans. Without human action, there would be no markets and when companies acknowledge this, they can start shaping the market in which they are active. The thought of markets as permanent and something one must follow is outdated. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) The malleability of markets has previously been researched by various names (see Kindström, Ottoson and Carlborg 2018) and in this study, the concept will be referred to as market shaping.

Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell (2016) define the market as either a physical or virtual space where demand and supply meet. If there is no demand, or no possibility to purchase a product or service due to, for example, no funding or a person being under-aged, there is no market. This view supports the idea by Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) above that the market is composed by people. Markets take form in various ways based on what the market wants or is offered through added value (Kim & Mauborgne 2018)

Marketing actions are tied to the context the company is operating in and might as well change and shift form as time passes. Consequently, a marketing strategy is not to be duplicated and used in other conditions or for another company. (Maclaran, Saren, Stern & Tadajwski 2011) Kotler, Armstrong & Parment (2016) continue that marketing strategies support what is to come with the goal of a growing business. As a result, it might even be preferable for companies to prepare for different fallouts in the future by addressing different possible strategies. The marketing strategy is only a part of the more comprehensive corporate strategy and is more detailed accordingly.

A traditional marketing strategy can, however, be seen as antiquated as it is focused on the given market and written to adapt to the specific market in which the company is active. Yet, if the market is not working for the company and the business is unprofitable a more innovative approach might be beneficial in order to alter the market in the company's favour. That is to say, that the stagnated market as it is, is not preferable. (Nenonen and Storbacka

2018) Marketing actions and strategies, that incorporates a will to shape the market are proactive and focus on changing the environment the company is active in (Kindström et al. 2018). Mele, Pels & Storbacka (2015) continue, that simply by implementing marketing actions a company is still supporting the market to change even if that is not the intention, which is why a less prognostic strategy is preferred.

A market can also be shaped by smaller actors (Baker & Nenonen 2020), and as different actions occurring in the market shapes it, the market should be seen as malleable (Kindström et al. 2018). Even before a market is created, marketing actions are present in order to examine consumers and developing a need (Araujo 2007). New markets are made by creating added value to the consumer by solving a problem or discovering gaps in supply (Kim & Mauborgne 2018).

1.1 Problem discussion

Sustainable development and climate change can no longer be considered simply a trend. For humankind to fix the damaging choices made in the past, we need to work together both on a global level and also as individuals. One way for individuals to reduce their carbon footprint is to limit the amount of meat they consume and adopt a vegetarian diet. Meat counts for a good source of protein in the human diet but is sustainably indefensible when mass-produced. Hence, other forms of ensuring satisfactory level of protein through diet are being examined. As stated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO 2013), the population is predicted to rise to 9 billion within the next 30 years and hence, new solutions to feed everyone are required. Edible insects are presented as one alternative to a modern meat-based diet as insects contain protein and amino acids that humans require, but use less feed than cattle, sheep, pigs and chicken (in that order) and emit fewer greenhouse gases. (FAO 2019)

Many different solutions have been presented in Finland in recent years, and products related to oat and horse have risen to popular, easily acceptable articles (Stammeier 2017). In November 2017, Finland changed the interpretation of the Novel Food Regulation by the EU, and it has since then been legally approved to commercially sell insects as food (e.g.

Sillanpää, 2017; Törmänen 2017). Edible insects are a superior source of protein compared to meat or vegetable protein and use far less resources for producing the same amount of protein. Insects are in many cases, mostly developed countries, considered vermin and pesticides are created and used for considerable amounts of money. (Premalatha, Abbasi, Abbasi & Abbasi 2011) But what if insects were used as food?

The problem, however, is that people are not accustomed to the thought of eating insects and many think it is unconventional and even disgusting. According to Samuel Piha, in an article made by YLE, the main reason for dreading insects is habits. In Finland, however, people are more prone to experimenting with eating insects and are more positively set towards it. (see Kahila 2017)

In this thesis, I have applied a method for defining the problem in which data sets the ground for formulating the problem. This method is according to the “*jigsaw puzzle approach*” (in Swedish *pusselbitsansatsen*) presented by Alvehus (2018). This approach starts with gathering data by studying existing research and discovering unresearched areas to examine.

1.2 Purpose and research questions

This thesis explores the role of marketing in the shaping of new markets. I will research how markets, in general, are being shaped and what it takes from a marketing perspective. This thesis will further delve into how Finnish actors working with edible insects have proceeded with creating and shaping the market. This is a completely new market area that has not been legally active in Finland before 2017, which makes it interesting to examine the possibilities and challenges. As the market for edible insects now is legal and it has been possible for new companies to grow.

The intention is to map actions, especially marketing actions, taken by both companies providing edible insects to the market and other actors in order to create the market opportunity.

The problem this thesis aims to explore is what role marketing plays in the shaping of a new market and what it takes to create a new market. I will specifically focus on the field for edible insects in Finland. The market is still new and is hence being shaped as we speak.

This thesis aims to answer the following questions.

How is a new market created, and how is it shaped?

What is the company strategy behind shaping a market?

How do marketing actions contribute to market shaping?

With the research questions as a base, the theoretical framework has been assembled in order to in the best way give a comprehensive view of the topic. By combining theoretical research with a qualitative research method, the aim is to ascertain the research questions.

Based on the theoretical framework, the purpose is to research how marketing actions have helped in creating and shaping the market for edible insects in Finland. I am searching for answers specifically for this field but I am also interested in whether the results may be implemented on other novel markets as well. I expect results that speak for the importance of marketing in one way or another in market shaping. The reason for choosing to focus on the market for edible insects in Finland is partly based on my personal interest in the topic, partly because of the geographical area.

1.3 Delimitations

The thesis will be limited to Finland and the Finnish market of edible insects. I will further demarcate the research to new companies in the field of edible insects and their story of how they have made it to the point they are now. Due to the small size of the field, in addition to company representatives, other experts with a strong influence on the field have been interviewed in order to get a broader view of the process. Their valuable input in shaping the market is important to understand the process. I have chosen not to include consumers in the study as I wanted to concentrate on the business perspective, together with input by area experts. Studying how users shape a market would require a study of its own (Harrison &

Kjellberg 2016). The companies and experts have been handpicked as the most suitable for this research and the research method has been narrowed down to qualitative interviews.

1.4 Methodology

The chosen methods for researching shaping a market focus on written material together with interviews of actors in the field. According to Alasuutari (2011), previous empirical research is to be analysed as clues rather than hard facts, and to acknowledge that they are always conducted from a specific angle. One should study previous research critically and strive to find the core behind the results.

The theoretical framework in this study concentrates on previous research regarding markets, marketing strategy, market shaping, value creation, and entomophagy. The theoretical part shall delve into the background of how a new market is shaped and what it takes to alter a market, specifically regarding marketing actions. After that, I will examine the phenomena of entomophagy and how it is perceived in western society. I will further focus on the market in Finland and how the market has evolved, paying specific attention to marketing actions.

The research method chosen for this paper is qualitative interviews with companies and field experts, highlighting the current situation, background, and future. The interviews were conducted in January, February, and March 2020. As the sample and field of focus are small, I will not be able to answer broader questions such as “how marketing affects marketing shaping.” The method focuses on the field for edible insects in Finland which means that it is a limited research area both in geographical size as well as sample target field. The interviews focus on how the interviewees consider the topic content-wise, and they are not analysed based on how the interviews express themselves. However, analysing the sample from a broader perspective might enable new research results, but limits still need to be set for the results to have a chance to allow for unexpected results. (Alasuutari 2011)

Altogether eight interviews were conducted for this study. Demographical restrictions were not set regarding the interviewees, but they must all be either representing a company active in the field for edible insects or experts of the said field. The companies were further chosen

based on their business and the requirement was that they produce or have produced products for the consumer market. For the interviews not to differ from each other, the same interview guide was used for each interview situation. The structure varied depending on the interviewee, but the aim was to cover the same topics with all interviewees. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to accurately retell their answers. In chapter seven, the results will be analysed from the perspective of the interview guide and in the following chapter eight against the research questions.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis contains a total of nine chapters. The first chapter introduces the reader to the topic and maps the core concepts. The introductory chapter consists of problem discussion, purpose, and key concepts which shall be processed in the following chapters. The introduction is followed by the theoretical framework which is divided into three parts. The first theoretical part and second chapter outline markets and marketing strategies with a focus on shaping actions. The third chapter introduces the reader to the concept of market shaping and dives deeper into the topic. The fourth chapter presents entomophagy both in general and how the practice appears in Finland and is the final part of the theoretical framework.

The chosen methodology is presented in chapter five, followed by empirical findings in chapter six and data analysis in chapter seven. These chapters will in addition to present the results also analyse the results based on the topics constructing the interview guide. Chapter eight concludes the thesis and presents both theoretical and practical implementations as well as suggestions for further research. In this chapter, the methodological results will be analysed further in order to provide answers to the research questions. The thesis is completed with a summary in Swedish in chapter nine.

1.6 Key concepts

Market is in this thesis referred to as somewhere, either physical or virtual, where demand meets offer. (Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell 2016)

Marketing strategy is here referred to as combining plans for upcoming marketing actions in order to increase sales while keeping the customers satisfied in a chosen market. (Dibb et al. 2016)

Market shaping is in this document described as a phenomenon in which a player aims at shaping a market to favour not only himself but the field as a whole. If the motive is to solely benefit from the change personally, it usually is not a successful strategy. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Market making is a more drastic form of market shaping and is here referred to when a company not only moulds the market to fit its practice better but introduces itself or its product somewhere where it has not been seen or consumed before. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Entomophagy is the definition of human consumption of insects (FAO 2013).

2 Strategic marketing

The following chapter will present the market, what it is and how it is defined and continue to introduce marketing strategy the more traditional way compared to market shaping strategy. Before examining marketing strategy, one needs to understand the concept of the market itself as marketing strategies differ depending on how the company sees the market. In the following section, a deeper view of a market is examined which aids in defining the marketing strategy in the next subchapter.

2.1 What is a market?

The MOT Oxford Dictionary of English (2020) defines the market as “*an area or arena in which commercial dealings are conducted*”. Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell (2016) continue, that a market is somewhere where sales of products or services take place. Previously, a market has been a physical space to sell goods, but nowadays, it is more common to refer to it as a geographical area or any physical or virtual space where there is demand and supply for a product or service. In order to be able to call something a market, there are several obligations that need to be met. The people representing the market, need to want the same kind of product or service in order to create a big enough demand, and they must have the ability to buy it, meaning that they have to have the funds, the desire to purchase it as well as the legal right to do so. (Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell 2016)

Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) see markets as “complex adaptive systems (CAS).” As defined as a complex adaptive system, a market is continually altered depending on actions. Consequently, a market does not continuously keep the same stable shape and is not something that needs to be adapted to. The authors further encapsulate the market as:

Markets are CASs of exchange for the creation of value, which includes use value to consumers. Markets subsume industries and add multiple layers of designable elements. Rather than obeying ordinary laws of cause and effect, markets constantly evolve from both emergence and deliberate design: deliberate shaping. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018: 27)

According to Mele, Pels & Storbacka (2015), a market can either be defined as a verb or a noun, which describes the different forms the word can take. These categories can then further be divided into four themes being market entities and market representation under the noun, and market performing and market sense-making under the verb. This concept offers a way to examine markets in a complex manner. The themes are connected and influencing each other, together creating a market specific for a certain field. By understanding these themes and making them work for you, marketing can influence how markets are made and shaped. (Mele, Pels & Storbacka 2015)

Market entities, involves all actors that a company needs to take into consideration when planning their own business. The market here can be considered as the relationship between the buyer and the seller, but in order not to exclude important aspects, the authors prefer including the buyer-seller view into a bigger ecosystem in which possibilities are far wider. Market representation describes the diverse ways in which a market can be portrayed. Different market views, depending on from what angle the market is defined, can co-exist simultaneously, even within a company. The different angles are represented by the specific product that is being exchanged, and the wider view of the field beyond the physical product that the company is active in. Market performing illustrates the various actions that a company performs. For example, these actions can be transactions regarding selling a product but can likewise be part of customer engagement over a long period. Market sense-making describes the understanding of how markets are shaped and created, where product lifecycle includes the proactive actions taken for market development and illustrates the part of a market change that cannot be predicted. (Mele, Pels & Storbacka 2015)

2.2 Market view

According to Nenonen and Storbacka (2018), the market view can be divided into nine distinct categories describing a poor and limited market view compared to a rich and integral view. In this model, the limited market view is the traditional way of viewing markets, while the integral market view is what the authors indicate would benefit companies more. Traditionally, according to a limited market view, markets are seen as being defined according to specific goods or industries, and that markets are provided and something a firm must adapt to, compared to the integral view which defines markets as complex ecosystems

that adapt according to activity by market players. The views also differ when it comes to value creation; in a poor, limited market view value is created when the products are sold to the customer as the trade itself is being made, whereas the integral view puts focus on value co-creation together with the customer, meaning that value is created when a product successfully creates meaning for the customer while in use. The latter focuses on creating a product or service that the customer finds valuable after the purchase. According to this view of value creation, the product is successful when it manages to both satisfy the customer and engage her in reaching her goals by using that specific product. This is also an important part of the marketing strategy used by companies; in a company with limited market view, the company focuses on how it is located compared to its various competitors, whereas a company with an integral market view follows a strategy that emphasises value creation both for customer as well as partners of various kinds. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Figure 1: Poor and rich market view

Poor, restricted view		Rich, systemic view
Markets defined around industries and/or products.	Definition of markets	Markets defined as complex adaptive systems.
Suppliers and customers in a value chain.	Market structure	A system of market actors (organisations, individuals) with interactions fostering value creation.
Exchange value: the value that is extracted by the supplier when selling a product.	Value focus	Use-value: the value that is created when a product is used in the customer's value creating process.
The market is external to the company. Markets are given and their development is deterministic.	Market versus firm	The market system is an outcome of actions by market actors. Markets are plastic and malleable.
A company's job is to adapt to the market, i.e., opportunities are precursors of strategy	Market opportunities	A company can influence market development, i.e., opportunities are created by strategy
Company level competitive strategy - how the company positions itself against competitors.	Role of strategy	System-level value-creating strategy - how the company supports the value creation of customers and other actors in the system
To find sustainable competitive advantage.	Ultimate goal	Continuous renewal (as competitive advantage is always transient).
Product market share. Shareholder value.	Key measurement of success	Stakeholder/shared value.
Technological and product innovations.	Innovation	+ business model innovation, management innovation, and market innovation.

Reference: Nenonen & Storbacka (2018: 33)

Another point where the views differ is when it comes to company goals and how to measure success. For companies having a limited market view, goals are mainly set to finding competitive benefits and advances are assessed according to how big a market share the company has together with investor value. For companies having an integral view, the goal is to constantly develop, and success is measured depending on value that is shared within the ecosystem. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) This is supported by Kim and Mauborgne (2018), who suggest that companies with a market making strategy focus on what they can provide their customers more of, rather than cut the service and hence cost. This is backed up by the thought that these companies do not think that customers necessarily always seek for lower prices, but many times better service or a better product instead. By creating value through better service or products, companies can attract a whole new customer segment that would previously have been uninterested. This is done by widening the picture of the market and, furthermore, shape the market.

2.3 Establishing a marketing strategy

According to West, Ford, and Ibrahim (2006), marketing, and hence marketing strategy, is active on many levels within a company. From a marketing perspective, marketing is the bridge between the company and its customers, acting on the demand set by the market in order to manage goals set by the company regarding e.g. sales. On a business strategy level, marketing proactively directs the company forward and is visible through the whole organisation, creating a business advantage. Rogers (2011) continues, that in order for the marketing strategy to succeed, the marketing department is dependent on the corporate strategy and the resources given, which is why marketers should be present when the corporate strategy is being developed to give observations of the market situation (see Kourdi 2011).

Dibb et al. (2016), define marketing strategy as

The selection of new opportunities to pursue and current activities to support, identification of associated target markets and competitive positioning, and the creation of appropriate value propositions and customer

engagement plans, in order to deliver the specified performance goals in the corporate strategy. (Dibb et al. 2016: 40)

A marketing strategy is a holistic strategy from the marketing perspective, including several factors such as products, marketing activities and value creation, while striving to reach set goals (Varadarajan 2009). Markets are man-made and hence something that also can be changed by human action. Markets do not simply exist, but they are created and shaped according to demand and ambition towards a goal. (Storbacka & Nenonen, 2011) Marketing actions depend on how the firm perceives the market and can therefore differ between actors. As Mele et al. (2015) define it:

If we view the market as customers, the marketing focus will be on managing those customers. If we view the market as practices, the marketing focus will be on influencing market practices, and so on. This perspective-based approach highlights the importance for managers to explicate their view of how markets work and what the role of marketing should be within them. (Mele et al. 2015: 110)

Since companies need to plan for their future and develop strategies for business growth in the correct direction, marketing should also be organised. Strategic planning includes strategies to match the resources of the organisations with the possibilities the market provides. Sometimes planning for different scenarios might be a good practice if the outcome differs depending on, for example, upcoming legislation. When formulating strategies, planning starts with the big picture; what is the main purpose of the company and in what sense does it provide better or different service than competitors? When these questions have been answered the strategy can be divided into smaller parts within the company, where different departments can sharpen their strategies to align with the company goals. A company needs to have a marketing strategy for every market it is present in or planning to enter. The marketing strategy is more detailed than the company plan existing on the corporate level and should provide researched reports on why marketing needs a specific amount of resources. (Kotler et al. 2016). The marketing strategy is part of a company's bigger corporate strategy and hence, the marketing strategy must be in line and follow the same outline as the corporate strategy. Important questions a strategy should answer are where the company wants to be in a few years and what the markets should be, how to

outperform competitors and with what kind of resources, as well as what does the environment look like now and what might there be to come, and what targets and wishes actors and stakeholders have. (Dibb et al. 2016) Marketing on a strategical level must consider setting long-term goals over fast accomplishments and integrate contrasting values such as analysis based on statistics together with softer aspects such as more artistic qualities (Peppers & Rogers in Kourdi 2011).

Marketing actions depend on the specific context a firm is active in, and this can change over time. Hence, the same model cannot be used for different companies, even in the same area of business. Furthermore, marketing theory alone is not enough to declare the market or what a market is as it does not hold all the answers. (Maclaran, Saren, Stern & Tadajwski 2011) Since marketing acts as a direct channel between the company and the customer, marketing actions are important for how the market turns out (Araujo 2007). A marketing strategy is developed from a competitor strategy which runs on a higher level in the company. When a competitor strategy has been drawn, the company decides upon what units to concentrate on and marketing strategies are made for every unit. The units can change over time. (Parment 2008) Peppers and Rogers (2011) argue that when developing strategic marketing customer trust is crucial for reaching success, and in order to succeed in that goal, the company's employees must also have trust in the company they work for (see Kourdi 2011).

According to Dibb et al. (2016), a marketing strategy includes several functions to operate, and the marketing department offers advice regarding what opportunities to address and what to be aware of by understanding the market. A marketing strategy needs to include various aspects, such as understanding where the company currently stands and what should be done to improve revenue and placement on the market, developing the strategy further as the building blocks change. Furthermore, it should have a clear understanding of the target customers as well as being able to communicate the core message and brand. The marketing department also needs to evaluate how to keep existing customers and engage with them, and how to attract new customers. These aspects must be managed, and the right team and tools gathered for a successful implementation.

When engaging in a marketing strategy, the firm will benefit from mapping the environment it is or will be active in as an ongoing process. The marketing environment can be divided into two spheres, the micro-environment and macro-environment. The micro-environment includes all such actors that are close enough to affect the company in how it relates to the customer. The macro-environment stands for the bigger picture and includes social structures that affect the company from the outside. An example of such a structure is the ecological footprint and sustainability addressed by the situation of our planet or technological development. (Kotler, Armstrong & Parment 2016; Dibb et al. 2016)

Marketing environments change over time, and sometimes changes can be quick. Thus, managers must stay focused and do their best in predicting what the future will bring. Occasionally, companies fail to predict changes in the environment successfully which leads to difficulties in comparison with competitors. Furthermore, marketing strategies should be updated according to the changing forces in order for the company to be able to change directions and refocus when needed. (Dibb et al. 2016)

Due to the lack of methods to trustworthy measure marketing actions, marketing has had a slightly different position in economics. (Araujo 2007) One could argue, however, that this is changing as marketing is digitalised and every click made by the customer or time spent on a specific page can be measured. It is still difficult to say whether a customer decides to finally buy a product because of marketing actions or not, but there are more methods available now than there used to be. In order to be able to measure marketing actions, careful planning is important. (Lavas 2016) Big data is being collected everywhere in bigger quantities than has previously been possible to process. The development of ways to use the collected data has enabled a leap forward on utilising the vast amount of data available. When actors know how to utilise the available data, they can create value out of otherwise useless data. A vast amount of value lies in the sort of data that cannot easily be conventionally stored, such as noise, photos or videos, called unstructured data. (Barr 2015) With digitalisation enabling data collection, also other forms of utilising digital possibilities take form, for example machines and different technologies such as robotics. Since these new forms of co-workers are getting more common, they contribute to creating value both for the

company but also for the consumer. Companies also need to evaluate new forms of creating value for their customers as innovative technologies and hence transparency blur the traditional borders between the company and consumer. (Storbacka, Brodie, Böhmman, Maglio & Nenonen 2016)

2.4 Summary

To conclude, markets can not only be defined but also viewed in diverse ways. For a market to exist, there must be enough demand and supply to meet the demand. Moreover, customers need to have the required funds to fulfil their needs and companies' products or services that matches the needs. Depending on how the company sees the market, the marketing strategy will differ. Hence, a marketing strategy must be created for a company's needs and not copied from other company strategies. One can consider the market as stable where the company adapts to the market and strives to outperform competitors in a limited market environment. Another way is to view the market as integral, where the company by its actions can change how the market appears. The marketing strategy is part of a company's corporate strategy and thus goes into more detail regarding for example how the company is perceived by the customers and who the customers are. Since marketing environments transform over time marketing strategies ought to take several scenarios into consideration in order to adjust in an agile manner.

3 Market shaping

This chapter will dive deeper into the concept of market shaping. Building on the previous chapter, in which markets and strategic marketing were introduced, this chapter will focus on market shaping actions and what it means in a company strategy. Market shaping will critically be investigated from different angles from a company perspective. The concept will be elaborated upon in detail, dividing the themes in targeted sections for a comprehensive overview, briefly connecting the theory to the field of edible insects in the following chapter. First, a deeper overview of market shaping is presented, focusing on the definitions of market shaping and how it differs from a more traditional approach. Then the chapter will continue with focal subsections focusing more closely on the topic in detail. Finally, the chapter will end with a summary.

3.1 Market shaping under the lens

Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) argue, that the traditional template that companies use when developing their strategy is out of date. The traditional way of creating a strategy assumes, that markets are stable and something that simply is, and that what has worked before will work again. Market shaping however, is a new way of viewing strategy and may be used to shape an already existing market or create a new market to fit the company. At the core of a market shaping strategy is creating value for the customer when using the product or service instead of measuring value as when the product exchange takes place (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018). This is supported by Kotler et al. (2016: 94) who argue that companies can either view markets as given and unchangeable, or as opportunities that can be modified. Companies that view markets as uncontrollable usually act according to what the market dictates and rather watch things happen. They develop strategies that will keep them safe through possible threats and ride on the possibilities provided. Another way of viewing the market is by being proactive and shaping the market according to the company's own needs. These are the companies leading the way and creating opportunities for themselves, rather than waiting for them to come. Companies actively engaging in a shaping manner are able to defeat negative situations and create a successful environment that works for them. By being proactive, companies can take action that drives them forward. Firms cannot shape everything,

however, and certain environmental forces need to be respected. (Kotler et al. 2016) When a market is being shaped, it usually requires a wide selection of actions taken by one or more companies that eagerly strive to change the market. (Kindström et al. 2018)

According to West et al. (2006), companies would gain an advantage by questioning their strategy and adopt a more innovative approach to gain success. To gain market share, a wider view of the field is favourable and to challenge their view on what the market wants, compared to what the market does not know it wants and solve it. Dibb et al. (2016) continue that companies can perform in two separate ways when reacting to the marketing environment. If they see the environment and the changes it might bring as something that cannot be influenced, managers will keep a lower profile and keep to their original strategy. However, if the marketing managers view the environment as adaptable, they will proceed in a proactive way and strive to mould the market in a way that suits them. In the latter case, the company will locate what obstacles need to be rigged, such as legislation or economic factors, and proceed to overcome them. However, all environmental factors cannot be altered. (Dibb et al. 2016) Expressing the company vision and giving voice to the shaping ideas, engaging the whole network in the process and collaborate in order to work for the wanted change and assist customers in the new environment are part of generating change. Promoting activities are important as companies that have good intentions but do not know how to express them, are not as successful in shaping the market. (Nenonen et al. 2019)

Market shaping includes both shaping an existing market as well as creating a new one. Creating a new market is hence one form of market shaping. Market shaping is not directed to huge corporations; small actors and even individuals can act as market shapers (Baker & Nenonen 2020). Kindström et al. (2018) continue, that markets are constantly being shaped by the various actions performed by market actors and a shift away from visioning the market as stable and an environment that need to be followed is welcome.

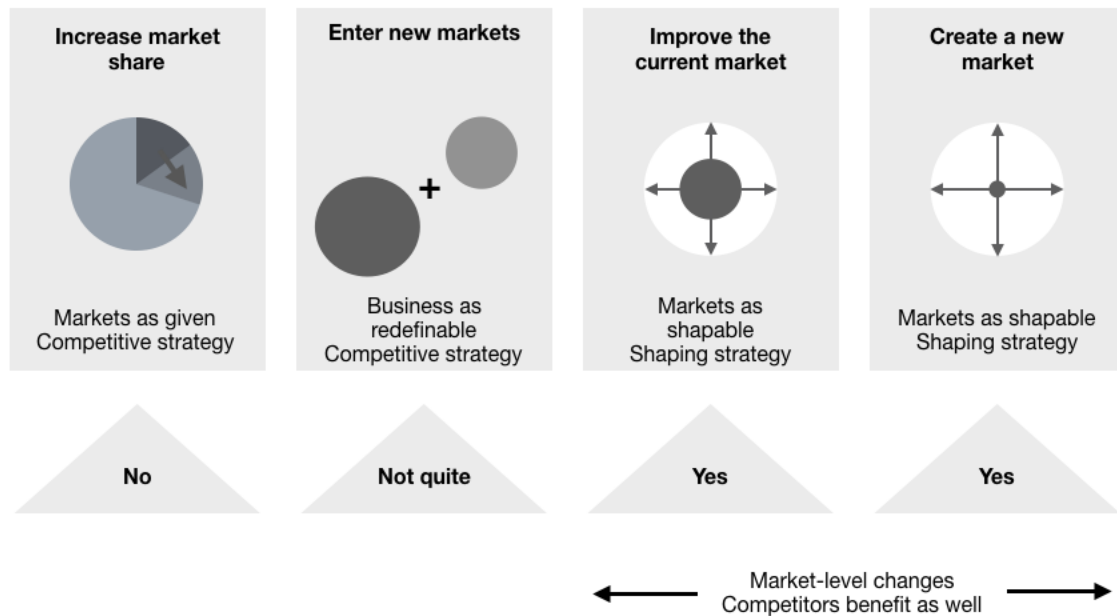
Furthermore, Kim and Mauborgne (2018) continue that many companies are stuck with traditional ways of viewing the market as something that is, including competition, and that strategy must be built upon the main thought of growth happening at the expense of

competitors. They call this traditional view the *red ocean strategy*, compared to the *blue ocean strategy*, which is a market-creating strategy. For companies to make the switch from a competitive strategy to a market-creating strategy, three key factors are essential. The first one is to widen the spectrum of where new opportunities may lay and not solely focus on what there is now. This means shifting the way of thinking and place the company in a new light. However, it is difficult to make changes to one's mind when lacking effective tools. Hence, the second factor is to gain the right tools and perspective to ask oneself the right questions that bring the company forward. The third factor is the human process which focuses on how to inspire people through change and turn feelings of anxiety of the unknown to creativity. (Kim & Mauborgne, 2018)

In order for markets to change, it often requires a play by multiple actors to either strive for the same goal or as a result of independent choices shape the market that they are active in. Shaping the market as a whole or making changes to the business usually go hand in hand when it comes to market shaping and both lead to the market changing in one way or another. (Baker, Storbacka & Brodie 2016) This is supported by Harrison and Kjellberg (2016), who raise the importance of users in shaping the market. Users may not be the active driving force behind market shaping but depending on the market in question, user activity might have an impact of the shaping outcome.

It is, however, not as straight forward as ditching the old ways of doing business and taking new strategies or processes into use. When making changes, research indicates that it is of good practice to use both the old and the new processes at the same time for a while in order to make different actors feel comfortable about the change and gradually move towards the new strategy. Furthermore, introducing new innovations into the play might, in many cases, require readjustments and concessions from the parties involved. (Koskela-Huotari, Edvardsson, Jonas, Sörhammar & Witell, 2016) Driving through change and thus shaping a market requires the support by top management (Kindström et al. 2018)

Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) present the model below for defining market shaping.

Figure 2: Market shaping defined

Source: Nenonen & Storbacka (2018: 34)

What does not count as market shaping is when companies increase their market share but otherwise stay the same. In this case, the market is seen as stable and something that companies need to accustom to. When businesses enter a new market, it cannot either be seen as complete market shaping as the market is still seen as stable and the company follows a competitive strategy. Entering new markets might either mean that the company enters another geographic area or starts to distribute a new, by the company previously not provided product. However, when a company begins to improve a market that they are already active in, it is called market shaping. Improving a market requires that the company sees the market as something that can be shaped, and they follow a strategy that enables and provoke shaping moves. A fourth scenario which also is viewed as market shaping with a twist, is when a company creates a totally new market. This case requires more from the company than making a small change to the strategy but might for instance, call for changes in infrastructure and legislation. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Kjellberg and Helgesson (2007) argue, that dividing market practice in three categories assists in analysing how markets evolve and change. They suggest three categories based on how markets are being shaped in practice. The three categories are Exchange practices, Representational practices, and Normalizing practices. Exchange practices include hands-on actions such as marketing the product or service, logistics, and pricing. These practices represent such actions that are directly associated with the business and marketing the product or service. Representational practices describe actions that are more abstract than exchange practices and aid in mapping the market and in what way it is changing. Representational practices are used when a company seeks to update its market strategy or influence the customers. Normalizing practices is a step further from representational practices as they support in mapping in what way a market should be constructed. Normalizing practices strives to change markets in a specific direction, although however, it usually is not possible to predict what way the market finally will take. When all three categories are taken into consideration, either one by one but preferably by interlinking them, market shaping practices can be evaluated and different actions taken by stakeholders considered. (Kjellberg & Helgesson 2007)

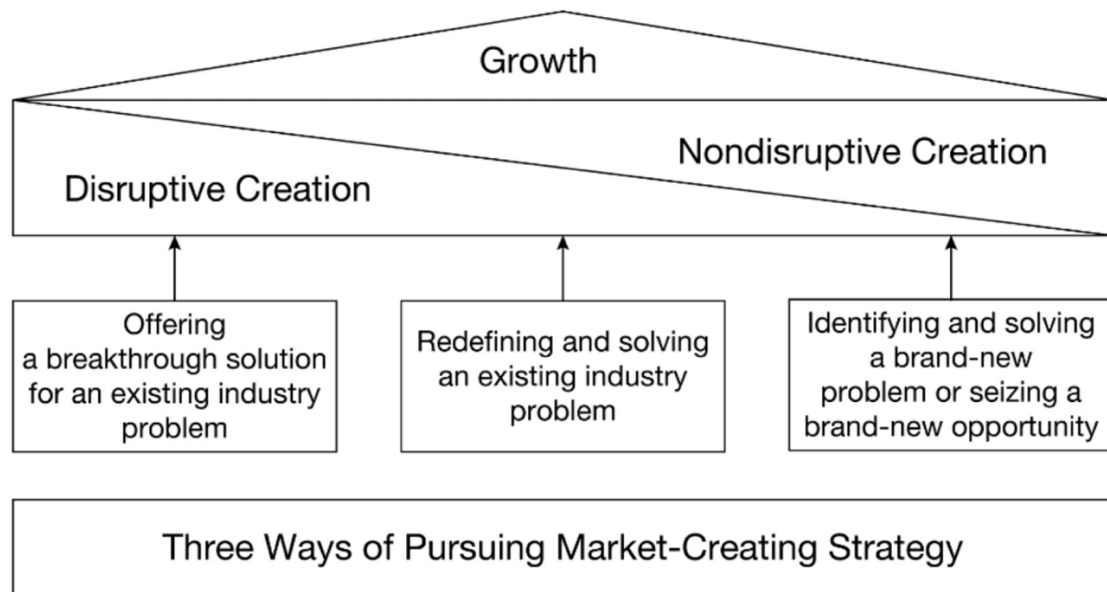
3.2 How does a market evolve?

As said earlier (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018), creating a new market is one form of market shaping. Even though this study focuses on shaping an already existing market, this sub-chapter presents market creation to give a broad perspective to the topic.

The way marketing influences market creation is diverse and quite different from other disciplines. It utilises psychology to understand the consumer; what the consumer wants, and how to portray the product for it to be as attractive as possible. Marketing actions are active before a market is created or shaped and combine social sciences with more tangible facts in order to create a demand. This may lead to inevitably needed change in e.g. regulations and hence, a more continual process. (Araujo 2007) Kim and Mauborgne (2018) continue that in order to create a market and in that way strive for growth, a company can either use a disruptive or a nondisruptive strategy. Being disruptive in this context means finding a solution to a problem that a certain field has been trying to solve. The disruptive way of

implementing this is by creating a new market at the expense of another. This means entrepreneurially creating a new market with new jobs, but at the same time, sometimes unintentionally, leading to the decline of another company or field and result in people losing their jobs. The nondisruptive way of proceeding towards creating a new market on the other hand, is by solving a problem no-one considered before. This is often done by creating a new product or service that fits the demand well without jeopardizing or competing with another field or company. The third option, situated in between the previous market-creating strategies, is identifying an existing problem in a specific field and viewing it from a different angle. In this way, one can come up with new solutions and accordingly create new markets. This might attract customers from similar businesses and hence act as competition, but more importantly, it might attract customers to the field that otherwise would not previously have considered a product or service in the field at all. All these examples offer value to the customer besides solving a problem.

Figure 3: Market-creating strategy



Source: Kim & Mauborgne (2018: 45)

Market shaping takes time and the process can oftentimes take years instead of months. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) This is supported by research conducted by Nenonen et al. (2019) that reveals that market shaping actions oftentimes take many years to show results which implies that market shaping strategies should be conducted for several years ahead. Companies should not await major breakthrough shortly after starting their shaping process. The same research also indicates that market shaping actions bring a positive effect on the whole market including competitors, which suggests that companies should not fear to make decisions that could benefit competitors and other actors as well. Kjellberg and Helgesson continue (2007), that market shaping actions do not have an end and hence is a perpetual process. If the process ends, it means that the market would stop existing. The market shaping process might, however, take different turns and in that sense change direction which could appear as an end to the process.

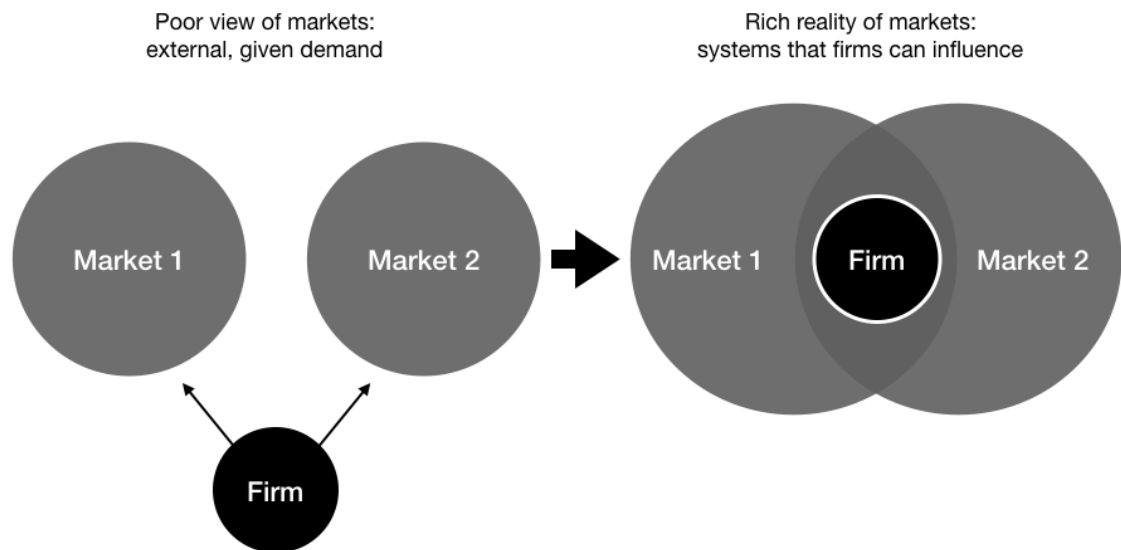
It might be difficult to know when a market is ready to be shaped. Shaping a market that is already under some sort of turmoil is easier than trying to change a stable market. Right timing is hence of utmost importance. One indicator of when the market might be ready is when discussion is present regarding the need for change. The discussion can spin from a crisis or accident that could be prevented or fixed by examining new solutions. On the other hand, a likewise important factor in success stories regarding companies successfully shaping a market is luck. Since one can never truly predict the future, anything can happen. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) Sometimes downsizing in a specific market might be a considerable option. If the field is not favourable the company could benefit more from redirecting the resources elsewhere. (Parment 2008)

Kindström et al. (2018) recognise that a market shaping company, in order to succeed, must create trust and validity by informing customers and partners and establishing a certain demand for what the company offers. As important is focusing on the product and co-create it with customers as it will simultaneously increase customer understanding. Finally, the market shaping company need to understand its customers and partners as well as focus on increasing competence in sales and marketing strategy to offer value.

As in segmenting consumers into innovators, early adopters, or laggards (Rogers 1962), one can divide companies in similar positions depending on when they decide to create a market or shape it. One could argue that it is most useful to be the first to make a move. However, the market might not be ready for the product just yet. It then takes time and effort for the company to educate consumers on the new product. In this case, it might be easier to be the follower company to enter when the market has been warmed up already. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

3.3 Shifting towards a shaping strategy

Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) argue that conventional marketing strategies within companies normally plans for markets as if markets are something firms need to adapt to. The authors indicate, however, that working with the market as given works well if the market is cold, and the market as it is serves the company and business is good. Similarly, though, if the company is struggling, a more disruptive way of planning might be profitable. As Smith, Raspin and Smith (2008) present, markets need to be defined as complex as they are constructed not by only one or two factors but a mix of many different components. Mele, Pels & Storbacka (2015) emphasise the use of an unpredictable strategy for the same reason; as companies take part in marketing actions, the market will shape, and new possibilities will appear as a result. Another point of view is using the brand to influence partners and consumers and hence shape the market. Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) assert, that the firm can choose to be part of one or more markets, and hence, be part of shaping the market/markets or place itself outside the market and adapt to whatever happens, as the figure below indicates.

Figure 4: From poor to rich market view

Reference: Nenonen & Storbacka (2018: 28)

When it comes to the required strategies for market shaping actions, Nenonen, Storbacka and Windahl (2019) suggest that companies need to adopt a wider view of the actions needed. Instead of concentrating on the goal of growing a specific market share, companies could benefit from evaluating the possibilities of growing the whole market that they are active in. In this way, the company has a greater chance of shaping the whole market and beyond. According to Nenonen and Storbacka (2018), for a company to adopt a shaping strategy, it needs to redefine or at least sharpen the market frame the business operates in. Before being able to frame the market, the business definition needs to be clear. The executives should ask themselves what it is that the company wants to achieve and in what business it wants to be. The business definition and the market frame are connected; hence, the business definition must be realistic and concrete. This, however, does not mean that the business definition cannot include an ambition over where the company should be heading as well as an explanation of where it is now.

In order to manage a shaping strategy, Nenonen et al. (2019) suggest that companies should focus on how to trigger change and how to facilitate it. Triggering change means evaluating the company's strategy and making adjustments that support change in the market, such as calibrating customer support and focusing on innovative development.

Nenonen et al. (2019) were able to identify three unifying groups of capabilities for triggering change, or market shaping, in a market. One group focus on exchange and describes actions taken regarding i.e. product development, updating the pricing strategy, and evaluating how for example digitalisation make matching providers and customers possible through different platforms. The second group directs attention at networks and represents actions taken within the network, for example providing customers support in using the product or targeting new customers as well as encouraging competitors to enter the market. The last group, concentrating on institutions, describes affecting language and media, and impact laws and regulations likewise. A focal firm does not need to apply all triggering values if there is no reason to do so and can hence choose when to use different capabilities.

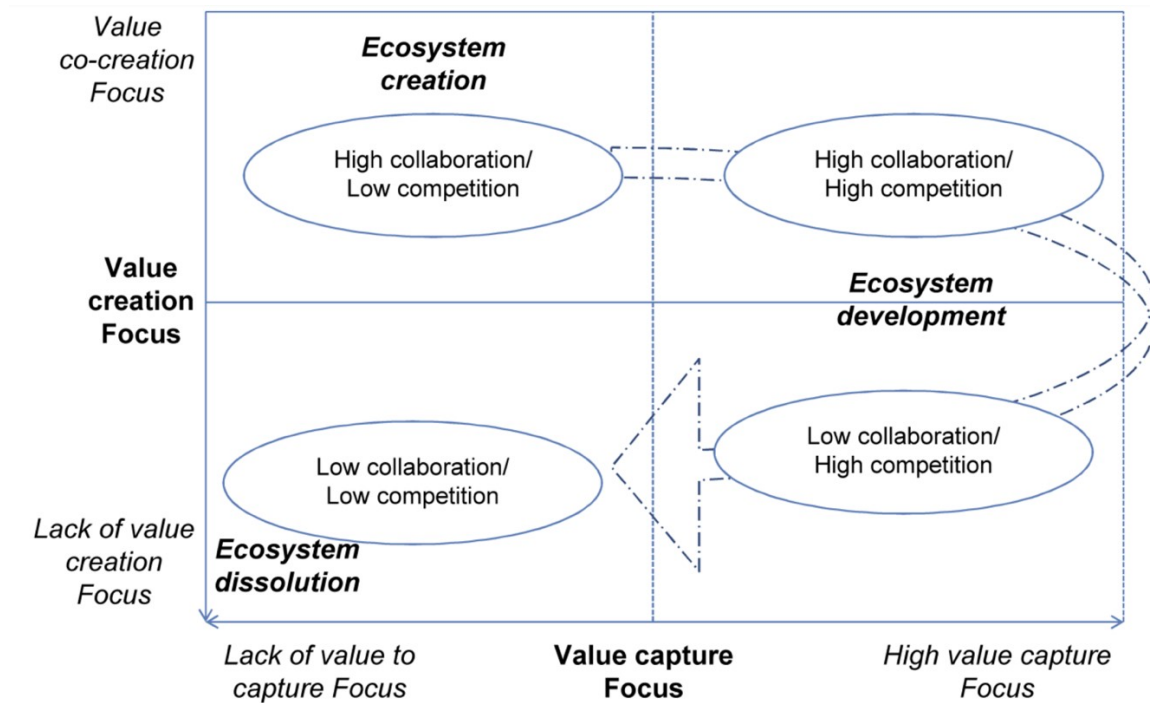
3.4 Creating value

Mele, Pels, and Storbacka (2015), argue that by switching the view away from customers and instead concentrating on the ecosystem as a whole, companies could find new ways to create value. Furthermore, marketers need to focus on how the market could be altered in their favour, or even create a new market based on their targets.

Value can be created through ecosystems and hence provide different sets of value for different actors. When partners and competing actors decide to create an ecosystem with the focus to create value, it starts with the actors actively collaborating at the same time as they put competing to the side. This phase focuses on co-creating the ecosystem and space for determining the networks' joint strengths. During this phase, value is created but not as much captured by the network. In the second phase, both value creation and value capturing are strong when the partnering actors are collaborating and competing at the same time. This phase demands sharing of resources as the collaboration otherwise is unbalanced and does not create value. If that happens, the member companies are focusing too much on creating

value for themselves, not for the ecosystem as a whole. In the third phase, the ecosystem is strong, and the associates focus more on capturing value and leaving collaboration behind. Important in this phase is that competing within the ecosystem should be modest compared to competition outside the ecosystem. If the competition within the ecosystem between partners is too strong, mistrust might take place. The fourth and last phase is the end of the ecosystem path, in which the partners can either decide to close the ecosystem or make changes for further collaboration. (Ben Letaifa 2014)

Figure 5: Creating ecosystems for value creation



Source: Ben Letaifa (2014: 288)

In order to create value for the customers, the company needs to develop a suitable marketing strategy that emphasises the customer role. As customers are many and different, the company cannot focus on everyone and reach out to all with the same message or tactic. This is done by segmenting the market and hence deciding on what customers to target, usually based on geographical location, demographics, and psychological characteristics. (Kotler et

al. 2016) As different technologies are being developed, they offer new ways of interacting with customers. It is now easier than ever to be in touch more often, but this does not directly correlate with customer satisfaction. There is a fine line between value and frequency, and these two factors do not go hand in hand as value in some cases might increase with fewer touchpoints and in other cases value is created through more and better interaction. (Sheth & Sisodia 2006)

Previously, value has been thought to be created within the firm and then used up by the consumer. This view has some limitations that need to be viewed more closely. According to this way of evaluating value creation, value can only be measured by the price tag the product or service has at the time of exchange. Furthermore, value creation has been thought to be solely on the shoulders of the company and has not been mirrored on the market. This view also emphasises that value is an economic factor based on a perceivable product and that the market is made of the supplying company and the receiving consumer. When studying the producer-consumer chain from a service-dominant angle, the limitations are no longer valid as the borders between different actors are not as clear. (Vargo & Lusch 2012) Ottosson, Magnusson and Andersson (2019) propose a framework featuring value creation in sustainable markets with market shaping intentions. Value is created through different processes where value measured in money is only one aspect, together with presenting new vocabulary and language as well as testing new solutions.

A product or service may not create significant value to the producing company, but on the contrary, be of utmost importance for the user and hence the user will co-create value for the product. Value can thus be defined as something that is created by and for the whole ecosystem and does not need to provide the same sort of value for all. The socioeconomic factors play an evidential part in creating and capturing value. The creating and capturing parts are blurred as a stakeholder can create value but at the same time capture value created by another player. (Ben Letaifa 2014) Moreover, market shaping often includes shaping feelings and norms that have evolved over time. Consumers and competitors alike might be used to acting or consuming in a specific manner or have never come across the new way of thinking before. It will require some hard work to change perceptions and alter

innovativeness in the field. Consumers are more likely to try a new invention, service or product, whereas industry partners need to evaluate carefully as they have more at stake which might entail a longer acceptance time. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Since value is not solely created within the producing company and simply by exchanging products or services, the value creation chain needs to be carefully thought of from different angles. A product for example, will continue to create value for the buyer after the exchange has happened. This means, that the buyer has to know how to utilise the product to reach its' fullest potential. Hence, depending on the product or service, the providing company must be prepared and willing to assist the buyer in any circumstances even after the exchange has taken place. (Vargo & Lusch 2012) This might not create more value for the providing company, but the value captured by the user or the ecosystem as a whole is far more comprehensive. This in turns mirrors back to the creating actor and value is co-created within the network. (Ben Letaifa 2014) Discovering value potential is done either by studying the market and understanding how value is perceived amongst customers and other actors, or by experimenting and influencing the company in trying out new ideas in order to get to a positive outcome, even if it would be unplanned. Here it is equally important to emphasize creating value instead of capturing value. (Nenonen et al. 2019)

Vargo & Lusch (2012) argue, in contrast to the accounting point of view, that a product that has not been sold has no value. It might have economic value as it has been produced to a certain cost, but if there is no one who would like to buy it, it loses the value. Hence, only products or services that are sought after and wanted, have a value. By taking it further, product or service providers cannot provide value per se, only propose value to the consumer. If the consumer has no need for the specific product or service, she will not cocreate value either.

3.4.1 Products

Companies can decide to grow in various ways. According to Kotler (2016), there are four different alternative strategies for growth. One alternative is market development which means identifying new markets for the products offered. It does not need to be a different

country, but a more subtle change in customer demographics could do the job. In the case of identifying a new geographical market, it is important to research both possibilities as well as challenges. Another option for business growth is product development. This includes developing new products in markets where the company already exists. A third option for gaining market share is through pricing and advertising; by lowering prices, the company can attract customers from competing companies without namely updating products. This is called market penetration. The last alternative for market growth is diversification. This means starting an activity in a completely new field in which the company has not engaged before. (Kotler, 2016)

According to Bradley (2005), companies need to invest in innovating their products to successfully compete on the market. The product needs to be what consumers want as well as being different enough compared to competing products. New products need to be innovated and the already existing products developed further. Parment (2008) continues that a product often fulfils not only a primary demand (e.g., hunger) but also other purposes (e.g., sustainable living). By analysing the product thoroughly and why customers want to buy it, the company will understand the competition better.

According to Mele et al. (2015), if companies perceive markets as based on products or product categories and hence solely focus on products when building up their strategy, they might unintentionally limit themselves. By focusing only on the products, a company can have too a narrow a view and hence fail to recognize competition from other fields and fall short on business opportunities. (Mele et al. 2015) At the point when psychology was applied as a tool in marketing in order to understand what customers seek from a product, it was clear that oftentimes it was more about lifestyle than for example, the products' external factors. Hence, understanding this makes it easier for companies to influence customers in what they want. In this sense, marketing has successfully combined various subject fields to reach a goal. (Araujo 2007) When introducing a product to a new market, however, adjustments usually need to be made. What interests a consumer in one market most likely will not do the trick in another market. (Bradley 2005). Consumers can also be divided based on how willing they are to try novelty products or services. Consumers who strongly relate to a specific

company or brand might oppose new products entering the market, while consumers who feel like they are being part of the change process are more likely to test a new product. (Araujo, 2007) The way it has been for long is that products are produced for the developed countries first where after they are introduced to developing countries. Often the large companies are the force behind this phenomenon and hence the same products are being spread worldwide. (Bradley 2005)

3.5 Networks

An important feature when shaping a market is the network of actors. When shaping a market, or creating a new one, it requires a network of not only business partners and customers, but also infrastructural partners in the form of for example legislation and media. Companies striving to shape a market have the influencing role over key partners that it sees as crucial for the upcoming success. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018). When new partnerships evolve, they create new patterns which in turn sets the ground for novel markets. This starts either at a grassroots level to then travel to upper levels regarding legislation or directly at the decisive or company level which makes the spreading even faster. (Baker et al. 2016). This is supported by Vargo & Lusch (2012), who continue that value is created within the network and can be seen under loop as sharing resources with another actor or by uniting as a team and shape the market as a whole. According to Nenonen & Storbacka (2018), market shaping means that an actor intends to shape the whole market in the favour of many actors and thus improve the market. Changing a market with the motive of only benefitting personally, will not work in the long run. Shaping a market requires different actors who are positive towards redefining their role in the new market. Particularly if a new market is being made, actors need to be at ease with unclear roles and definitions. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018)

Marketing actions require a team of players, preferably with people with different skill sets collaborating to achieve the best result. This means not solely from the company side but also other actors such as merchandisers and retailers. (Araujo 2007) Partnering up with others within the company as well as outside the company alleviates the goal of creating value for the customer by streamlining the process and being able to offer a hassle-free delivery chain. When collaborating with different departments within the same company, it is important to

maintain an open dialogue so that all parties are heard and taken into consideration. The role of the marketer is keeping the focus on the customer and the experience provided while not compromising, for example, the budget. (Kotler et al. 2016)

Before starting the market shaping journey, the company must distinguish its main partners, being not only the closest providers or buyers but also actors far down the line being, for example, customers' customers. The company needs to take into consideration who these actors are, what they provide and what other products they use that relate to the specific market. Other important features to contemplate are how the different actors relate to each other and whether all actors are necessary for the future market to come. Sometimes when markets are being shaped, not all actors from the past might be the right partners in the future. Hence, companies need to re-evaluate their network frequently in order to examine new ways of working and finding new business opportunities. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) By including new partners in an innovative renewing process within a service ecosystem, it adds diversity to the process which in turn eases the change (Koskela-Huotari et al. 2016). Ben Letaifa (2014) argues, that moving from a competitive approach between companies with creating value for the specific company itself, towards a viewpoint in which value is created within the ecosystem, is difficult. Actors who have been competitors before will not automatically behave as collaborators immediately even if they strive for an ecosystem for networking with each other. Factors that ease the transition towards a more collaborative partnership are clear thoughts on where to head with the ecosystem, in other words gathering a coordinating managerial facet to keep focused on the goal. Other factors to consider when striving for a collaborating ecosystem are embracing the community in order to keep the right mindset and all parties involved.

When shaping a market, the company might need to help educate both business partners as well as customers. If introducing a new product causes mainly confusion, the product provider might benefit from taking over an educating role. This will in the long run, help customers and partners adapt to the new product and way of using it, as well as adopt the product as a normal piece in their everyday life. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) This is supported by Kindström et al. (2018) who emphasise the importance of, on the one hand,

creating a demand for the offered product and, on the other hand, create trust on the market. One is stronger together and unlike doing changes alone, affecting the market and targeted actors is more successful when striving for the same goal.

In addition to a network of actors, creating or shaping a market often involves new terminology which needs to be adopted by the market. This is most successfully done by educating actors in the new area which creates a coherent approach. By shaping the market but keeping it similar to existing markets eases the process for consumers and other actors to grasp the new concept and to either try the product out or be involved in a partnering role. (Baker et al. 2016) This is supported by Nenonen et al. (2019), who suggest that companies active with a market shaping strategy benefit from not only increasing their own share but instead gain positive impact by improving the whole market. This will also help competitors, but the gain is mutually bigger and results in an outcome that is better for all. Moreover, the authors emphasize that a shaping company needs to communicate with other stakeholders such as customers, competitors and partners in order to influence the network with for example new vocabulary or events. In these cases, value is created within the network and distributed to everyone involved. This is supported by Gavetti, Melfat & Marengo (2017), who indicate that shaping actions may have an impact on competitors in the field, but also indirectly on the focal firm. By making changes to the market, it will affect other actors which in turn will echo back to the shaping company as the network and business environment changes. In environments that tend to change quickly, shaping strategies need to be handled with care as the market might otherwise be “*overshaped*”. This might happen if many actors are working on shaping the market and hence alter the market in a way that makes it unstable. However, if the actors on the other hand are part of a connected network and thus working for the same goal, they might reach the change they strive for even though many stakeholders are involved.

3.5.1 Communication

When shaping a new market, the company needs to think about how they interact verbally. What sort of names are being introduced and in what way is the new product or products being communicated about? It is important to create a name for the company or product that

is easily accessible, both for the customer but also for competitors. When shaping or creating a market, ready-to-go words might not exist. Hence, it is up to the pioneers to let their creativity flow. As an important complementary angle, also the visual and statistical side is equally fundamental. Media and marketing agencies handle this with grace, but in most cases, many companies do not use a different kind of depictions well enough. When naming a new product or even a company, the name needs to be catchy and informative. A great name works in the company's favour and helps boost sales. If the name nor the product is not interesting enough, the novelty product might not succeed. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) If the product, however, becomes so popular that the name is referred to as the thing itself, it might be slightly difficult (e.g. the zipper or trampoline, see Shontell 2010).

According to Mele et al. (2015), marketing has a greater possibility in influencing an already existing market or the creation of a new market, by understanding the whole ecosystem around markets. This, in turn, aids in creating value when the focus is not pointed at a single area. For example, by creating a specific language for partners, customers and institutions to use, marketing aids in creating new business opportunities as well as providing terminology for novelty products or services. Ruskin-Brown (2006) continues, that one of the main challenges in marketing communication is successfully informing customers of the value a products offers when customers lack sufficient information.

Introducing a completely new product means familiarising consumers with something that they are not used to. Companies need to evaluate how to make the novelty product approachable for the audience and a part of their everyday life. This can be achieved, for example, by using phrases or other visuals that people are already used to and hence promoting a feeling that the product is meant to be or has always been. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) Pearson and Zehr (2011) emphasise the potential in Pre-commerce and market through customers. This applies mainly for social media marketing and a company can strive to identify core customers who can act as influencers for a product or the company. The company also needs to create good content for sharing within the network of influencers and customers.

Besides using language for communicating the name and use of the product, connecting with customers through information is crucial when shaping a market (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018). The marketing department needs to include various aspects when communicating in order to create a comprehensive impression of the company (Blythe 2009). Moreover, communication continues to be important after the customer purchases a product as when customers call for confirmation for their purchase (Ruskin-Brown 2006). Media is convenient as a tool of reaching out to a big audience. However, media in general are for profit-actors and are hence investigating opportunities to obtain as many views as possible. Media has the potential to influence what people see, although not what they should think. It is also up to the media producer to decide on what and how it is displayed. Thus, a market shaping company most likely wants to influence media on publishing news that would benefit the market. Another powerful method of reaching out through informative channels is by providing statistics of the market or how the product could influence the user or environment. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) Nowadays, when the use of social media and other digital channels is common,

To raise awareness, diverse kinds of events might prove useful. Moreover, events and other PR occasions attract media, which is a solution where everyone benefits. If the current palette of events goes hand in hand nicely with the novelty product, the company might take advantage of these. Otherwise, creating innovative marketing actions is a way of making noise and invoke interest. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) However, Kim and Mauborgne (2018) point out that when making changes to the strategy and taking part in market shaping actions, a modest start can be recommendable. If taking off too loudly and for example launching a product in many locations at once, possible flaws are more difficult and costly to fix. Furthermore, if the media have been interested in the companies' actions and additionally report possible failures, customers might react negatively. Thus, the authors recommend starting smaller scale, investigate how the action is perceived, fixing possible errors and to magnify when the product or service is tested.

3.6 Competition and regulation

When customers have the possibility to choose between different product or service providers, it means that there is competition. Companies then need to think about their unique advantage in the market and what they can offer the consumers that makes them different from their competitors. What brings the customers value and what do they need? To create a strategy, research must be done in order to have a clear picture of what players act as competitors. A marketing strategy also needs to include the advantage that the company has in comparison to competitors and in what way it can offer something that others fail to do. (Kotler et al. 2016) For a market to develop, it quite often requires competition. Competition allows for consumers to assess similarities and differences between two or more players, which in turn adds value to the market. One player is weaker than two, and two players are weaker than three when it comes to developing a market. As an example, reaching out to potential customers through marketing is much more efficient when several companies promote the same sort of products, although the products are competing. The knowledge carries further when there are more actors making noise about it. (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018) As for companies to tackle competition, it is essential to know the competitors. The company should research what the competitors do and in what way they offer value to their customers. By knowing the competition, the company can evaluate what they can do differently or how they can improve as well as knowing what the competitor cannot do. (Kotler et al. 2016)

It is however possible for companies to both compete and collaborate simultaneously (Baker & Nenonen 2020). Competition is best utilized when combined with cooperation. The benefits of both competing and cooperating are various. By competing, companies strive for better products and outcomes which may not be required solely by customers. Developing new products might be needed simply to stand out and to interest customers in comparison to the competitor. On the other hand, by cooperating, both or all companies can join forces and profit from each other. Through cooperation, companies can focus on their core business and still, together with the competitors, offer a wide selection of goods to the customers. Furthermore, by working together towards the same goal, companies can gain reputation more efficiently and make themselves known in the market. (Bengtsson & Kock 2000) Kotler

et al. (2016) argue that competition nowadays is not solely between single companies but between whole chains of production. A company with great products might lose to another company with poorer supply but a stronger supply chain.

As an example of changing markets and hence, changing competitions, the movie and series providing platform Netflix announce that their biggest competitor is sleep. People lack time and if it was not for sleep, Netflix's customers could partake in the wide selection of movies and series at a whole different level. (Hern, 2017)

Interacting with competitors can be handled in various ways, but different studies show (i.e. Bengtsson & Kock 2000), that a mix of collaboration and competing with competitors, gives the best outcome when it comes to business growth and creating value. Coopetition is a gentle blend of collaborating and competing, and it depends on the companies involved and their situation to what degree the relationship is competing or collaborating. A cooperative relationship needs to be handled with care as the companies involved in this kind of affiliation have both conflicting and connecting interests. (Bengtsson & Kock 2000). When networking within an ecosystem, Ben Letaifa (2014) argues that for the ecosystem to be successful, a coordinator or group is needed to lead the network forward. This role is important in order to keep focus and maintain the vision clear in mind amongst the actors. It also assists in creating affinity between members and hence derive a feeling of mutual respect and aspiration to work for the same goal.

In the market for edible insects in Finland, Arppe, Niva and Jallinoja (2020) argue that up until the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry revealed that the EU Novel Food Regulation is going to be construed more permissibly in Finland, the Ministry had been perceived as the actor against which all other actors were opposing. This position enabled the other actors (producers, retailers, enthusiasts) to join forces and hence collaborate for the same goal. The authors indicate that collaboration between the early actors might not have been a reality if the authority hindrance would not have been there, and what is more, acting as a network creator.

Shaping or making a market often means dealing with regulations, standards, and legislation. Actors striving to introduce a new product and hence create a new market or shape an already existing one may strive for changes or updates in the law to enable their product (Baker et al. 2016) Following a market shaping strategy means striving to either loosen up regulation to enable different forms of business or creating more regulation with a stabilising intention. Changing regulations as a single company might be difficult as regulators do not want to be perceived as affirmative towards a specific actor. Thus, teaming up with a network of players striving for the same outcome is preferable. This can also be done by activating the customers, meaning the demand by consumers is great enough to change regulations in their favour (Nenonen & Storbacka 2018).

Regarding edible insects, not all Europeans have the same opportunities to try out insects as the legislation differs. In the EU, insects are part of the Novel Food Regulation (2015/2283) and it includes the whole insect, including for example legs and wings. Novel food, according to the Novel Food Regulation, is foodstuffs that have not been part of a typical diet or consumed vastly in the European Union before 15 May 1997. Food that is covered by the regulation include products that have been consumed outside the EU as well as food produced in an innovative way or by a new process. The new Novel Food Regulation replaced the previous version as of January 2018. The main changes to the previous version are digital updates to the processes and data protection. (European Commission 2018) With the update of the regulation, also the use of insects as food was clarified. (Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö, a)

3.7 Summary

Market shaping is an innovative marketing strategy, where the company may utilise societal transformation as leverage for shaping the market. Market shaping includes making changes to a market where the company by the time is present by developing it, as well as creating a new market. Offering a solution to a problem or introducing a new product to aid market difficulties or demand are examples of shaping actions. At the core of market shaping is creating value throughout the whole ecosystem, including the network of customers, partners, competitors, shareholders, and stakeholders. A market is challenging to shape for one actor

alone, why collaborating with competitors and partners is to prefer. However, a combination of collaboration and competition, called cooptation, within a network of actors striving towards the same goal has the chance to reach the goal of a shaped market more efficiently. Shaping or creating a market requires the strategy to consider introducing new vocabulary to communicate with actors and customers, influence regulation, and choosing the right time to make the required manoeuvres.

4 Entomophagy

Entomophagy is the definition of eating insects. It is not used only for human consumption but for other creatures too, such as birds and other insects. Insects have been eaten by humans through history and are not something new in that sense. There are several different edible insects worldwide and the most popular ones are crickets and grasshoppers, beetles, caterpillars, bees' wasps and ants among others (FAO 2013; Raheem, Carrascosa, Oluwole, Nieuwland, Saraiva, Millán & Raposo, 2017). The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed announces, that the world population is estimated to reach 9 billion by 2050, which stresses the importance of finding innovative solutions for catering for people's needs for food. Approximately 2,5 billion people worldwide are already consuming insects in their diets and insects can, in addition to the human diet, be introduced as animal feed to a wider extent in the future. (IPIFF 2020)

Belgium and the Netherlands are often seen as example countries when it comes to introducing insects to the everyday lives of their citizens. Belgium introduced insects as one of the early countries in Europe and is hence often referred to (Belluco, Halloran & Ricci 2017). In the Netherlands, insects have been introduced in the form of alternatives for meat. Products were for example nuggets made of insects and other familiar ready to eat meals. Some of the problems faced by the company, Insecta, was that their products were perceived as too expensive and difficult to get as they were accessed mainly through big grocery stores accessed by car. (House, 2018)

Although consuming insects as food is common worldwide, it is not popular in Europe. Compared to the rest of the world, Europeans mostly find eating insects as slightly disgusting. In order to normalise consuming insects as food, different strategies have been tested broadly. These include reaching out to the younger population and educate about edible insects at an early age, add insects into other food products that people are already familiar with and develop them further to increase willingness to try. Other strategies are amending the taste for the better, taking advantage of known actors in promotional actions, equip consumers with related knowledge to accept insects as a source for good quality nutrition and inform

where insects can be bought and how they should be consumed. (Raheem et al., 2017) On the contrary, House (2018) argues that when implementing insects as a new part of the diet, the insects should not be hidden away but more so emphasized as one of the main ingredients. He continues that for consumers to choose insect dishes before something more traditional, they need to feel a positive reward and reason to do so. Otherwise, it is easier to continue as before.

It is equally important to emphasize the environmental aspect of consuming insects compared to meat and to amplify the benefits regarding the future dilemma of a growing population (Raheem et al., 2017; van Huis, 2013) Premalatha, Abbasi, Abbasi, & Abbasi (2011) continue, that insects are not only more efficient in turning feed into animal protein but are also a sustainable addition to income for people. In conventional agriculture, insects are considered pests and something that must be erased. However, insects consist of around 75% of protein compared to grain and vegetable crops that consist of 14% protein at best. Insects are hence an untapped resource in battling global food scarcity and adjustments should be made to turn insects into an advantage and more commonly utilised. In most cases, insects also hold more nutrients than meat or vegetable protein sources.

If the goal is to make insect as normal a foodstuff as anything else, it must be made easily available to purchase. This is especially important in the early stage when insects most probably are more expensive than the more traditional alternatives. In a Western society where insects have not been consumed before, it is difficult to add insects into the diet as they do not replace any other ingredient as it is. Hence, it is problematic to add them to already existing products or recipes. (House, 2018) Collins, Vaskou and Kountouris (2019) continue, that so far, no specific marketing strategy has been proven more successful than another, and that a combination of different marketing activities needs to be used for different markets. There is room for product development as well as price adjustment.

For a novelty food such as insects, to be adopted into the diet of people, it benefits from being part of some specific usage rather than simply being a stand-alone product. Since insects are

something that Europeans are not used to cook with, even the most open-minded consumers do not know what to do with them. (House, 2018)

Rather than striving for a comprehensive acceptance of eating insects as they are, a more successful strategy would be to add insects to food that already is accepted in the market (House, 2018). In order to further promote entomophagy, there need to be further research conducted upon the nutritional value of insects, as to assure consumers of the health benefits. Research also need to focus on rearing insects with the purpose of enabling a comparison to more traditional ways of farming food. Another important future aspect is the economic benefit, as farming insects may provide an income for people in the future as well as an alternative source for protein. (FAO, 2013)

4.1 Edible insects in Finland

Many of the first Finnish start-up companies who started producing edible insect as human food before it was legally accepted were inspired by the FAO report. Moreover, the strong start-up environment in Finland acted as pushing factors together with wide media coverage. In Finland, the discussion around edible insects was mainly focused on a human diet, not on feed for animals. In the beginning, the Finnish companies started with house cricket as the main insect. Insects, supply and expertise were ordered from the Netherlands. The reason behind choosing the house cricket was the thought that it would be the easiest to start with, that consumers would adopt the house cricket easier than other possible options. At the start, the companies did not differ massively from each other. (Arppe, Niva & Jallinoja 2020)

Growing edible insects is not particularly difficult, at least if it is kept at a small scale. Insects are also easy to refine into other products. As the field has gotten media coverage during the last years, it might have had an impact on how many new producers have gotten involved in growing and producing edible insects. (Heiska & Huikuri 2017) Arppe, Niva and Jallinoja (2020) continue that Finland is a special case regarding edible insects in the sense that the country is small, and a few start-ups started producing insects before the change in legislation when the future was still unsure. Furthermore, media took an active role in communicating

changes and prospects and hence aided in bringing out the knowledge for the new form of foodstuff.

In Finland, producing insects for human food became legal in November 2017 (Sillanpää, 2017). Directly after, in the end of November, Fazer launched their cricket bread, which created a hype world-wide. The bread and the marketing campaign around it even won the third prize in the Sustainable Development Goals series at the Cannes Lions competition in the category of Responsible Consumption and Production. (Fazergroup 2018) Moreover, Arppe et al. (2020) continue that the environment for edible insects in Finland took off with a considerable network of actors from different fields. The network consisted of research centres, universities, media, distributing companies, individuals interested in the topic, international reports, and authorities. Influences were taken from abroad and adapted to the Finnish scene. Before the change in legislation, the authorities were the ones who were restrictive in their approach towards insects as food. The media coverage, on the other hand, was mainly positive.

The consumer price for edible insects has so far been high, and Heiska and Huikuri (2017) have in their report analysed the root cause to be the small specialty market that edible insects represent. They continue, that edible insects can be categorised as artisan food which affects the price together with the small scale, often hand-made, production. (Heiska & Huikuri 2017). In Western countries a rule of thumb is to have less visible insects in the product and focus on enlightening consumers about the new ingredient. As more consumers become accustomed to insects as food, the general feeling of disgust towards eating insects might fade over time. Targeting children at this point and familiarising them with insects is worth taking into consideration in order to improve future perceptions towards edible insects. (Collins et al. 2019)

One of the biggest changes in the market for edible insects in Finland has so far been the change in legislation (Heiska & Huikuri 2017). The main reason for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland to accept insects to the foodstuffs market was that edible insects had raised interest among both consumers and companies. Insects were in Finland

sold as i.e. kitchen decoration and eye candy which meant that the product, even though consumed as food, was not under the Ministry's food control. By interpreting the novel food regulation by the European Union to include insects as food, insects can be monitored by the food supervision division and involve the Finnish Food Authority in the control. (Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö b 2017)

According to Arppe et al. (2020) the different actors who were active in the goal of getting insects accepted as human food used different strategies to achieve this goal. The most common strategies were publicity in media, testing the product, and eating the product. Media publicity was created partly by the actors themselves, by contacting journalists and insofar, sparking the public interest. Promoting insects as food intrigued other media personalities and the hype was on. Product testing as a strategy on the other hand, happened through both informative events and providing products to retail stores. When it was still against the regulations to sell insects as human food, all events and products had to use words that did not refer to people eating insects but preferably experiencing them. The third strategy used was openly offering people to eat insects. This happened through events such as the Helsinki Night Market, where crickets were sold as "non-food" and through individuals organising events, as the legislation did only apply to commercial activities. (Arppe et al. 2020)

5 Methodology

This chapter will present the methodology of this thesis. The chapter will commence with presenting the concept of research design and trustworthiness of a study. Furthermore, I will introduce different research methods and arguments for why I have chosen a qualitative research method for this study. Finally, the chapter will end with presenting the data sources and how the data has been collected. A table with the interviewees is presented and a brief introduction to why they were chosen for this study.

5.1 Research Design

Bryman & Bell (2015) define the research design as “A research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data”.

For the research to be clear and easy to grasp for the reader, a clear focus, and hence design is crucial. A good research design stems from well-articulated research questions which give the study its base. By having a thought-through design, it keeps the research neat and on track. Furthermore, a good research design assists in connecting the theoretical part with the methodology and illuminates the core of the research. Nevertheless, the research design needs to be flexible enough to handle changes if the process so requires. (Flick 2007)

For this study, I have chosen to follow a case-based design and interviewing actors in the field of edible insects. In a case-based design focus is put on understanding the separate cases wholly and recognising differences in mindsets and situations (De Vaus 2005). The study is explorative in nature and seeks to understand the chosen field of edible insects, but also looks for broader signs of actions for market shaping as a whole.

5.2 Research Method

Qualitative research, compared to quantitative research, utilises text or spoken language as a data source and the used method needs to be flexible to capture the perspectives of actors involved (Flick 2007). This is supported by Bryman and Bell (2015); however, they continue that qualitative and quantitative research are different research strategies. The differences

between these research strategies are that a qualitative research strategy focuses on language and creating theories, whereas a quantitative research strategy focuses on measuring theories. Qualitative research, in contrast to quantitative research, further underlines social differences and gives more room to the individual view instead of certain models.

The theoretical framework defines what kind of data should be collected and how (Alasuutari 2011). Qualitative research requires the researcher to be neutral to a realistic extent; however, as the empirical data is gathered it will be analysed by the researcher who will evaluate the data according to her ability and the purpose of the study (Flick 2007). Depending on the purpose of the study, the data can be analysed either from a content perspective or by analysing also interaction in detail. A recorder is the most trustworthy device for analysing spoken language, yet it fails in communicating body expressions and nonverbal communication. (Alasuutari 2011)

For this thesis, I have chosen to use the qualitative research method. The main reason behind the choice is that I found it interesting to gather the individual voices of different actors involved in the field and have the possibility to dig deeper into their answers and thoughts. I consider the qualitative research method suitable for this thesis, to understand how the market for edible insects has been formed and shaped, what the strategy behind shaping a market is and how marketing has been involved in the process.

5.3 Trustworthiness of the study

According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the three most important aspects of business research methods, are reliability, replication and validity. Reliability represents whether the study can be re-made and obtain the same results repeatedly. This measure is especially important in quantitative research where the results should not change regarding on who conducts the research. Replication, the second aspect presented by the authors, means that the study conducted needs to be documented in detail to such a degree, that someone else can conduct the same study later if so need be. Validity represents whether the study actually measures what it was supposed to, and whether different factors such as time and place influence the result, or if the same study can be conducted in a different field.

This is supported by Daymon & Holloway (2010), who present three alternatives for how research can be trusted. These are the traditional perspective, the alternative perspective, and the radical perspective. The traditional perspective suggests that research, both quantitative and qualitative, needs to be evaluated the same way by “validity and reliability”. The alternative perspective proposes that when conducting qualitative research different measurements should be used as opposed to quantitative research and used the terms “trustworthiness and authenticity”. The radical perspective suggests that the research conducted should be evaluated regarding what is most natural for the study or common within the field and hence not compared to other studies with different criteria. They further recommend that the alternative perspective should be used especially if the author is new to research. Bryman and Bell (2015) points out that reliability, replication, and validity often seems to apply more for quantitative research rather than both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is measured by confirmability, credibility, dependability and transferability. For confirmability to be achieved, the purpose is compared to the conclusions and how well they match, in order to show that the conductors’ own thoughts have not been mixed up with the results. Dependability means that the findings are accurate and that the reader easily can follow the path and make entitled conclusions. Credibility is achieved when the reader, regardless of their positions, can follow and understand the findings and what the research strives for. Transferability means assisting the reader in transferring the knowledge gained from the study to other fields, even though the study might contain a restricted and small sample of respondents. (Daymon & Holloway 2010)

As the possibility to remake the study completely is limited, it will affect the quality and dependability. It might prove impossible to reach the same interview objects, the content of the interviews might be affected by time and progress in the area in question, and the researcher generally influences both the collecting of data as well as analysing it.

(Denscombe 2018) Flick (2007) continues that in order to achieve quality in interview-based qualitative research, an interview guide will assist in capturing the core for each interview.

5.4 Interviewing

The interviews are constructed based on the theoretical framework, made specifically for the research in question (Lantz 2007). Although interviewing as a qualitative method is common, it is still a lengthy process, including preparations, the interview itself, transcribing and analysing the results (Bryman & Bell 2015). In order for an interview to be professional, it has to reach up to certain demands. The interview must provide trustworthy results, the results must be valid, and it must be possible for others to check the conclusion critically. (Lantz 2007) Interviewing as a method may be used when the researcher strives to research convoluted phenomena and gain deeper knowledge on a specific question. Moreover, interviews are a good approach when the goal is to target specific interview objects who have insightful information about the research problem and when the researcher strives to understand the problem profoundly. (Denscombe 2018)

In qualitative interviews, the researcher can change the order of the interview questions and even modify the questions themselves, ask new follow-up questions, and let the interviewee talk in a way that she pleases. The focus lies in the thoughts of the interviewee and hence the interview guide is only a guide, not a report that has to be followed strictly. Qualitative interviews strive for long and wide answers in contrast to quantitative interviews, where the answers must be documented and easily conserved. (Bryman & Bell 2015)

An interview guide is composed in order to make the interview reliable and for the interviews to have the same structure. The questions need to be asked in a logical order, and without a plan, the interview might easily lose track. (Lantz 2007) Apart from the researcher leading the interview forward, it is also important that the interviewee has given their consent to the interview and that what is said during the interview can be used as data for analysing the results afterwards (Denscombe 2018).

The qualitative interview can be divided into two categories, the unstructured and the semi-structured interview. The unstructured interview does not follow any predetermined questions and hence the interview resembles a normal conversation. The interviewer might start with one question but other than that, lets the interviewee talk freely and ask questions only when needed or to keep the interview going. The semi-structured interview, on the other hand, follows an interview guide made beforehand by the interviewer. The questions stated in the guide are all asked in the same way, but they do not necessarily need to be asked in a specific order and additional questions can be asked. The semi-structured interview leaves room for the interview to have depending on the situation, just like the unstructured interview. (Bryman & Bell 2015) Both forms of qualitative interviews, however, are searching for an answer to something specific and in that sense an interview is not equal to a discussion. (Lantz 2007)

Personal interviews are the most common form of qualitative interviews, before group interviews and focus groups. The advantages of personal interviews are that they only require two persons to match their calendars to find a possible slot for the interview. Moreover, they allow for a clear understanding of who said what and it is simple to transcribe the recordings as only one person acts as the source. (Denscombe 2018)

Regarding research ethics, the researcher must not cause any harm to the interviewees during data collection. This is also applicable when analysing the data when emphasis must be placed on objectivity and honesty. The researcher must value the interviewees' right to anonymity, which additionally is a favourable method for preventing negative outcomes for the interview objects. (Denscombe 2018)

5.5 Interview objects

Since the market for edible insects in Finland can be considered small, it put some restrictions on choosing the interview objects most suitable for the purpose of the study. The interview objects were chosen based on their activity in the field for edible insects in Finland. The companies involved in the study were restricted to companies whose end products were directed at human consumers or farmers. At the time of interviewing, the companies ranged

from one-year-old to six-year-old companies. The companies sell their products both directly to the customer through their webstore, offers or at events, but also through other distribution channels such as grocery stores and speciality stores.

Below is a list of the persons in alphabetical order who were interviewed together with their title, company and date of interview. ChefBug, Entis, Griidy and Muurahaiskauppa are all companies focusing on business-to-consumers while EntoCube focuses on business-to-business. Muurahaiskauppa is inactive and hence Robert Ramstedt is in this study handled as both company representative and a field expert. The other field experts have various backgrounds; Susanne Heiska is Senior Scientist at Natural Resources Institute Finland, Topi Kairenius and Ilkka Taponen are two of the founding members of Tuotantohyönteiset ry which is an association for domestic food and feed insect industry actors. Ilkka Taponen is not active in the association anymore and is hence not representing the association but acting as a field expert with both domestic and international experience. Topi Kairenius is an insect chef, author and speaker and has been active in the field for edible insects and promoting insects long before it became legal to sell insects for humans, and has arranged events and caterings for many years through his site Hyönteiskokki.

Interviewee (alphabetical order)	Company/organisation	Position	Date
Aija Viitaniemi	ChefBug Oy	CEO, Founder	6.1.2020
Antti Reen	Griidy Oy	CEO	3.1.2020
Ilkka Taponen	Tuotantohyönteiset ry	Founding member	9.3.2020
Otto Palonen	EntoCube	COO	18.3.2020
Robert Ramstedt	Muurahaiskauppa	Founder	4.3.2020
Samuli Taskila	Entis Oy	CEO, Founder	13.1.2020
Susanne Heiska	Natural Resources Institute Finland	Senior Scientist	6.2.2020
Topi Kairenius	Hyönteiskokki Tuotantohyönteiset ry	Insect chef Founding member	8.1.2020

Even though all interview objects gave their consent to release their names in this thesis I have, however, chosen to keep them anonymous in the analysis as the sample is small. I will refer to them as C1, C2, C3, C4 and E1, E2, E3 and E4 in which the C stands for Company representative and the E stands for Expert in the field.

5.6 Data analysis

According to Bryman and Burgess (1994), qualitative research analysis is a continuous procedure and the researcher can choose to either start analysing the data immediately after collecting parts of the data, or wait for all data to be collected before beginning the process. Gibson and Brown (2009) continue that qualitative research often does not follow a straight line from topic decision to ready paper through theory collecting and data gathering and analysis. But rather, jumps from phase to phase and the researcher might want to consult theory in the middle of data analysis or stop writing a collect more data. Hence, the process, even though following a structured plan from beginning to the final version, can form according to the need and occasion.

Analysing qualitative interviews is made based on the interviews themselves, linked together to the bigger picture. The data collected through qualitative interviews is, as stated previously, descriptive and according to the flow of the interview. One cannot make a comprehensive analysis by summarising the answers, but the answers must be put into perspective. (Lantz 2007) A condition favourable for success in analysing qualitative interviews is that the interviews are recorded and transcribed. Transcribing takes time and hence needs to be planned as a part of the research. Moreover, transcribing the interview assists in both reminding about the interview, what was said and how, and offers an easier method to analysing the data than listening to the recording repeatedly. (Denscombe 2018)

A total of eight interviews were conducted for this thesis. All of the interviews were done in Finnish and two were done virtually due to partly long distance between interviewer and interviewee and partly because of the recommendations by the authorities regarding the corona virus COVID-19. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and the results translated into English. The transcribed material amounted to 73 pages in the language in which the

interviews were conducted in, Finnish. All quotations are hence translations made by the researcher. Most of the interviews were done face to face with the interviewee at a place that suited them the best, except for two interviews that were conducted via Skype. The interview objects were not offered anything in return and wanted to take part in the study. The researcher did not know the interviewees since before.

A common way of analysing qualitative data is by recognising themes that occur in the data, called thematic analysis. Thematic analysis focuses on recognising three aspects in the data, being commonly arising themes, opposing views and how the various components relate to each other. (Gibson & Brown 2009) In this study, I transcribed the data into the same structure as was used for the interview guide, highlighting topics and subtopics. This way analysing the data and finding patterns was eased, as the interviews were unique in form due to the respondent's way of answering the questions.

5.7 Summary

This chapter started with briefly exploring the research method where after the trustworthiness of a study, particularly a qualitative study, was inspected. The chapter continued by presenting the chosen research method, why I chose to go forward with a qualitative approach and analysing the appointed interview method more closely. Finally, the data source was presented together with a detailed description of how the data was collected. The interview objects were presented, as well as the procedure for how the data was collected and analysed.

6 Empirical findings

This chapter will present the results of the study. Altogether eight interviews were conducted for this thesis and the results will be presented according to the main topics in the Interview Guide (found under Appendices). The same guide was used for all interviews and the main topics are Background, Strategy, Customers and Competition. Although, as reliability is not measured in the same way in qualitative research in which the interviewer has an important role as the research conductor herself, as in quantitative research in which the same questionnaire is used for many respondents (Daymon & Holloway 2010: 78-79), the flow might have been slightly different regarding interviewee and progress of the interview. The answers have however critically been analysed case-by-case and carefully implemented under the right category.

6.1 Background

As an introduction to the theme, I asked the interviewees to tell me how they started either the insect business or first became interested in the field and what it was that triggered the spark. Many expressed their interest in sustainable development and sustainable food production as reasons to explore the potential of edible insects. This was accompanied by saving the world and finding solutions to battle famine and the unsustainable meat production we are used to today. Another reason is overall health and finding varieties when dealing with allergies. Finland was mentioned as a pioneer country in this field, compared to the Nordic countries. Three of the respondents mentioned taking the leap to the field by wanting to explore innovative and novelty things overall and to bring new products to the market. In a few cases the spark for either interest in edible insects or found a company was triggered through studies. Many of the respondents had food or gastronomy as a hobby and were at the same time concerned by the world situation and the climate.

“It originally started as a hobby. As early as ten years ago, I started experimenting with picking wild insects and raising them myself”. (E1)

The Madventures show with Riku Rantala and Tunna Milonoff was brought up by a few of the interviewees, which indicates that the show has made an impact on both the active partners in the field but most likely also the customers, as one of the interviewees told me. One interviewee brought up intuition and the feeling after having watched a video of a Finnish pioneer cooking with insects, and that was a triggering factor.

As to sum up, in six out of eight cases sustainability was a main reason for entering the field of edible insects, either as a founder of a company or as a field expert. In two cases the main reasons were excitement over novelty products and an urge to deliver something new to the market. The FAO report from 2013 *Edible Insects: Future Prospects for Food and Feed Security* regarding usage of edible insects was mentioned as a trigger and important document in the beginning of choosing the path for future career.

“Like many others, I had experience of eating insects through travelling in Asia, and the FAO report threw gasoline into the flames; a big organisation stated that insects are a smart thing. Further through the improvement of the world and ecology foremost, and also the fact that on the hobby side food has long been close to the heart.” C4

6.2 Strategy

On the question on how they would describe their strategy, C1 said that their strategy is an ongoing process and the focus is to create tasty and successful products for a reasonable price. Their strategy is evolving constantly, and they must challenge their own ideas continually. C2 emphasised the urge to normalise the products to consumers and focus on making tasty products. The strategy was also to start small and slowly grow. C3 has the same approach and focus on normalizing insects in the Western countries as an ingredient as they have good nutritional values and are organic. They underlined, that trends in many cases start in the West to then move on to other countries; by consuming insects here (in the West) it might be possible to reach other countries where a good source of protein is needed. They are focusing on making products that are easy to approach. C4 said that their strategy is to acquire new customers and build networks in Europe. E3 answered that their main strategy had been internationalisation as the Finnish market was too small. C3 also brought up that

they try to focus on one main target area and do it well; the optimal situation would be to control everything in the production chain, from farming to processing and consumers and business, but as resources are small one has to choose a clear focus.

When I asked what their strategy is, one of the respondents thought aloud about it and ended up saying:

“The strategy is to try and do different things all the time and advance through success. A blind monkey in a dark room-type of strategy, where you try to find the liana by fumbling.”
(C1)

The above answer sums it up rather well. As the field is new both to the companies and the consumers there are not yet ways that are better than others and the actors move forward by trial and error. The companies are learning by doing and exploring new opportunities.

Strategy development

Coping with the fact that the market is new, the companies are still experimenting with what works best for them. For some, the path has been straighter than for others, but they are still testing and trying to determine what product is most successful. All companies mentioned that pricing is still an issue and that the end product, in many cases, simply is too expensive. They have been exploring different options and solutions, and some have ventured products from consumers to animals, from processing to growing insects, whether to focus on whole insects or insect flour, whether to be active in growing the farming network and so on. All this have however helped the companies gain experience in the field, but they are still finetuning their core business idea. They are all focusing on narrowing down the core idea. One of the interviewees mentioned that they are changing their strategy more towards direct-to-consumer and focusing on their webstore.

Challenges

The biggest challenge for the companies is prejudice. Previously the fact that selling edible insects was not legal was the biggest obstacle and especially two of the companies were active in bending the rules. Moreover, price is a major challenge. E1 wished for the sake of

the whole field that pricing would be more competitive. C3 said that farming insects is still costly for three reasons; it is not yet automatised enough, it is low scale business and it is not subsidised. Hence, it can hardly be compared to meat production. They believe that when the price is at the same level as meat today, it will change consumer behaviour.

The business-to-consumer company representatives all mentioned quality and Finnish produce as top factors when creating products. As C2 said, they are not striving to being the biggest or most successful as the other criteria, being sustainability, health, and price, are more important. E3 said that companies in Finland see marketing as an expense instead of an investment which is challenging. Small start-ups might not have the resources, but marketing is essential for surviving. E4 continued that many new companies seemed to have been created based on emotion rather than experience as insects have been interesting. However, these companies have not succeeded which shows that companies with relevant experience in their teams are more successful.

“Prejudice is the greatest challenge. A big challenge is also the price. Awareness needs to be raised still.” (C2)

One of the field experts, E2, mentioned, that in the beginning all companies had to do everything, e.g. developing their business processes, marketing, develop production and animal feed and apply for permissions, among others. This was difficult for the companies, while at the same time trying to protect their interests. Now that the field has developed, the companies have started to find the direction they want to proceed in and collaboration between companies is better, which shapes the field further. E1 mentioned that the main priority is to tell as many people as possible why insects are good. C3 however said that it is costly to tell people why they should eat insects. E1 continued that when the interest in Finland now is low, companies should turn their focus on international markets, and when the interest in Finland rises one of the ultimate philosophies regarding edible insects, locality, can be reached.

Both E3 and E4 said that now might not yet be the right time for insects, and that the right time is still to come. In that case, the companies already active are early out and this is one challenge.

Marketing, mission, and vision

The main marketing operations done by all companies are tastings and taking part in events. Since the core obstacle has been to encourage potential customers to try and taste insects, that has been the number one priority. As E4 said, Finnish consumers do not have any memories of their mothers cooking delicious crickets but when a generation like this grows up the situation will be another. Tastings have been done at different events such as festivals and shopping malls, but also smaller occasions such as private events have been arranged. Media coverage was intense two years ago when Finland allowed marketing and selling insects to consumers and the media wanted recipes for insects. The problem back then was that no-one, in fact, could make the dishes as insects could not easily be bought.

C3 said that they communicate their vision and mission better now than before, and that they strive to tell their existing customers about their vision, both offline and online. As an example, both C2 and C3 add small notes with information or greetings to the customer ordering products from their webstore. C3 emphasised repeating the core message in all communication. E2 pointed out, that the packaging for edible insects abroad is more informative and promotes the ecological aspects of insects. E2 continued that it seems that companies now develop products for more thought-through forerunner customer groups.

“Now, perhaps a little more thought will be given to the fact that there are potential consumer groups who are pioneers in insect eating and mainstreaming. And let’s think about the products targeted for the slightly narrower target group that they fit their needs. The marketing actions of the insect products may not be visible to such a wide audience.” (E2)

E3 had found social media marketing and Google marketing to be the most beneficial forms of marketing for companies with small resources. Facebook and Instagram require less time but if the company has time, then search engine optimisation is the best tool to utilise. This

was supported by C3, who uses social media and influencers in their marketing, but also mass media. The importance of media was pointed out by all interviewees, however, with the constraint that Finnish media is not publishing articles about edible insects now as the field is experiencing a dip. A few of the respondents pointed out however, that it is only the media who describes the field dipping, but in reality, it is developing. E3 continued that new applications such as TikTok probably would work for targeting a younger customer group who are not nervous about insects. E3 pointed out that Google is good for targeting customers who already are close to buying while social media works as informative channels.

“If you have the time and know how to write then SEO is the best. It requires you to be able to write and you have time. And if you have less time then you should invest in either Instagram or Facebook. Or if you know what people are buying then Google is the best as when googling people are more likely to buy, they are looking for thing X because they need it.” (E3)

Another event where the different actors have been collaborating to raise awareness is “Bugi Hyönteisruokafestivaali”, an event that has been arranged two years in a row. In 2018 the event was held in Helsinki and in 2019 in Pori. The clientele was slightly different as the event in Helsinki was held in Maria 01, a non-profit entrepreneurial community, and in Pori in a shopping mall. According to the actors present at the events, the shopping mall worked well as the event attracted passers-buyers that would not otherwise have interacted. The reason for arranging the event in Pori was because of the “Bugs and Brands” development project in the Satakunta area, lasting from 1.3.2019 to 31.8.2020 (Bugs and Brands, 2020). One of the companies also created a truck that drove around in Finland, serving insects to people. It helped in reaching new potential customers who would otherwise not have tasted insects. Creating trust amongst customers was mentioned as an important part in normalizing and using chefs’ clothes at events had proven successful. It creates confidence for the product.

As the Muji store opened its doors in a big shopping mall in the centre of Helsinki in December 2019, it has for two of the company’s proven to be a big visibility factor. They

managed to provide their products to a more competitive price and together with the marketing done by the store, sales have been good. Compared to the conventional grocery stores where products compete for visibility with thousands of other products, at Muji visibility is better.

The company representatives all emphasised the importance of good visibility online and having a working web store, especially for reaching out to customers abroad.

Marketing actions shaping the market

For one of the companies, the next steps in shaping the market are to stabilise production and find the right distribution channels, and to think about what products to focus on, where they should be sold and to whom, and put the focus on purposefully developing these elements. E3 wish that the market would develop in a diverse manner and that the price range would settle near the level of meat products. For another of the companies, the next steps include focusing on protein products, meat replacements and snacks, with the aim on creating products that can compete with other existing products both regarding price, taste and environmental aspects. The other companies will concentrate on the web store and growing their network. Most of the interviewees pictured a future where meat consumption has decreased and in which insects are a part of the everyday diet.

“It’s ultimately a pretty simple thing to embrace why insects are such a sensible option in food production. When you just get to explain and a person realizes it and gets inspired by it herself and puts it on the end of the salad table where there’s some nuts and roasted onions and you add crickets because it fits perfectly.” (E1)

Now is a calmer period and the market has subsided. C1 saw the positive in the situation as they now have time to work on innovations and improve products, without pressure from the media. On the other hand, the viewpoint of C2 who represented a smaller company wished for the interest to take off again soon. All interviewees, however, eagerly waited for the market to grow slowly but steadily. They commented that the market development so far has jumped forward with peaks and lows and it has been under much work to respond to the demand. However, E4 pointed out the, apart from what the media might communicate, edible

insect sales have never reached a high peak to be followed by a crash, sales have instead increased slowly and never been exceptional. E4 continued that as human food insects might never become as popular as vegetable protein but as animal feed the situation is another. This was supported by E1 who however wished for insects to be normalised as human food too. However, diversity and different alternatives is key, and every possibility that aids in decreasing meat consumption is good.

“Certainly, it would be nice to hope for explosive growth, but for myself, I would hope for upward, steady growth. Since these are insects that not only appear somewhere, they need to be bred and taken care of and the conditions put in order. Furthermore, they are living beings with whom we are dealing.” (C1)

When asking the interviewees how they see that their marketing actions have shaped the market, C1 answered that the insect truck left the biggest impact and they got lots of positive feedback. As for now, the most important marketing activity to be done is mainstreaming edible insects and that is done by offering good experiences to people. Two of the companies created unconventional products containing insects before it was legal to sell insects for human food. One of them was a jar with crickets and granola and marketed and sold as kitchen decoration (keittiösomiste); a somewhat provocative product that was not openly meant for food. Another product from the same producer was crickets in a bag (sirkkapussi), sold as eye candy. The cricket bag did not pass the screening of the authorities and was forced to be taken away from the retail store but instead sparked the authorities to react.

“I would argue that one of the absolute biggest things was getting a product on store shelves and thereby sparking the conversation. Another thing that was done in the beginning was talking with politicians too, no direct or targeted lobbying was done but whenever there was a chance it was used as well. And then the footwork that was done has been a really big deal.” (C4)

Moreover, tastings and interacting with people in different ways was seen as important by all companies as well as experts. However, both companies and experts agreed that

communicating vision and mission could be improved. E4 mentioned, that they analysed social media marketing made by various companies in the field, and the result showed that it was not active, and, with a few exceptions, there seemed to be no strategy behind. E4 thought that one reason might be that long-term marketing actions fall short of short-term actions as resources are limited. E3 continued, that companies should invest more in acquiring long-term customers, as the lifetime value matter more, and continued that marketing actions cannot be assumed to bring back revenue immediately after one campaign but requires a lasting action plan.

What is special in the field for edible insects compared to almost any other field, is that here things are done that have never been done before. – E4

C1 says that there have been discussions on doing more marketing together as all companies are small and none have massive resources. Hence everyone is needed, and the longer they stay, the better. This was mentioned by all interviewees, that every company operates from a slightly different angle which adds to the palette. C1 continued that they focus on products that they think are reasonable and let other companies concentrate on other products. As the market stabilises there has been some ideation on joining forces in order to break through the European market, but the discussions are not that far yet.

Main drivers for the market to be created and shaped

E2 mentioned one main driver for companies to rethink their strategies was the market struggles that occurred in the beginning and forced companies to develop. On the question of how the market has changed since they started, C1 answered that many have already tried and tasted insects but not everyone. C1 continued that the market is now more accepting and hence has turned in a better, more favourable direction. Media was mentioned as one important actor in shaping the market as it managed to create a hype. All the interviewees however saw the media hype slightly negative as the market was not ready to deliver yet. However, the cricket bread by Fazer was mentioned as an important product to create trust for the field, even though all agreed that the product itself was not great.

C3 said that in Finland the market has changed so that the novelty in it has faded. Many have already eaten insects and are now waiting for the products to develop. Now it is not enough that the products contain insects to bring added value, but they need to also be reasonably priced, tasty and the insect should bring something relevant to the product.

E2 continued that one way of mainstreaming edible insects would be to add them to the official dining recommendation and further implemented in the public sector. For this to happen more research is needed regarding e.g. nutritional values and processes. However, as this is a lengthy process E2 saw that the market first will develop with the help of early adaptor customers and through the European market. E3 said that there will always be people to whom the charm of novelty is enough, but one cannot build a business with it as a foundation. E3 continued that buying overpriced products simply because they are ecological does not make it in the long run.

“There is always a group for whom the charm of novelty is enough. As long as there is something it’s enough. But you can’t build a business on it.” (E3)

Customer acceptance and reactions

On the question of how Finnish people have reacted towards the new market, C1 and C3 answered that it divides people. Overall, all respondents answered that Finnish customer have responded well, and in most cases, better than in other countries. The most surprising thing for C1 was to notice that there are many people in Finland who have already been growing, for example, mealworms at home. The time is now favourable for edible insects as sustainable development in general and climate change in particular is an important issue which everyone ought to think and do something about. Even though climate change is a serious business, they do not want to make eating serious, and hence strive to keep eating insects fun. C2 mentioned that children are well-informed about sustainability issues and that many customers point out that insects are the future. C3 and E3 continues that Finnish people seem to be open toward new things and one reason behind this is that Finland has neither a strong food culture like other countries nor a strong identity when it comes to traditional dishes. E2 said that according to earlier research, it was expected that Finns would try insects open-mindedly. What was surprising however, was that people tried but only once. It is easy

to sell an exciting product once but even more so difficult to create a continuous demand. E2 continued that Finns are however open to new foodstuffs but it requires more marketing, better products, and time.

As the company is young, C1 said that it is easy to challenge oneself as it happens automatically when trying to determine what works and what does not. It is good to have a team of people from diverse backgrounds. This was supported by E3. C3 mentioned that some products are meant only to create a market but does not necessarily solve any problems that insect food otherwise can, referring to sustainability issues.

“The charm of novelty is gone and now the products need to develop and offer some added value. It is no longer enough to have a cricket in the product, but it should be reasonably priced, tasty, and cricket should really bring something sensible to that product.” (C3)

6.3 Customers

All company representatives said that they are still working on defining the different customer segments and collecting data to support segmenting. The field experts did not either have a clear answer on who the customers are, and one said that field does not yet have clear data on who the customers are, compared to animal feed. All however had guesses based on events and webstore analytics.

Defining customers have according to C1 been difficult but one cannot exclude demographical factors. The biggest customer segment that is more visible as a group is men under 40-50 years old. On the other hand, C1 continued, that in many families it is the woman who decides what to buy and her preferences might be different from the males’. According to C2’s observation, males between 25 and 35 years are the biggest customer segment as well as children. E1 had not yet found what the linking factor is in people who are interested in edible insects as the group is so diverse. C3 defined the main customer to be a person living in the city who probably has a higher education and reflects on what to consume, age and sex does not matter. This was supported by E3 who define the main customers to be males under 40 years or females over 65 years who live in the capital city area and have a certain income

level to make buying overpriced products possible. However, C3 continued that it depends more on the product what appeals to whom.

At this moment, C1 emphasised that they need to address their product to a big crowd as the customer segments are still to be found. This was supported by E1 who however points out that companies with a clear target group have a good starting point. C3 claimed the leading challenge to be reducing the customer acquisition cost. They target customers by offering their products in areas where their target customers live and utilise influencers on social media.

E2 said that the main consumer is a working parent with several children who quickly must pick up something from the grocery store and rapidly make dinner. A major surprise for C2 and E3 was noticing that the elderly has shown great interest in the products as they are concerned about getting enough protein. The elderly is however difficult to reach as they need to be met in person. They are not the ones who buy products online. E2 continued that for this product, edible insects, the companies should focus on the early adaptor customers who are conscious about sustainability issues.

C2 wished that insects would be introduced in schools more, for example in cooking classes. Customers also consist of sports events and educational establishments. C3 said that they strive to targeting a younger customer segment as they will be the future potential when the market grows bigger and continues that is a balance between the present and the future.

Added value

C1 said, that the added value they want to give their customers is to bring interesting, sustainable, transparent, healthy, and tasty food to people. E4 thinks that the added value in edible insects lies in the visuals of whole insects, however, continues that insect flour is the easiest way to reach out to the mass. This was supported by E2. C3 said that the added value they offer their customer lies in the wide product range with products being easily approachable and points out that their products with edible insects are dairy free, soy free, gluten free and contains nutritional fibre, vitamin B12 and iron. The nutritional aspect was

brought up by all companies. C3 continued that being able to offer customers good nutritional value in combination with a sustainable farming method brings added value. E2 saw added value in ethical values and ecological contribution and thinks that a product group that would not promote insects as such but concentrate on the sustainability aspects such as ethically and sustainably produced products. E2 thought that an ethical product group would make it easy for consumers to know that they are making a good choice by choosing a product, which would make them feel good without emphasising the insects too much. E2 pointed out that certificates are important when marketing abroad.

When developing a new product, C1 said the ideation starts from two factors: it has to taste good and it must bring some sort of added value to the customer. For some, the value might lie in getting nutrients such as vitamin B12 or protein, for others it might be about actually seeing the insect or just wanting to try insects and add it in their diet.

“It cannot be a product that contains insects just for the sake of insects, but that people have some reason to buy it.” (C1)

Customer participating in marketing

All respondents mentioned that their customers actively market their products. Edible insects are such a product that eating it is an experience that most do together with a friend and post it on social media. However, E1 pointed out that for a product to be visually interesting it needs to contain whole insects instead of insect flour. This has been a key factor in reaching potential customers and helped to spread the word as a network. Consequently, thought has been put into branding, design of packaging and development. C1 enthusiastically said that edible insects provoke discussion and interest, which might be a reason why it was noticed quickly. A customer finds the product and influences where the product will end up physically by bringing it with her. One of the companies was creating a new customer program to engage with both old and new customers. E3 said that they should have included customers more in marketing and referred to referral concepts where the customer recommends a product to a friend and benefits from it by receiving a discount code. This thought was also mentioned by E4.

6.4 Competition

When asking about competition, the answers differ. One of the companies saw some of the other Finnish actors in the same field as competition, while they cooperate with others. The same company prefers working and developing on its own. Another company mentioned the rest of the world that competes with the same sort of products in general, and Eastern Europe in particular, as their main competitor as the workforce is cheaper there. C3 argued, that it depends on the customer and from what angle they approach the products. Competition can be composed from the meat industry but also companies providing vegetable protein products.

“I would think about competition from a broader perspective. The biggest competitor is people's consumption habits. They are not used to eating crickets.” (C3)

Competition also rises from different fields when customers are making choices on what to buy or invest in, which means companies must keep an open mind to where possible competition stems from. E2 answered that the situation has been intense, and the field is constantly changing, and that many companies probably sense that an extra pair of eyes in the back of one's head would be beneficial to know what is happening. It is difficult to perceive what will drive change as change is constant and companies need to adapt and be proactive. C4 said that the increased competition did not affect their strategy, but it has helped in the decision on what parts of their business to discard and what to focus on. Increased competition was by all interviewees perceived as positive and when more actors are active in the field it brings trust in the field as a whole. E4, accompanied by C3, said that when one company is growing, it grows by earning shares from other fields, not by cannibalising the other companies in the same field. Since companies increase in both number and size and the unsuccessful ones quit, it gradually becomes clearer for the existing companies what to focus on. Hence, the field is now starting to experience companies differentiating themselves from one another. E3 said that a company that has taken care of its economy and has a strong brand is competition to take seriously. The companies were however concerned about the increased competition in a way that if any actors in the field performs poorly or causes harm it will

affect the whole field. Moreover, the challenge with disagreeing on how to shape the market was brought up. E1 answered that before it became legal to sell edible insects all actors were, in a way, together against the authorities. Now that the market is open the foundation for competitive setting is there, but it does not show. E1 continued that every company takes care of their own business and strive to differentiate from the others. One of the respondents argued that not every actor strives to normalise the products but rather rides on the product being somewhat extreme and creating a wow effect.

E4 pointed out that the companies collaborate more than compete, and if any of the companies active in the field is doing poorly or failing it is a loss to all the other companies at the same time. This was supported by E3 who said that actors in this field have collaborated remarkably well and supported each other.

“Finnish companies cooperate a lot and do not compete with each other that much. The fact is that if one of the firms does poorly or fails then it is also a loss to the other firms. The fact that there are more actors brings credibility to others.” (E4)

Partners

On the question of who the main partners are, all companies mention the big grocery stores as well as smaller specialty stores in Finland. All companies acknowledged peer companies in the same field as partners. Moreover, international chains was mentioned as exciting potential; the cricket bags are small, and people transport them on trips when they go abroad. Other partners are marketing agencies, insect farmers and roasters. Apart from the web store, also restaurants are important distribution channels.

“Every single person who has the possibility to make these products visible and bring them forward, I count as our partner.” (C1)

C4 mentioned their customers as the main partners. They have an open dialogue with the customers and the customers contact them when they want to bring up ideas and thoughts.

Hence the customers influence the product development even though the company does not systematically ideate on future strategies for shaping the market with their customers.

Rules in the field

When asking the interviewees if any regulations or rules have been drawn up within the field by the actors, most companies mentioned “Tuotantohyönteiset ry” which is an association that brings all actors together and acts as an information channel to and from the authorities. E4 mentioned, that when selling edible insects became legal in Finland, close to every actor in the field came together to discuss rules and regulation with the Finnish Food Authority. This has led to the point where Finland has one of the best guides for insect farming and is consulted by other countries. A few of the interviewees, both company representatives and field experts, said that the communication with the authorities has been open and there has been no friction in the dialogue. However, before the regulation was changed the actors active already then had to learn how to handle the authorities which in the beginning seemed difficult.

E2 brought up IPIFF (International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed) as an active organisation in Europe promoting edible insects, where actors in the field together have formulated the guidelines.

What is the secret to success?

As the last question for the interviewees, I asked why they think that they are still in business and have not gone bankrupt or quit. To the interviewees who did not represent a company, I asked the same question in general. The answers were similar, and an aspect that rose were that companies that commenced during the hype phase without any background in either start-ups or the food industry have quit, partly due to overly optimistic expectations for growth. C3 found that companies who try to do everything struggle to a bigger extent as the resources will not suffice. Many newcomers started when media wrote about the prospects in the field without further experience or solid business plan. E3 emphasized the importance of a good team beside having a good product. C3 answered that they had a long-term vision since the start with no expectation of immediate change or that customers would rush for their products. C1 said that they have proceeded with patience and with a modifiable strategy.

C1 continued that they want to try what works before investing heavily, divide risk and develop products and sales through trial and error. C2 answered that quality is their main priority, and starting small with a stable base.

“Partly because of luck and partly because of perseverance, and ability to make quick changes of direction. It has not been easy for us either.” (C4)

E2 pointed out that the ability to predict and to adapt to change has been strong in the surviving companies. Moreover, diverse knowledge within the team is important. E2 continued that being part in innovative business always comes with risks and hence good risk management is crucial. That, and luck. Companies who have been able to move forward despite failing attempts, understand competition and the customer as well as the big picture and networked internationally, they have succeeded.

6.5 Summary

In conclusion, it can be noted that as the companies still are small and young, none of them had a clearly defined strategy. However, all companies had engaged in marketing activities to both make and shape the market they are active in. This was noticed by all interviewees, both company representatives and field experts. Main marketing activities was taking part in events, organise tastings, market on social media and through the webpage, and through repetition slowly but steadily work to change people’s feelings of edible insects as part of a normal diet. The strategy was seen as an ongoing process where main factors are to create tasty products to a good price, and that are easily accessible.

Defining the main target customer group was proven to be challenging for the same reason that the companies did not have a clear strategy. The results showed that the main customer is a male between 25-50 years of age, who most probably lives in the city and has a decent income level. Moreover, children were seen as an upcoming potential segment when they grow up, and surprisingly the elderly had shown interest.

The different actors in the field for edible insects collaborate well, although the collaboration was more distinct before the regulation was changed and it became legal to sell insects for food in Finland. This was thought to be because before all actors promoting edible insects

had to work together against the authorities which was a unifying factor. However, many of the respondents said that the collaboration with the Finnish Food Authority has been frictionless and open. Apart from the companies, several actors are active in the field, and the respondents mentioned partners such as retail, marketing agencies, customers, and each other. Factors why the companies, who have succeeded in this field, are still operating, were mentioned to be starting small and steadily grow, have clear business plan and not invest heavily to soon.

7 Data analysis

In the previous chapter the empirical findings from the data collection was presented in detail. In this chapter the results will be analysed further based on the theoretical framework, in order to find similarities and patterns. The analysis will follow the same structure as the empirical findings, using the main topics from the interview guide as headlines. However, the different backgrounds will be integrated with the strategies used. Further a deeper analysis of the customers is made, followed by an evaluation of the competition. Finally, the chapter is wrapped up with a summary.

7.1 Strategy

Many of the interviewees said that one of the reasons for delving into the field of edible insects, was a concern for the environment. Sustainable development of the world we live in was raised as an issue. In many cases it was however not the only reason but rather combined with other interests such as wanting to create or be part of something new, drive to build a start-up, or learn something new.

The field for edible insects in Finland is still small as are the companies. This showed in the interviews in the companies not having clear strategies yet, or not being able to communicate them clearly. However, the active companies have during the past years grown their understanding for the market and are actively working on improving their situation. Varadarajan (2009) states that a marketing strategy includes components related to marketing. The interviewees all mentioned various marketing related actions such as taking part in events, tastings, and improving the webstore. Dibb et al. (2016), argues that the marketing strategy should be based on where the company positions itself and where it is heading, supporting the main corporate strategy and be the interpreter for the company about what the market looks like. Even though neither of the companies had a clear strategy they were all able to list marketing related actions that they had already done or were going to develop. One of the companies was more active especially in social media than the others and it was clear that they invested more in marketing. Kindström et al. (2018) says that even

small actions shape the market which supports all steps taken by the actors working with edible insects in Finland.

Theory implies that yet no marketing strategy for edible insects has proven better than another (Collins et al. 2019). This is supported by the empirical results, where the respondents state that they are testing different approaches.

Social media is used as a marketing channel both by the companies via their own channels, but also by individual customers who test the products and share their experiences through their own profiles. This can be tied together with the presented theory about creating value together. Value is no longer created solely at the time of purchase, but value keeps being created afterwards when the customer uses the product. The individual benefits when she can announce what she has experienced to her network. The company benefits when information about their products is being distributed and reaches potential new customers. The market benefits when knowledge about the supply and market as a whole grows. To create added value can hence in the best-case scenario benefit all actors in the same field where everyone profits from the situation. Ben Letaifa (2014) argues that value is co-created by the company and its customers, which supports the above results of value co-creation. Moreover, Vargo & Lusch (2012) says, that value has previously been thought of as something that company produces and is transferred to the customer at the stage of buying the product or service. Even though this still is correct, the product or service should be able to create value also after the event of purchase, which can be assumed by the results. However, a common challenge for the companies is that the products are still on the expensive side and that customers taste the products once but do not necessarily return to buy more. The added value might not be enough for the customer to return. This could however be a question for marketing communication in its task to reach out to customers.

However, by inspecting marketing actions and frequency of them in various digital channels it is clear which of the companies has more resources at hand and investing in marketing. Time will show how it affects business growth.

However oblivious of the other respondents' answers, all companies agreed that the core task at this point is to offer customers tasty products, take care of hygiene and avoid scandals such

as food poisoning. Parment (2008) says that products answer several demands apart from the essential requirement. In the case with edible insects, companies answered that they want to make products that taste good, but also emphasised other criteria such as the products being suitable for people with allergies, insects being a positive replacement for meat as a more sustainable option and the edible insects promoting health.

Even if all companies and field experts expressed their thoughts on heading for international markets to be the most sensible strategy, one of the companies explicitly expressed their vision to first conquer the Western countries and then focusing on countries where food is scarcer. This is supported by Bradley (2005) who argues that in many cases products are first made common in developed countries where after they enter the markets of developed countries Bradley continues that when launching products in new markets the product most likely needs to be adjusted as the same approach might not work the same way as in another market. This can be adapted to the new edible insect market in Finland. Even though the situation is slightly different, with new start-up companies introducing the product directly in Finland instead of a multinational company, similarities are still to be seen. In Finland, adjustments have been made to how the product have been marketed and offered. In comparison to markets where insects have been consumed before and the insects sold as they are and simply roasted, the Finnish market has not been ready for such an approach. Here efforts have been made to blend in the insects into other, more approachable products. First, before the legislation changed, crickets were sold as kitchen decoration and eye candy in a jar with muesli ingredients. After the legislation renewal, crickets were introduced in, for Finns so much loved and consumed, bread.

The orientation towards the field for edible insects in Finland where the actors are still small, is supporting the literature that shows that even small actors can shape a market, even individuals (see Baker and Nenonen 2020). Because the resources are scarcer, it might take more time, but all marketing action contribute to shaping the market. The creation and shaping of this market have however been supported by bigger actors such as big companies and institutions. As an example, one can mention Fazer launching the cricket bread as soon as it was legal, as well as changes in regulation. This is supported by the theory, where Raspin

and Smith (2008) suggests that as markets are made as an outcome of several factors, the market itself must be seen as multifaceted.

Hence, even though the companies are not consciously working for shaping the market as such, their actions drive the market towards change. As the field for edible insects is new, several factors such as consumer habits and processes evolve slowly. Nenonen and Storbacka (2018) emphasise that companies who want to shape the market they are in, need to view the market as changeable, not something stable that needs to be adjusted to. This is the case with edible insects in Finland as the market that has evolved does not yet support the companies' and their business. In this case, all active actors in the field are, with or without strategy, working to shape the market in their favour. Mele, Pels and Storbacka (2015) supports this by saying that companies should assume that the market will change and hence build a strategy that supports this in order to manage quick turns if needed.

However, Gavetti et al. (2017) argue that market shaping done by a company will affect the rest of the field, and besides reflect back to the starting company. A challenge here is that the market can be overheated with several actors acting in a shaping manner and make the market unpredictable. This can be seen as a demanding reality in the field for edible insects based on the results, as the changes happening in the field are quick. The actors need to be alert and in many cases proactive, however, if everyone is proactive and acting accordingly, it can alter the market in an insecure manner.

The empirical result reveals, that marketing actions have been used before the market was created and simultaneously as the market amends. Actions such as tastings, arranging events, creating products and lobbying for the regulation to change have been common. This is supported by theory that suggests that marketing alters the market through understanding the customer needs and wants, and that marketing is involved before a market is made or changed (Araujo 2007).

The result from the study showed, that the strategy for the interviewed companies included creating tasty products to a reasonable price that are accessible. When analysing the results, one can see that the companies so far have not yet fully achieved these. If a product is tasty or not, is of course a personal opinion, but one can argue that work still needs to be done.

The price range is at this moment perceived as too high and the products are according the field experts not yet easily accessible.

7.2 Customers

As stated by West et al. (2006), marketing is the channel between the company and the customers, which is seen in the answers by the interviewees. Particularly taking part in events were said to be an important marketing action for the companies as the occasions supported discussions with potential customers. One company mentioned that their customers often contacts them with ideas and thoughts on product development, which indicates that the path between company and customers works in a favourable manner.

Kotler et al. (2016) and Dibb et al. (2016), present that the marketing environment can be divided in the micro- and macro-environment, where the micro-environment includes stakeholders close to the core business and customer relationships, whereas the macro-environment includes all phenomena and trends that influence the company on a wider scale. Based on the results in the study, the interviewees where more or less able to name partners or trends that affect their business. What can be seen in the micro-environment are customers who are still not used to consuming insects, and hence a good amount of work is still to be done to make insects as normal as vegetable protein sources. As one interviewee said, a positive change in the market would be to add insects to the official food recommendations and in that way support the growth of the market. Even though two of the respondents thought that it might be too early for edible insects, the global trend regarding sustainable development speaks otherwise. However, it might take time for trends that require change in the perceptions of the mass to develop and hence the field for edible insects might take years to develop.

The respondents said that it is still difficult to know exactly what the customer segments are and how to reach out to them. One of the companies tried to produce products that would appeal to as many as possible, while another tried to focus on a specific group more clearly. Time will show what strategy works the best but according to theory, the company need to understand who the customers are and communicate to them, as well as understand how to

keep the customers they already have and engage with new potential customers (see Dibb et al. 2016). Marketing does not only need to advertise the products, but also understand the customer and strive to develop with the customer needs in mind (Kotler et al. 2016). The results of the study showed the difficulty in defining who the target customer is. This is because the field and the companies are new, but one can also argue that it is because people from every possible segment have been a potential customer as so many have been interested in trying the intriguing product that has been featured in the media. All respondents were sceptic towards the hype partly created by the media as the market was not ready. The when the interpretation of the regulation was changed all actors hastily developed new products, which by a few respondents was intense. Theory implies that when shaping the market, companies should start modestly partly because of not attracting too much attention from the media. If media reports errors or other negativities, it might affect the market (see Kim & Mauborgne 2018)

Some of the interviewees answered that the main customer that they can segment is a male under 50 years who can afford buying costly new products that might still need to be developed and lives in a city. This group can be defined as the early adaptor who is among the first ones to try new interesting products. Children were by a few of the interviewees seen as future highly potential customers and the elderly as an unexpected customer group. Araujo (2007) argues that consumers who consider themselves as being part in a change of something bigger are more prone to trying new products. People on the other hand who are loyal to a brand or company can be more sceptic. Even though only one company at the point of the interviews had a slightly more clear picture of their target customer, theory suggest that a company active in market shaping needs to be clear in communication not only to partners but also customers, in order to advise on new concepts (see Nenonen et al. 2019). This might turn out difficult when the main customer segment is still to be defined.

According to Baker et al. (2016) market shaping activities can benefit from being kept similar to an already existing market as the help consumers and other stakeholders adapt. The field for edible insects lacks direct similarity to lean back on which makes it more difficult for companies and actors to normalise insects. However, as many of the respondents answered,

creating products that reminds of already existing products should be prioritised and developed, instead of using the thrill that insects provoke in people.

The empirical result shows, that the actors actively promoting edible insects as part of human diet, have done so by targeting the youth, include insects in common products, educate consumers, striving for tasty products and in the future use partners in promoting insects. These are all approaches that are mentioned by Raheem et al. (2017), however they also included informing where to buy insects and how to use them. In Finland, the media has been a main driver for the latter. Promoting insects as hidden in other products or showing them as whole divided the respondents. House (2018) indicates that insects should be kept visible to offer a clear selling argument to consumers why to buy a product and that consumers, through seeing the insects, feel good about their choice. This on the other hand is opposed by Collins et al. (2019) who argues that insects rather should not be visible. This shows that whether or not to normalise insects as whole or hidden divides both researchers and practitioners.

7.3 Competition

A division in focus area is to be noticed among the companies in the field, which happens as a natural development when companies experiment in what works for them. The result however showed a milder collaboration between companies than could have been expected. This can be an aspect that Tuotantohyönteiset ry in the future can answer. When new markets are being developed and changes it will in theory lead to actors agreeing on market-specific rules. Such rules did not occur in the interviews to a great extent. However, all actors agreed on that the common feeling between stakeholders was good. Some collaborated more than others and the results show that the ones who collaborated more were more satisfied with the collaboration and the solidarity. This is supported by theory where Araujo (2007) and Kotler et al. (2016) argues that marketing needs a team with people with diverse backgrounds, and the field can unify their vision and communication by working together.

Ben Letaifa (2014) presented a model for companies creating and capturing value (see chapter 3.4). In the first phase companies create an ecosystem or network where they

collaborate to create value and work for the same goal. In the next phase they capture value while creating it through collaboration. The third and fourth phase however do not create value; the third phase still captures it without collaboration and in the fourth the network will collapse as value is neither created nor captured and companies are no longer collaborating. Based on the empirical results, the actors collaborated more when it was not yet legal to sell insects and the actors strived for the same goal. When the regulation was changed, and the market went through a hype the actors started competing more. On the other hand, now that the market has calmed, the actors have come together through the association. This might mean a boost for collaboration in order to create value for the field as a whole.

However, all interviewees agreed on competition being nothing but positive as it creates trust for the field. This is supported by the theory, presenting that more actors promoting the same product or service are stronger together and can reach out to a larger audience. (Nenonen and Storbacka 2018) This is supported by Baker et al. (2016) who argues that several actors forming a network is required to shape a market, together with possible changes in regulation. In order for the field of edible insects to legally commence, it required a change in the interpretation by the Finnish Food Authority, of the novel food regulation by the European Union to include insects as food. This was mentioned as the most important driver for the market to change.

The interview results show that all interviewees recognise the positive aspects in collaborating. Furthermore, they all welcome more actors to the field as it provokes trust in the field, although all companies expressed concern for any actor to blunder. This correlates with theory by Nenonen et al. (2019) who propose that market shaping actions made by a company should still be made even though they might benefit a competitor simultaneously.

7.4 Summary

In this chapter, the empirical findings were analysed based on the theoretical framework. The results of the study defended the theoretical framework well and the interview guide supported the methodology. The backgrounds of the interviewees were diverse although sustainability and an urge to innovate were binding factors. The interviewees mentioned various marketing actions that they had either done themselves or otherwise identified. Even

though the persons taking part in this study have an extensive background and experience regarding edible insects, the field is still new for them as well and all were still examining the best solutions on how to proceed. As to sum up, the company representatives were not able to present clear strategies on how they have been or are going to move forward. However, all could answer the questions which indicates that they had a plan in mind, but it might not have been defined as a strategy.

8 Conclusions

In the following chapter, the research results and analysis will be discussed further in relation to the research questions. The aim is to find answers to the research questions that support the purpose of the study. The chosen case-based research design focuses on understanding the underlying thoughts and perceptions of each case, while examining the theoretical framework against the research questions and problem discussion. The discussion is followed by both theoretical and practical implications as well as limitations of the study. Criticism towards the study will be presented as well as suggestions for improvement. The chapter is completed with suggestions for further research.

8.1 Discussion

Edible insects as a field has made a spectacular entrance in Western countries as concern for a sustainable food production and more ecological protein options are elaborated upon, and the field is still shaping and evolving. Finland, a small country in the North, being one of the forerunners developing the field in many aspects such as developing the process and products and changing consumer perception on including insects in their diet, is fascinating. However, studying how a new market is shaping did prove challenging. Since the field is new and small, comprehensive conclusions are demanding to make since the sample is small and the company strategies are still under construction. Theory regarding market shaping mainly concentrate on big companies, offering insight on how companies with adequate resources have shaped or should shape the market. Marketing with scarce resources sets limitations to what kind of actions can be made and to what extent. Notwithstanding, studying a small field with, for the time being, small companies offer a convenient impression on varied actions taken by actors about to shape the market. Moreover, it requires creativity from the actors to reach set goals with limited resources.

In the following section, I strive to present the empirical analysis according to the research questions presented in the introduction. This way, a comprehensive description of the results is portrayed in an uncomplicated way, linking the purpose of the thesis with the empirical findings. The research questions presented in the introduction of this thesis are:

How is a new market created, and how is it shaped?

What is the strategy behind shaping a market?

How do marketing actions contribute to market shaping?

As briefly stated in the introduction, the problem is formulated based on data and extensive research with the purpose of generating one more piece of knowledge to the field (Alvehus 2018: 20). The above questions have been in the centre of not only the theoretical framework but also the methodological study conducted by qualitative interviews. Further emphasis was placed on entomophagy generally and the new market for edible insects in Finland.

How is a new market created, and how is it shaped?

The field for edible insects in Finland is a good example of a market being created from the very beginning. This indicates that markets are not stable places that cannot be changed. Based on the empirical analysis, for a market to be created it requires not only one but many actors with the same vision who work together for the same goal. These actors have to unite to create a stronger foundation and through it make an impact. In this case, creating the market and shaping it faced different obstacles. In the creation phase, the biggest challenge was to achieve an update in how the novel food regulation was interpreted and legalise selling insects for human food. In the shaping phase, in which the field is now, the most significant obstacle lies in psychology and habits of people. The actors face consumers who are not yet used to the thought of consuming insects as part of their normal diet. A challenge that appeared in the shaping phase, is that consumers seem to have accepted a higher price when the field and products were new and exciting. Now, when many already have tasted insects, the novelty feeling has faded, and the majority is no longer eager to pay a premium price. This creates a demanding environment for the small companies, of which many do not have the possibility to lower prices. This indicates, that focusing on consumers who have the required interest combined with funds to create a demand and hence a market, is to prefer. Without a high enough demand, and supply to meet the demand, a market cannot exist successfully.

For a market to develop, the product must feel both exciting and be easy to access and adopt at the same time. Consumers also need to feel the importance of the product as it fills a demand or offers an alternative to something else already existing. Moreover, companies must take into consideration creating products that does not necessarily contribute to their main philosophy if it in turn aids in creating the market, as one product might work better as an introduction to the field than others, even if it means slightly stepping away from solving the focal issue. Edible insects are not a new product per se, as insects have been consumed in different parts of the world throughout history. However, as it has been uncommon to consume insects in Finland before, insects can be considered as a new product for this market. Companies that produce insects for human consumption have had to invent different ways of presenting the product, and to observe the potential customers in what way they are most likely to first try the product and later buy it.

The market for edible insects can either be viewed as a new market of its own, or just a part of all foodstuffs. If placed in its own category, the field can be evaluated as newly created from a market making perspective and compared with other similar fields such as hemp. In this comparison, both fields have entered the Finnish market recently and have been struggling with sceptic perceptions and strict regulation. In the latter case, this area leans more strongly towards the concept of market shaping in which the field can be viewed from a broader perspective and compared to other market shaping products such as “pulled oats”. Both products, pulled oats and edible insects, provide a new source for protein that is more sustainable than conventional meat. Depending on from what angle one choses to observe the field for edible insects, it creates different challenges. If perceiving the field as unique and a stand-alone field, it is demanding to locate customer segments as there is neither previous data nor experience regarding most potential customers. On the other hand, if placing the field for edible insects as an expanded, but still part of, area of foodstuffs, it changes the structure and other angles for customer segments are discovered. In this case, customers can be found in similar areas of products offering alternative sources of protein, and benchmarks may be found. This implies, that a change in mindset and angle from which

a market is seen can prove beneficial and offer fragments of insight into the market impression.

Unifying for the actors in the field for edible insects in Finland, is that they all view the market as shapeable. The actors have started with a thought to either create something new or offer a solution to an existing problem. This is fundamental for actors seeking to shape or create a market. Moving away from viewing the market as fixed, erases invisible boundaries surrounding the market, and allows for disruptive strategies to be created and used.

What is the strategy behind shaping a market?

In the case of edible insects in Finland, the companies' strategies at this point can be said to be shaped in the same pace as the market itself. As progress takes place, it shapes the market and makes the actors choose direction. The actors are highly responsible for what happens in the market, even though larger entities on the macro-level make a difference that the actors cannot mould in the same way. Based on the data analysis, the strategy behind shaping a market does not necessarily need to be defined in order to work, at least not in new market. The result shows that markets can be shaped by small actors working together towards the same goal and does not need to be shaped by big actors or companies. However, when big companies take part in the market shaping process the market benefits and might take a bigger leap forward. Nonetheless, if a big company decides to withdraw from the market it will express the market not being trustworthy and might harm the progress. Thus, once deciding to take part in shaping activities it is favourable to finalise the strategy, and carefully evaluate whether the company benefits from market shaping activities. Nevertheless, being able to change course when realising that the calculated strategy is not working in the company's favour, also is a valuable decision from the single company point of view. It might however, not prove advantageous from the market perspective.

The study indicated that the process requires actors who are eager to shape the market to improve business, and who sees the market as shapeable. As long as business is unprofitable, alterations needs to be considered to make a change in the situation and improve business.

Even though this study did not focus on consumers and their role in market shaping, the results implied that the role of consumers is important. The field for edible insects is still small and as the result shows, all actors are equally important in raising awareness of edible insects, and consumers play an active part. Activating consumers in marketing actions can hence be recommended for future strategies.

Products, or services, are at the core of a market shaping strategy too, as it is the products that builds the business offers and stands at the core of creating value. The results pointed out, that companies who had a business plan on how to proceed and what to focus on, and a realistic impression of how long it takes for a market to change tolerated market fluctuations best. Further, strongly believing in the product together with an experienced team were corner stones in a successful market shaping strategy. Actors who recognise that market shaping can take several years before showing expected results, are better equipped in the process. They build their strategies on modest achievements and set long-term goals instead of striving for fast results and immediate growth.

Compared to traditional strategic marketing where markets are seen as constant, a market shaping strategy identifies the market as alterable. This poses requirements on the strategy to be proactive and take various scenarios into consideration. The marketing strategy, that goes into more detail than the corporate strategy, should include comprehensive information on who the target customer is, what the company seeks to achieve in the long run, and what kind of added value the company can provide the market, to name a few. Furthermore, the strategy needs to be agile and easily adaptable to changing circumstances, in order to maintain business and not only stay afloat but be successful. Reflecting on the study results and data analysis, one can conclude that actors who have the capability to innovate while focusing on the main goal and striving to create added value for the market, are strong market shapers. Ability to critically evaluate own products and company development, and make analysed decisions based on data and experience are crucial for a successful market shaping strategy.

How do marketing actions contribute to market shaping?

Based on the data analysis and the theoretical framework, one can conclude that markets do change even without a well-articulated marketing strategy or market shaping strategy. However, what is needed is collaboration between different actors who passionately strive for the same goal. Moreover, in this field one can see that marketing actions have been present long before the initial change in the market made the market for edible insects develop.

Marketing is important but as the companies are small, actions are modest. When media is not actively publishing articles about edible insects to the same extent as previously, the field soon experienced a gap in visibility followed by feelings of decline. This proves the strength in marketing communication. Even though marketing in new markets is possible and recommended for small companies, back-up from both media and bigger companies are to prefer, implying that joined forces are stronger than one actor alone. Building a network of actors with the same vision aids in combining forces and gaining a far bigger visibility and knowledge about the field. Particularly in small fields with small actors, cooperation regarding marketing actions are positive. As noticed in the results, the biggest challenge for the field no longer is to improve knowledge about insects as a product, but instead normalising the use of it. The actors work on including insects as part of a normal diet and convince consumers to not only try the products once but keep buying the products.

Since the field is new to Finland, companies and field experts have little solid data on who the most potential customers are and creating a clear customer profile is still challenging. This makes marketing actions difficult to target in order to reach the most potential customers. Hence, putting effort on clarifying customer segments and building customer profiles is crucial. Marketing is most beneficial when reaching the target audience with a focused message that they most likely will identify themselves with. Actors can only use a generalised marketing strategy to a certain degree, but when striving for the best return on investment a clear focus needs to be set. This comes down to the produced content, how the message is communicated and what channels are used to reach the target customers. All this while taking the limited resources into consideration. This indicates, that companies need to

choose the customer segments they desire to focus on and direct their limited resources to the specific groups for highest return on investment.

The empirical data analysis indicates, that marketing is, if not the most eminent, one of the critical areas to focus on when shaping a market. Both theory and the study show, that various marketing paths are to be developed and different channels used in order to figure out the most profitable one. Building a network of both competitors, partners, customers and a skilled inside team stands as a foundation for successful market shaping marketing. As marketing actions, as stated previously, exists even before a market is created or shaped, marketing is not to be excluded from a successful strategy. Marketing plays an important role in creating demand, even though marketing cannot replace an otherwise questionable strategy. Well executed marketing actions creates value both for the customer, the company and for the market.

Moreover, what can be observed based on the empirical results is that marketing actions changes in nature as the market shapes. Marketing goes from being provocative in the beginning of creating or shaping a market, to modest when the market shaping process is ongoing. However, the sample is small and thus conclusions regarding marketing actions changing form cannot be drawn on a general level. When analysing the results, I could not help but recognising features of guerrilla marketing in a market shaping environment. Most marketing actions committed within the field for edible insects in the beginning of the shaping process were provocative and executed with a limited budget. The marketing actions included events and promoting products, of which not all were legitimate, and creating extensive publicity through digital content, mostly by media. In guerrilla marketing, markets are not perceived as static and hence more or less radical activities with the goal of shaping the market are used. This can be seen in the studied field as guerrilla marketing characteristics resembles then ones of market shaping.

8.2 Theoretical implications

Through the empirical study, this thesis has contributed to the earlier theoretical findings about market shaping and to what extent marketing is contributing to changing a new market.

As this study focused on how a market is shaped but chose to study a new market that still is in the early phase of shaping, it was clear to see that market creation is one radical form of market shaping as the theory implied. Through the chosen focus area, contributions to entomophagy has been made in the form of studying how the specific field in a specific area has acted in shaping the market.

Although it seems like change is the new constant, there has not been much research on how markets shape, neither on edible insects. This study may hence contribute to the theoretical field by providing insight in how especially new markets are shaped. Focus was in this study placed on marketing, but as marketing is a fundamental part of a company it was blended with theories on strategic levels within companies, aiming at covering essential parts of market shaping.

This thesis can hopefully be beneficial for small companies striving for either creating a new market or shaping a market. Theory and empirical findings have been compiled in a compact format, addressing the issues with market shaping. The empirical findings have addressed both challenges and possibilities that small companies face, both regarding market creation and market shaping. Hence, especially small companies or start-ups that are pondering how to proceed and what processes to undergo, will most likely benefit from a study like this.

8.3 Practical implications

Based on the previous chapters including theory and empirical study, I have made a few observations. When shaping a market, companies need to have resources to await the change in the market to reach the targeted point. A market shaping process can take years, and companies who do not possess the capability to withstand the slow development will struggle. The resources needed are not only monetary but to a high degree also mental. Companies who believe in their business and products and have a pragmatic attitude towards business growth seem to have an advantage compared to companies with the opposite starting point.

Investing in a skilled team and being part of a larger network are influential factors in a market shaping strategy. The network holds more experience, skills, and resources than one actor alone and working together to create value will result in the companies capturing value.

Marketing plays an important role in shaping and creating a market. Companies need to strive to solve a concrete problem and offer a solution to an existing dilemma. Delving into the core obstacles that both the consumers or the ecosystem are facing and solving them, proposes possible growth opportunities. Marketing is the hotline between the company and the customers and hence marketing action should not only go in one direction from the company to the customers. Rather, the company needs to actively strive to listen to even small calls from the customers in order to understand who the customer is and what problems she might have. Incorporating the customer in product development is recommendable, as by doing so the company may build a stronger customer bond while at the same time receiving first-hand tips and suggestions for further development. This could aid in creating added value both for the companies and their customers. Value is at the core of shaping a new market; if the consumers cannot see the added value provided by the companies and their products, business will not succeed.

8.4 Limitations

Since the companies that are active in the field for edible insects are small and young, it became clear that they might not have lacked the resources to construct a business strategy for their company. Moreover, without a business strategy, a focused marketing strategy is challenging to create as it must be interlinked with the business strategy. The strategy in unison for the companies at this point was mainly to attract potential customers and convince them that insects taste good and are good for both you and the environment. The companies, as they are small, seldom have a dedicated person to develop marketing, not to mention a marketing department.

The sample for the study was limited, and the interviewees chosen by me. Somebody else might have had chosen other respondents which in turn could have given another result. Since the chosen method for the study was semi-structured interviews, the same results might not

be able to achieve if made by another researcher. The study could also have focused solely on companies, both active and companies that have already quit, for a more focused result, instead of including both company representatives and field experts. A limitation with a case-based research design is that the result might not be consistent when remaking the study. Moreover, the interpersonal relationships between interviewer and interviewee can differ, and the analysis is made from my perspective.

8.5 Suggestion for further research

The field for edible insects in Finland can be seen from a smaller perspective as a new market that has been developed during the latest years. This is the perspective I have chosen to base my study on. On the other hand, the field can be seen as a part of a bigger context where all foodstuffs are included, where edible insects are challenging, for example, the meat industry as a subcategory. This could be an interesting angle for further research within the field. Therefore, as a suggestion for further research, I would propose studying the field for edible insects as a new competitor in a bigger market. The perspective could, in that case, be how actors within, for example, the meat, milk, or egg industry perceive edible insects as a competitor.

An alternative approach to study the topic is by choosing another suitable field of interest, either in Finland or abroad, and examine similarities or differences. In Finland, the fairly new field for hemp farming and production would be an interesting field as it resembles the field for edible insects, both in novelty and controversy.

Another interesting angle to examine market shaping in would be to study the interaction between marketing and sales. One could study how market shaping actions correlates with sales results and hence combine the two fields for a comprehensive result. This could be done through a one-case study, examining the marketing actions made by an actor and mirror it on increased, decreased or neutral sales results.

9 Svensk sammanfattning

MARKNADSFÖRINGENS ROLL DÅ NYA MARKNADER OMFORMAS: EN STUDIE OM ÄTBARA INSEKTER I FINLAND

Inledning

Marknader är konstruerade av mänsklig handling och kan således även formos och utvecklao av människan. Utan mänsklig aktivitet skulle inga marknader existera och då företag inser detta kan de se på marknaden de är aktiva i med nya ögon. En marknad inte bara är, utan förändras kontinuerligt beroende på de olika aktiva aktörerna. En marknad kan vara både en fysisk plats, till exempel ett torg, eller ett virtuellt rum där efterfrågan möter tillgång. För att en marknad ska kunna existera måste utöver dessa krav även möjligheten att förvärva en vara eller tjänst uppnås. Exempelvis kan ingen produkt eller tjänst säljas om inte köparen har tillgångar.

En marknadsföringsstrategi, eller strategi i allmänhet, är inte huggen i sten och kan således ändras på om läget så kräver. Således bör inte samma marknadsföringsstrategi användas för olika situationer än den som den är planerad för. Då målet med en marknadsföringsstrategi främst är att åstadkomma tillväxt, kan man argumentera för det positiva i att utveckla flera alternativa strategier för en oförutsägbar framtid. En traditionell marknadsföringsstrategi granskar marknaden som given och något som inte kan ändras på utan till vilken företaget måste anpassa sig. Om marknaden emellertid inte är gynnsam för företaget kan det vara skäl att tänka om.

Hållbar utveckling kan inte anses vara en övergående trend på basis av den information vi besitter i nuläget. Då jordens population fortsätter att växa bör fokus i högre grad sättas på hur vi lever. Ett sätt att minska sitt koldioxidavtryck är att minska på mängden kött man konsumerar. Alternativa proteinkällor existerar redan, som de mer traditionella baljväxterna samt moderna uppfinningar som exempelvis pulled havre. År 2017 ändrade Finland sin tolkning av Europeiska Unionens ”Novel Food Regulation” gällande ätbara insekter, och det blev lagligt att tillverka och sälja insekter kommersiellt. Insekter innehåller förutom protein

även aminosyror och vitaminer som människan behöver. Ett problem är dock att finländarna, som de flesta andra i Europa, inte är vana vid att äta insekter. Finländare är dock relativt positiva inställda till att beakta insekter som ett födoämne.

Syfte och forskningsfrågor

I denna avhandling ämnar jag att granska problemet genom att studera vilken roll marknadsföringen har då nya marknader förändras och koppla teorin till området för ätbara insekter i Finland. I den teoretiska referensramen behandlar jag hur en marknad förändras med fokus på hur finländska aktörer aktiva inom området för ätbara insekter har påverkat och förändrat den nya marknaden. Då detta är ett nytt område är det intressant att granska det mer ingående ur ett marknadsföringsperspektiv. Hur borde marknaden förändras och vilka utmaningar har man stött på? Syftet är att kartlägga handlingar och åtgärder, mer specifikt gällande marknadsföring, utförda av både företag som säljer ätbara insekter för konsumtion och andra experter inom området.

Problemet som denna avhandling ämnar granska är vilken roll marknadsföring spelar då nya marknader förändras och uppstår. Frågor som avhandlingen har för avsikt att svara på är:

Hur uppstår en ny marknad och hur förändras den?

En hurudan företagsstrategi ligger bakom förändring av en marknad?

Hur bidrar marknadsföringsaktivitet till förändring av en marknad?

Den teoretiska referensramen stöder forskningsfrågorna för att ge en övergripande bild över ämnet. Genom att kombinera teori med en kvalitativ forskningsmetod ämnar jag svara på forskningsfrågorna.

Syftet med avhandlingen är att studera hur marknadsföring har medverkat i utformningen och förändringen av marknaden för ätbara insekter i Finland. Jag letar efter svar främst för detta område men är även intresserad av att granska huruvida resultaten kan tillämpas på andra nya marknader. Orsaken bakom att rikta in mig på marknaden för ätbara insekter i

Finland istället för en annan nyskapad marknad är delvis på grund av personligt intresse och delvis på grund av geografiskt läge.

Teoretisk referensram

Marknader kan betraktas på olika sätt om än att betrakta dem som rika och enhetliga är att föredra ur ett marknadsförändringsperspektiv. Detta innebär att en marknad betraktas som ett flexibelt system som inkluderar ett flertal olika aktörer i motsats till att inkludera enbart säljare och köpare, samt att värde tillförs då konsumenten använder produkten eller tjänsten till skillnad från att anse att värde skapas enbart då produkten eller tjänsten säljs. Till yttermera visso, är strategins roll bredare och betonar värdeskapande för både kunder och andra aktörer framom tillväxt och position gentemot konkurrenter.

Marknadsföringsstrategin är en del av företagsstrategin och kan såtillvida gå in på detaljnivå, innehållande bland annat produkter, värdeskapande och kampanjer. Marknadsföringens ansvar är att föra samman kundernas och företagets intressen samt uppnå mål utvecklade för företaget. Marknadsföringsavdelningen är beroende av resurser givna i företagsstrategin varför marknadsföringen bör medverka då företagsstrategin sammanfattas.

En marknadsföringsstrategi kan med fördel uppdateras i fall företaget märker att den inte för dem åt rätt håll eller om marknaden förändras. Marknader förändras ofrånkomligen då olika aktörer är aktiva och nya möjligheter uppstår. Marknadsföring är således närvarande och verksamt redan innan en marknad förändras eller skapas. För att hantera en strategi som fokuserar på marknadsförändring, bör företag fokusera på hur man ska utlösa samt genomföra en förändring. Detta kan ske genom att rikta in sig på att omskapa språk genom att erbjuda nya ord, eventuellt påverka regleringar genom verksamhet som kräver myndigheter uppmärksamhet, erbjuda nätverket av kunder och konkurrenter möjlighet att medverka i marknaden samt att tänka om gällande produktutveckling. Företag som anser att marknaden är given och icke-föränderlig konstruerar en strategi som håller företaget i säkerhet och drar nytta av befintliga möjligheter. Företag som däremot ser marknaden som föränderlig konstruerar en förutseende strategi som för företaget i önskad riktning mot en situation som gynnar företaget. De sistnämnda företagen är de som visar vägen och övervinner hinder med större sannolikhet.

Förändring av marknader inkluderar både förändring av en redan existerande marknad och skapandet av ny marknad. Då en ny marknad skapas är det alltså en form av marknadsförändring, om än en mer dramatisk variant. Marknadsförändring är inte enkom stora företag förunnat och även små företag kan förändra marknader. För att en marknad däremot ska förändras krävs ofta ett samspel mellan olika aktörer som strävar efter samma mål, alternativt slumpmässigt genom självständiga val påverkar en förändring. I fall förändringen är omfattande kan en mer dämpad strategi vara att föredra som tillåter att både det gamla och det nya tillvägagångssättet används simultant under en övergångsperiod. Till marknadsförändring hör inte situationer då företag utökar sin marknadsandel av en existerande marknad eller då företaget träder in på en ny marknad med befintliga produkter.

En ny marknad kan förändras eller skapas genom att ett företag erbjuder en lösning på ett existerande problem eller finner en lösning på ett problem ingen visste om. Alternativt kan företaget fokusera på ett existerande problem men hantera det från en ny vinkel. Detta kan attrahera kunder från andra företag samt kunder som annars inte hade tagit denna marknad i beaktande över huvud taget. Marknadsförändring tar dock tid, oftast flera år, och företag bör därför anta en långsiktig strategi och inte invänta genomslag direkt. Eftersom det är krävande att förändra en marknad är det viktigt att invänta bästa möjliga tillfälle; att förändra en marknad som genomgår någon form av turbulens kan vara att föredra. Å andra sidan spelar även tur en stor roll i huruvida strategin är framgångsrik.

Marknadsförändrande strategier fokuserar på nätverket av aktörer, ser på produkterna med nya ögon och ur kundens synvinkel, kan tvingas inverka på lagstiftning, funderar ut nya kommunikationsmetoder och även nya ord och inkluderar konkurrenter. Främst av allt strävar marknadsförändring efter att skapa mervärde.

Metodik

I denna avhandling har jag valt den kvalitativa forskningsmetoden som mest lämplig för syftet med studien. Grundorsaken till detta beslut är min strävan efter att ta del av de individuella aktörernas tankar och åsikter samt möjligheten att gå in på djupet med resultatanalysen gällande respondenternas unika svar. Som metodform används

semistrukturerade intervjuer där intervjun utgår ifrån en på förhand utvecklad intervjuguidebok. Intervjuerna utförs som personliga intervjuer där jag intervjuar en person åt gången. Frågor i en semistrukturerad intervju behöver inte nödvändigtvis ställas i samma ordning i samtliga intervjusituationer, utan kan ställas i olik ordning beroende på intervjuobjektet och flödet i intervjun. Intervjun strävar dock till att svara på avhandlingens forskningsfrågor och kan således inte jämföras med en diskussion.

En skillnad mellan en kvantitativ och en kvalitativ forskningsmetod är att en kvalitativ metod ger mer rum för individuella synpunkter och forskaren kommer in på djupet med den intervjuade. En kvantitativ metod fokuserar däremot på mätbara teorier och data. En kvalitativ forskningsmetod ger mer rum för individualitet även vad gäller analys av resultatet och kan således vara neutral endast till en viss grad. Resultatet kan, beroende av syfte med studien, analyseras antingen från ett innehållsperspektiv eller genom att även granska interaktion i detalj. Bästa förutsättningen för en djupgående analys av kvalitativt material ger ett inspelat och transkriberat material. Bandspelare är således vid mån av möjlighet att föredra framför anteckningar under intervjutillfället, trots bandspelarens misslyckande i att uppta kroppsspråk och icke-verbal kommunikation. Intervjuerna i denna avhandling spelades in och transkriberades.

För denna avhandling intervjuades sammanlagt åtta personer varav fyra representerar producerande företag och fyra är experter inom området för ätbara insekter i Finland. Personerna handplockades för denna avhandling på basis av deras expertis.

Resultatpresentation

Samtliga intervjuer började med en lättsam fråga gällande respondenternas bakgrund och vad som ledde dem in på området för ätbara insekter. Under intervjun framkom olika bakomliggande orsaker till valet av inriktning samt yrkesval varav de mest framstående var hållbar utveckling, hållbar konsumtion och matproduktion, framtidsfokus, klimatförändring, vilja att utvecklas samt strävan efter att delta i utvecklandet av en ny hållbar bransch. Alla ansåg att ätbara insekter är en del av framtiden och såg potential i området för ätbara insekter, både ur ett mindre företagsperspektiv och ett större miljöperspektiv.

Intervjun fortsatte sedan med ett mer strategiskt fokus. Här ställdes frågorna på lite varierande vis beroende på om respondenten representerade ett företag eller var expert inom området. Företagsrepresentanterna svarade utifrån företagets perspektiv medan experterna gav sina svar ur ett större perspektiv genom att betrakta företagen och marknaden som helheter. Eftersom området för ätbara insekter tillsvidare är litet hade inget av företagen en specifik företagsstrategi för hur de ämnade påverka marknaden. Vad som dock framgick under intervjuerna var företagens strävan efter en försiktig start genom att betrakta genmålet från kunderna och marknaden för att se vad som fungerar. Företagen önskade även att utvecklingen skulle vara försynt och marknaden skulle växa stadigt men behärskat. Alla respondenter nämnde även den enorma medieuppståndelsen för drygt två år sedan då Finland ändrade sin tolkning gällande EU-lagstiftningen och tillät försäljning av ätbara insekter för konsumenter. Ätbara insekter var då på allas läppar och media skildrade företeelsen frekvent. Detta var dock en jättig tid för företagen då de inte kunde svara på efterfrågan. Experterna som intervjuades nämnde även denna period men såg mer positivt tillbaka på den.

Då företagen är små har inte heller omfattande resurser kunnat sättas på marknadsföring. Företagen underströk dock vikten av välfungerande webbplats och nätbutik där den främsta bakomliggande orsaken låg i marknader utanför Finland. Därutöver utnyttjades sociala medier, muntlig kommunikation, olika evenemang, distributionskanalers marknadsföring samt gemensamma eller marknadsomfattande projekt. Evenemang där kunder anträffas direkt ansågs viktiga i detta skede då företagen dels enkelt kommer i kontakt med kunder och får direkt respons dels kan erbjuda potentiella kunder smakprov och på så vis vinna kunders förtroende och smak för insekter. Samtliga företag nämnde att de strävar efter att få finländare att tycka att insekter är goda som ett grundläggande mål. Som största kundgrupp nämnde företagen män i åldersgruppen 25 till 50, om än samtliga underströk att de ännu inte hunnit samla tillräckliga data för att kunna bekräfta detta. Kundsegmenten var även tillsvidare diffusa vilket försvårade en målinriktad marknadsföring. Respondenterna ansåg att finländare överlag har tagit till sig ätbara insekter väl och att Finland är en föregångare både vad gäller reglering och marknadsrepresentation. Finländare betraktades dock som tudelade vad gäller inställning till insekter som föda; en del provar gärna och anser det vara bra, andra

tycker att insekter inte passar som mat. En stöttesten ansågs dock vara bristen på kunskap om hur man som konsument kan använda insekter i matlagning, och tillsvidare saknas matprodukter som är enkla att tillaga.

Många företag, både sådana som förädlat och sådana som odlat insekter, har hunnit gå i konkurs sedan starten. På frågan om varför de företag som de intervjuade representerar ännu är aktiva svarade både företagen och experterna att det kan bero på företagets strävan efter att utvecklas måttligt och hållbart. Ingen nämnde att de eftertraktade snabba vinster om än de olika företagens ambitioner och resurser låg på olika nivå.

Eftersom marknaden för ätbara insekter är ny måste aktörerna inom området utmana sig själva konstant. Detta ansåg respondenterna förverkligas naturligt eftersom företagen oavbrutet måste utveckla sig och sina produkter i en riktning som tilltalar kunder. Ur respondenternas svar framkom mer eller mindre samarbete företagen emellan, dock nämnde samtliga uppkomsten av föreningen Tuotantohyönteiset ry (Produktionsinsekter rf, egen översättning) för ett drygt år sedan, vars mål är fungera som informationskanal inom området de olika aktörerna emellan.

Analys

Sociala medier utnyttjades både som marknadsföringskanal av företagen via deras egna konton men även individer som testade produkterna delade flitigt med sig av sin upplevelse. Detta kan knytas samman med teorin om att skapa värde tillsammans. Värde skapas inte längre endast vid köptillfället utan fortsätter att skapas efteråt då kunden använder produkten. Individen gynnas då hon kan tala om för sin vänkrets vad hon har varit med om. Företaget gynnas då information om deras produkt sprids och når nya potentiella kunder. Marknaden gynnas då kännedom om utbudet och området som helhet växer. Att skapa mervärde kan således i bästa fall anses främja alla aktörer inom samma område där samtliga drar nytta av situationen.

Man kan märka en fördelning i fokusområde hos företagen, vilket sker som en naturlig utveckling då företagen provar sig fram gällande vad som fungerar och passar dem. Ur resultatet framkom dock ett mindre samarbete företagen emellan än vad som kunde ha

förväntats. Detta kan vara en aspekt Tuotantohyönteiset ry kan svara på. Då nya marknader förändras leder det enligt teorin ofta till att aktörerna kommer överens om marknadsspecifika regler. Dyliga regler framkom inte i intervjuerna. Alla respondenter var dock överens, om än eventuellt ovetande om varandras åsikt, om att alla företag måste erbjuda kunder välsmakande produkter, värna om hygien samt undvika skandaler.

Inriktningen på området för ätbara insekter där företagen tillsvidare är små, stöder litteraturen om att även små aktörer kan förändra en marknad. På grund av att resurserna är små kan det ta längre tid men all marknadsföringsaktivitet bidrar till marknadsförändring. Skapandet och förändringen av detta område har dock stötts av aktivitet från större företag och institutioner. Som exempel kan nämnas Fazers lansering av syrsbröd, ändringar i reglering samt mediebevakning.

Diskussion

Resultatanalysen speglas här mot forskningsfrågorna som har gett avhandlingen dess struktur. Utifrån resultatanalysen kan man dra slutsatsen att marknader förändras även utan en välartikulerad marknadsföringsstrategi. Vad som krävs är dock ett samspel olika aktörer emellan som passionerat strävar efter samma mål. Även inom detta område kan man se att marknadsföring i olika former har varit aktiv långt innan själva området för ätbara insekter utvecklades till allmän kännedom.

Området för ätbara insekter i Finland kan ses som en egen ny marknad som skapats de senaste åren. Detta perspektiv har jag valt att utgå ifrån i denna studie. Å andra sidan kan området betraktas som en del i en större helhet där alla födoämnen ingår, där ätbara insekter är en utmanare av exempelvis köttindustrin. Detta kunde vara en intressant vinkel att vidare studera ämnet ifrån. Som förslag på vidare forskning skulle jag således förslå att området för ätbara insekter i Finland skulle studeras som en utmanare inom en större marknad. Perspektivet kunde då vara hur aktörer aktiva inom exempelvis kött-, mjölk- och äggproduktion uppfattar ätbara insekter.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview guide in English. The bolded questions are the main questions. The sub-questions with a narrow font are assisting the researcher should the conversation need additional support.

BACKGROUND

- **How did you start the insect business?**
 - What triggered the spark?
 - Where does the discussion regarding edible insects stem from?

STRATEGY

- **Describe your company's strategy.**
 - What challenges have you faced?
- **How has this strategy changed over time?**
 - What kind of marketing actions have you taken so far?
 - Have you made something above the ordinary to reach your goals?
 - How do you *wish* for it to be shaped?
 - How should it be developing in the best-case scenario?
 - What still needs to be done to grow the market?
 - What are your next steps?
- **How do you communicate your mission and vision?**
 - How do you see that your marketing actions have enabled shaping the market?
 - In relation to competitors?
- **In your opinion, what have been the main drivers for the market to be created?**
 - How has the market for edible insects changed since you started?
 - How has it affected you?
- **Describe how the Finnish market has reacted to this new field.**
 - What do you need to consider in order to challenge and question the possible assumptions you have regarding your business and market?

- How can you create new offers that attract customers and could grow your market share?

CUSTOMERS

- **Who are your customers?**
 - What relationships does each customer segment expect you to establish and maintain?
- **How do you reach out to your customers?**
- **What value do you deliver to your customers?**
 - What is the customer need that you solve?
 - What are the activities you perform every day to deliver your value proposition?
 - What are the resources you need to deliver your value proposition?
 - In what ways are your customers active in “marketing” your products further?
- **How do you define new customer segments?**

COMPETITION

- **How has competition influenced your strategy?**
- **Who/what actors are your main competitors?**
 - Do you see them as plain competition, or do you collaborate?
- **Who are your key partners?**
 - What is your relationship with them?
 - How do you discuss the market with partners?
 - Do you ideate on future shaping strategies together or on your own?
- **What kind of regulations or norms have you noticed being formed by the actors in the business?**
 - Common practices or general ways of acting?
- **Why would you say that your business is still active in the field (vs. businesses that have quit)?**

APPENDIX 2

Interview guide in Finnish

TAUSTA

- Miten aloitit/aloititte sirkkatoiminnan?

- Mikä oli laukaisija teidän kohdalla?
- Mistä ajatus lähti, mistä luulet, että hyönteiskeskustelu on lähtenyt?

STRATEGIA

- Kuvaile yrityksenne strategiaa.

- Mitä haasteita olette kohdanneet?

- Miten strategianne on muuttunut ajan myötä?

- Minkälaisia markkinoinnin toimenpiteitä olette tähän mennessä tehneet?
- Oletteko tehneet jotain ”yli normaalin”/täysin uutta?
- Miten haluaisit, että markkina kehittyisi?
 - Miten markkinan tulisi kehittyä parhaimmassa mahdollisessa tapauksessa?
- Mitä pitäisi vielä tehdä, että markkina kasvaisi tai muuttuisi?
- Mitkä ovat seuraavat askeleenne?

- Miten viestitte tavoitteistanne ja visiostanne?

- Miten näet, että markkinointitoimenpiteenne ovat muovanneet markkinaa?
 - Suhteessa kilpailijoihin?

- Mitkä ovat mielestäsi olleet keskeiset muuttujat/mahdollistajat markkinan muutoksessa/luomisessa?

- Miten markkina on muuttunut siitä, kuin te aloititte?
 - Miten se on vaikuttanut teihin?

- Kuvaile miten Suomessa on otettu uusi ala (sirkat) vastaan.

- Mitä tulee huomioida, jotta pystytte haastamaan ja kyseenalaistamaan teidän omia ajatuksia ja käsityksiä yrityksestä ja markkinasta?
- Miten kehitätte uusia tarjouksia/”ratkaisuja” houkuttamaan asiakkaita ja kasvattamaan teidän markkinaosuuttanne?

ASIAKKAAT

- Ketkä ovat asiakkaanne?

- Mitä eri asiakkaanne odottavat teidän tekevän/minkälaista suhdetta eri asiakassegmentit haluavat teiltä?

- Miten tavoitatte asiakkaanne?

- Mitä lisäarvoa tuotatte asiakkaillenne?

- Mitä asiakastarvetta juuri te ratkaisette/tarjoatte?
- Minkälaisia toimenpiteitä suoritate joka päivä/säännöllisesti toimittaaksenne arvoa?
- Mitä resursseja tarvitsette, jotta pystytte tarjoamaan lisäarvoa?
- Osallistuvatko asiakkaanne tavalla tai toisella tuotteenne markkinoinnissa?

- Miten määritätte uusia asiakassegmenttejä?

KILPAILU

- Miten kilpailu on vaikuttanut strategiaanne?

- Ketkä ovat suurimpia kilpailijoitanne?

- Näettekö heidät kilpailijoina vai teettekö yhteistyötä?

- Ketkä ovat pääkumppaninne?

- Mikä on suhteenne heihin?
- Miten keskustellette markkinasta kumppaneiden kanssa?
- Ideoitteko tulevaisuuden strategioista sitä, kuinka muokata markkinaa?

- Minkälaisia mahdollisia säännöksiä tai ohjeita olet huomannut hyönteisalan toimijoiden luoneen?

- Yleisiä toimenpiteitä tai tapoja menetellä?

- Miksi sanoisit, että teidän yrityksenne on vielä alalla mukana aktiivisena toimijana (vs. jo lopettaneet yritykset)?