INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the process I have undertaken on the way to executing my graduation project. It consists largely of two parts: research and actualization.

It includes most relevant preliminary research, which served as the starting point for building my case. Followed by research sub-questions, giving me more detailed insights into the field of content marketing, the brand and its target audience.

The second part is based on experimentation and includes mainly my own work. It includes the creation of my Content Creation Guide and the come hell or HighWater webseries.
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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH
**KEY TAKEAWAYS - PRELIMINARY RESEARCH PHASE**

**MARKETING TRENDS**
- Building relationships and making connections is more important than pushing sales.
- Research shows consumers (especially younger generations) prefer image-based advertising or brand input (reason why YouTube & Vine are gaining in popularity).
- Content marketing is the biggest, fastest growing trend.
- Powerful tools for brands to tell their stories are short videos and consumer ‘storymonials’.
- 2015 is the year of Human: human-speaking in brand messages.
- Visual storytelling continues to emerge as a strategy (inspire emotion, spark movement).

**NICHE BRANDING**
- Building a relationship with a subset of people that love what you do, sell, provide.
- Focusing on the needs of the audience rather than just your own product.
- Essential parts: brand experience + product mix + usability + distribution + content + media.
- More humanized identities make consumers feel belonging.

**CONTENT MARKETING**
- “The best way for brands to connect with people is to behave like them.”
- The focus from fans & likes, page-views & social reach is shifting to getting attention and deep engagement.
- There is 16 ways people consume information, deciding in a fraction of a moment how valuable a piece of information is.
- The 30 seconds ads need to shift to creating content people will choose to spend time with.
- Brands need to create their own editorial voice for powerful brand storytelling.
- It’s not about producing volume but about telling stories that create real connections.
- Brand awareness campaigns: ads (tv, social media, printed media)/ live in-person events, influencers, online presence, branded content.
- Whether campaigns are shocking, provocative, humorous, or dramatically entertaining they need to be memorable.
- Dynamic content and humor are most common viral content.

**BRANDED CONTENT**
- Targeting a relevant target audience with engaging, helpful or entertaining content (that barely mentions the product or brand but is of great interest to the target audience).
- ‘People’ stories vs. ‘product’ stories: starting with ‘people’ stories first, then finding creative ways to link that to your product.
- Promoting a point of view rather than a product.
- Consumers have already learned to ignore branded content on social media + have a 6 seconds long attention span. The solution is more intense content, including videos that are ‘shocking’, ‘offensive’ or ‘amusing’.

**BRAND FILM/VIDEO**
- Online video is currently the most effective type of content & also the one with the highest expectation for the future.
- Branded video views hit 2.9bn in the third quarter of 2014.
- The interest in brand video is big, but not many brands make use of it just yet.
- Brands must identify their higher purpose for creating branded content (e.g. purpose-driven branded video) to give consumers a reason to watch and spread the message.
- Online video is still a media landscape dominated by user-generated content, music videos & media companies (still space for brand videos). Video today is truly mobile: short form platforms, requiring less time, data, battery power & attention.
- Native, platform-specific content is more user-friendly and engaging. Earning brand recognition by producing content that the audience find appealing & the actively want to watch/share.
- By 2017 video will account 69% of all consumer Internet traffic.
- Length of the video is determined by the emotional trigger (humor/shock = short, nostalgia/pride = longer).
- After 72hrs, an average person will remember 10% of text, 65% of image & 95% of video.
- Modular storytelling/divisible content: extends a life of the content – can stand as a whole or on its own in fragments (content shared across different networks – more opportunities to raise interest & drive them to the main content).
CASE BUILDUP - BEGINNING STAGE

BACKGROUND
- Content marketing is one of the biggest, fastest growing trends in marketing, but niche brands don’t make much use of it yet.
- It is especially rare to see niche brands creating content that genuinely interests their consumers.
- Online video is amongst the most effective types of content, by 2017 expected to account 69% of all Internet traffic.
- After 72 hours an average person will remember 10% of text, 65% of image and 95% of a video.

RELEVANCE
“Content marketing is one of the biggest, fastest growing trends in marketing but niche brands do not make enough use of it yet.” This shows there is an unused opportunity for niche brands to create content that fulfills the needs of their target audience.

As Welter Shelter is a startup brand it has barely any content, but has a distinctive USP of representing defiance within the niche of weather-resistant brands, having a big potential in creation of compelling content.

PROBLEM DEFINITION
The online communication by brands with a similar target audience as Welter Shelter and their competitors is all based on promotion of products and presentation of new collections. The lack of distinctiveness in communication as well as a lack of engaging, creative brand content in their niche is a potential opportunity for Welter Shelter to not just attract but also to retain their target audience.

RESEARCH QUESTION & SUBQUESTIONS
“How can the niche brand Welter Shelter make use of content marketing to distinctively communicate its brand identity?”

What is the core of Welter Shelter’s brand identity?

What are missed opportunities in content marketing for niche brands?

What content does the target audience like to spend their time on?

How can Welter Shelter make best use of divisible content?

What channels should be used to reach the target audience?
"How can Welter Shelter make use of content marketing to distinctively communicate its brand identity?"
CASE OVERVIEW

SUBJECT
Development of a distinctive content marketing strategy for a niche brand Welter Shelter.

GOAL
To differentiate itself from the competitors by treating content as a brand asset instead of a promotion tool.

AUDIENCE
The modern day style-savvy men and women with contemporary urban lifestyles. Young professionals, pursuing a creative career, valuing niche brands.

RELEVANCE
Content marketing is one of the biggest, fastest growing trends in marketing but niche brands do not make enough use of it yet.

OPPORTUNITY
The lack of distinctiveness in communication as well as a lack of engaging, creative brand content in their niche is a potential opportunity for Welter Shelter to not just attract but also retain their target audience.

PRODUCTS
Brand Book
Content Creation Guide
Concept & Execution of an episode of a web series
"WHAT IS THE CORE OF WELTER SHELTER’S BRAND IDENTITY?"
CORE INSIGHTS
Welter Shelter is a niche start-up brand of weather resistant but fashion-focused outerwear. Based on this, they have 2 types of competitors. The direct competitors are those in the field of fashionable rainwear, whilst the indirect competitors are those more related to activewear.

“Our current photoshoot is still too mainstream. I imagine the ideal photoshoot for Welter Shelter with a guy and a girl standing in a lake, with some trees in the background and the moonlight. You don’t even see the product properly, just the silhouette of the figures and the guy is holding an axe and you see blood dripping from it.”

(Peter Landa, Welter Shelter founder)

Potential: following a provocative, differentiating USP (defiance) can set Welter Shelter apart from other competitors. The brand needs to undertake a more distinctive look & feel. The founder describes a very dark, horror-like scenario. He also mentions the focus shouldn’t even be on the product, it’s more about the story. This works perfectly with the Content Marketing trend.

CONCLUSIONS
The owner’s description of an ideal photoshoot for the brand made me realize there is a big potential in the brand identity being truly differentiating. Most brands in their niche communicate with a sense of nostalgia, trying to tap into authenticity, but as so many brands nowadays do it, customers become skeptical about whether or not to believe it. They are lacking in standing out from the crowd and also do not produce much creative content.

While most rainwear brands stand for protection, Welter Shelter’s USP is to represent defiance and endurance, which is actually much closer to sportswear and activewear brands. Those brands always show ‘survival’ in an adventurous or extremist manners.

Inspired by the founder’s vision & the tagline ‘Come Hell or High Water’, led by the brand core of representing endurance and the wish to differentiate themselves from the competitors (both direct and indirect ones) the lead for the core of Welter Shelter’s brand identity was born: CINEMATIC SURVIVAL.

THE BRAND: CURRENT LOOK
too commercial, not very distinctive, not in line with aimed identity of standing out from the competitors
COMPETITORS

DIRECT COMPETITORS

Stutterheim

Rains

Indirect Competitors

Elvine

Norwegian Rain

North Face

Patagonia
Q2: WHAT IS THE CORE OF WELTER SHELTER’S BRAND IDENTITY?

Inspired by the owner’s vision, I have developed a brand book for Welter Shelter. Indicating a visual style they should undertake to overcome the problem of being too mainstream-looking and not distinctive enough they are currently facing. My recommendation to them is to embrace ‘cinematic survival’ as a core theme which can be the red thread to all content they create. By taking survival horror as their core genre and having a clear visual guidance (Brand Book + Content Creation Guide) they can consistently produce content the target audience can easily relate to the brand.

VISION
No matter what, life must go on.

MISSION
We shelter and guard, with layers of pure defiance.

BRAND VALUES
eerie, persistent, unruly

CENTRAL THEME
cinematic survival

GENRE
survival horror

LOOK AND FEEL
dark, obscure, sinister

CONCLUSIONS
Most competitors focus either on the “realistic” survival or the nostalgic/authentic storytelling. Welter Shelter can differentiate from others by stepping on the side of the cinematic, sinister genre.

Welter Shelter should embrace CINEMATIC SURVIVAL as its central theme, leading all content creation and brand communication. This gives them the opportunity to still stand for “survival” (the most core characteristic weatherproof clothing usually represents), but taking a whole other angle which also gives a lot of space for creative content.

Following a dark, eerie look & feel, Welter Shelter can have a consistent visual style that fits with the central theme.

GENRE: Survival Horror, focused on suspense
Survival horror = A horror story about a protagonist who is put in a risky and life-threatening situation that he or she must endure, and the rest of the plot is how the hero or heroes overcome this.
Suspense = A story with sustained tension, surprise, and a constant sense of impending doom. Following the idea that “the scaries is what you don’t see” the content doesn

Why: “Cinematic Survival” is Welter Shelter’s leading theme. Embracing survival in a cinematic instead of realistic way provides differentiation from competitors. The horror genre is determined by the brand’s dark & eerie identity. Survival Horror is therefore the most suiting subgenre as it is focused on survival but embraces the eerie brand identity through horror.
NOTES:

- not very happy with the selected imagery. Some work, especially the dark forest and the deep sea one, but others need to be replaced in order to create more consistency.
- 4th image seems too humorous and doesn’t represent the right mood.
- 5th image is inside so despite it gives the right eerie feel it doesn’t suit. The images should be taken outdoors or in association with outdoors to have more of a link with the outerwear.
- 6th image is too staged.
- overall the content is appropriate, need to check certain words to use the exact right one (e.g. mysterious)
- layout simple but with all the images having to be dark light text on the foreground really works.
- different sized pages add an extra dimension and make it less boring.

NOTES:

- the replaced images are more consistent than the original ones, but the blood seems a bit too literal.
- following the idea of ‘the scariest is what you don’t see’ I wanna replace those images with things that are more suspense-based
- fixed the wording so it is all what it was supposed to be
NOTES:

- not very happy with the selected imagery. Some work, especially the dark forest and the deep sea one, but others need to be replaced in order to to - a consistent look & feel with the help of similar colours

- blue undertones add to the eerie feel

- shadows and reflections
THE LOOK AND FEEL

dark
obscure
sinister
SUB-QUESTION 02

"WHAT FORM OF CONTENT MARKETING WOULD BE MOST SUITED FOR WELTER SHELTER?"
Q2: WHAT FORM OF CONTENT MARKETING WOULD BE BEST SUITED FOR WELTER SHELTER?

INSIGHTS

- Content that is too brand- or products-focused does not travel well digitally, whereas content that stands on its own as entertainment will be shared and passed along. It’s important for WS to create content that genuinely interests their target audience. Other brands in their niche (and those targeting the same audience) fail to create content beyond product promotion. This is a gap WS can fill by being more than just a brand to their t.a.

- Branded entertainment is content brands produce focused on entertaining the consumer rather than promoting the brand. This can be in forms of a video, magazine, computer games, apps. In WS’s case video would be the best, most efficient option as the target audience has a short attention span and prefers video content over anything else. Moreover, the number of adults watching and posting videos is increasing (72% of all adult Internet users).

- It is important to look beyond what brands are used to create and borrow techniques from the entertainment industry. It’s not that much about the length of the video but more about the story. For WS, there are opportunities in both long- and short-formats. As long as the story will be catchy, the attention will be there. It would be ideal to create something continuous, like a series of videos and achieve the same effect television series have on the millennials when they cannot wait for the new episode of the series they follow comes out. The only thing to consider at all times is low budget! A possibility is for short Instagram or Vine video to lead to the full feature video on WS’s website or YouTube page. Facebook and Instagram are amongst the main drivers of traffic to YouTube, so whatever content is created it should be shared on social media!

- It’s important to create content for multiple touch points. An easy, low budget solution is to make use of the divisible content strategy. Main content + supporting content + micro content. This would be a great way for WS to be present on multiple platforms without having to spend a lot of time or money in creating the content.

- A lot of brands tend to just copy-paste their content across all platforms, without adjusting the format. Resulting in content not being ultimately displayed based on the strengths and weaknesses of the platform and can cause viewers to stop following it. Moreover, duplicating content gives no reason to the viewers to be following a brand on several media. If WS undertakes the divisible content strategy and focuses on making proper use of each individual platform it can provide diverse but coherent content on several different platforms and generate more reach but not turn off the viewers from other media.

- The mobile is becoming our prime screen. 40% of all content watched on YouTube is accessed via mobile devices. It’s crucial for WS to consider this, especially with their t.a. which is constantly connected and used their smartphones pretty much unconsciously.

- A critical step is developing a brand voice and defining a content playbook. This will be described in WS’s brand book and stretched across the communication plan. The brand book will not only include the traditional guidelines, but will especially focus on digital media and communication topics.

CONCLUSIONS

Welter Shelter should treat content as a brand asset rather than a promotion tool. By tapping into branded entertainment, they can instead of investing in brand-focused content focus on creating interesting content for the consumer. This is how Welter Shelter can become more than just another brand and engage with the target audience on a different level.

It is important to create multiple touch-points and distribute content on several platforms. A mistake many brands do is that they post the exact same content across all their social media. That means if the target audience follows them on both for e.g. Facebook and Pinterest and see the exact same photo there is less chance of engagement and more chance of being ignored or unsubscribed to.

An easy and quick way for Welter Shelter to avoid that is to undertake a Divisible Content Strategy. Creating one core asset and showing different parts of it on different platforms. Instead of being repetitive the content in this case is complementary.
"WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO CREATE ENGAGING BUT LOW BUDGET CONTENT?"
Q3: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO CREATE ENGAGING BUT LOW BUDGET CONTENT?

INSIGHTS

- There is a rise in a no-budget filmmaking movement – The Backyard Indie. If you create good content the audience does not care how much money has been invested in it. The most important factor in a low budget film is the script.

- It is believed horror is the most profitable genre for low budget films. Horror was also one of the top 3 genres for the majority of the interviewed target audience. With its apocalyptic brand voice WS is the perfect brand to tap into the horror movies/dystopian/apocalyptic content to connect with the t.a.

- It is important to build and maintain an interest around the content. This can be done with the help of the divisible content strategy. Micro content in particular can be used on regular basis to trigger and spark interest for the main content.

- Shooting with an iPhone has lately resulted in a lot of great content. From films, to ads, it is proven that good content does not necessarily need grand technology. This could be a nice opportunity for WS to jump on the bandwagon

- User generated content (or content that at least looks like UG) is especially appealing to the WS target audience. It’s not as much about the execution than it is about the content, which needs to be entertaining and catchy. The WS target audience is especially used to taking photos and making videos with their smartphones all the time. This format is especially close to them and feels more authentic. WS could approach their audience on a very personal level by using the same methods of content creating users use and are fond of themselves. This is how they won’t be just another distant ‘know-it-all’ brand, but more just one of them.

- The found footage genre has been especially popularized since the Blair Witch Project. The audience excuses the ‘rough’ image and modest production value if it’s a part of the story, giving the footage authenticity. This is a great way to keep the production low budget, but by making it a part of the story it instead of looking ‘poor’ connotes authenticity.

- The target audience is very active on Instagram, Pinterest and Tumblr. The type of content that appeals to them includes the analogue looking photography, with filters, distortions and double exposure techniques. WS can use this information to set a nice tone to their content. Instead of creating just some ‘low produced’ content they can embrace the ‘artsy’ and hip look & feel to appeal to their t.a.

- Short form video content (snackable content), popular amongst the t.a. does not require a big budget to create. Long form (series) keeps them entertained longer.

- There is a growing popularity for action cameras with GoPro being the world’s best sold camera. Why videos created by such cameras are especially liked is because they make you feel like you’re right there, in the middle of the happening. WS could use this to give the viewers a feeling of presence and create more excitement.

CONCLUSIONS

The found footage style is a great way of having content that is not highly produced but still draws audience attention. The viewers ‘excuse’ the rough image and modest production value if it’s a part of the story, giving the footage authenticity. This is a way to keep the production low budget but not loose interest in it. As the first person narrative through the eyes of the protagonist has been done in such style several times, it is important for Welter Shelter to find a unique take on such production (e.g. from the eyes of a stalker).

Content created with smartphones, action cameras etc. is on the rise and is a good alternative for content creation for Welter Shelter to keep it low budget, however I believe it’s important that even though the content is rather low budget it should not be low quality!! The created content still needs to look good and inviting therefore the mediums used to produce individual parts of the content need to also be thought through and picked based on the aim of the project.

Come Hell or High Water - the series is to be a more significant, longer-term content, therefore it’s important to reach a good quality. Budget can in this case be kept low by having little amount of cast, filming on one location, etc.

When not possible to keep a no- or low-budget repurposing budgets can be the solution. Instead of investing in promotional material Welter Shelter can use that budget to produce creative content. This way there is no need to excessive use of budgets but is rather focused on using the given budget in a smart way as creative content will bring more target audience response (as explained in Content Creation Guide)
"WHAT CONTENT DOES THE TARGET AUDIENCE LIKE TO SPEND THEIR TIME ON?"
THE TARGET AUDIENCE

WHO
The modern-day style-savvy men & women with contemporary urban lifestyles, pursuing a creative career.

DEMOGRAPHICS
Age is not really relevant; it’s more the life stage they are at. They are quite young-spirited but also ambitions, mainly young professionals pursuing a creative career. They are style savvy and are following an urban lifestyle. Valuing niche brands and rather buying less but carefully picking the brand they buy from (based on the product but also important: brand image). They value success in career but also like to take care of their private life (social life, nice interior, holidays). They are a part of the ‘fixie-hipsters’ group (man buns, fixie bikes, Pinterest lovers) and carefully curate what image of themselves they portray to the world.

The main social platforms they make use of are Instagram (for stylized images), Pinterest (for curated content) and Facebook (for showing their social life). Facebook might lead them to YouTube and Pinterest to blogs they also visit frequently.

INTERESTS
The target audience is largely active on social media platforms. They spend a lot of their free time online and are also constantly engaged with it while being busy ‘offline’. Online and offline is not a thing anymore as they are constantly connected. They are interested in various things from food to new technology, to ‘top 20 abandoned places’. Their environment and social networks largely influence their interests. They engage with various topics, as long as they managed to grab their attention (either by being liked by a friend on Facebook or posted by an online magazine they follow). Their content consumption is led by ‘snacking’ and they go from one topic to another in a matter of seconds (one link leading to another page, leading to another image, leading to another video resulting in “wait, what was I looking for?”)

* It is important for Welter Shelter to understand it can not be everything for this target audience, but it does have a great opportunity to be something significant and interesting for them.

INFLUENCES
They are influenced by people in their social network circles – friends, bloggers they aspire, people they follow on Pinterest. Getting the interest of the few people (the sharers influenced by the brand ambassadors) who would share the content produced by the brand and ensure it to pop up on their newsfeeds could generate better reach. This would be a more natural, owned/gained-media focused way of reaching the audience. It is especially important not to focus on paid media as the target group dislikes and ignores obvious advertising and product promotion. The only reason they subscribe to a brand newsletter is discount and after a while of receiving it they start hating it as it’s mainly all promotion based and starts feeling like spam. Getting content they would actually be interested in instead of ‘push’ content could change that.
living an urban lifestyle
Pinterest-like representation of themselves
Q4: WHAT CONTENT DOES THE TARGET AUDIENCE LIKE TO SPEND THEIR TIME ON?

INSIGHTS

- “The best way to catch the attention of the Millennial consumers is to come up with content that’s entertaining and uniquely yours”

- The t.a. is bored of the typical storytelling most brands undertook in the past few years. Tapping into nostalgia and giving the brand a personal story has been done too many times so consumers start doubting authenticity. As everyone tries to sell a unique, personal story, none of them seem unique anymore. Going against the current WS can differentiate itself from the competitors by not trying to be one of those brands, fighting for who’s story will manage to evoke some emotions but rather work on creating different type of content, content that will stand out and interest the t.a.

- They are most inclined to spend their time (and money) on entertaining content.

- They are frequent users of Netflix or Popcorntime where they stream both movies and series. Field research revealed that they watch series more often than movies (mostly due to the shorter duration time).

- They consume both short- and long-form video content, as long as the content itself is interesting enough to keep them interested.

- Short form video content (snackable content) such as Vine or Instagram videos is perfect for the short attention span of the target audience and does not require a big budget to create. Moreover, the t.a. is used to creating this content themselves so a brand can appear to be more on the same level as the consumers by using the same platforms. Using short video for WS can involve with the t.a., without requiring a lot of their time. It can be especially made good use of for times they are commuting or having to wait.

- The t.a. also produces a lot of content themselves. It’s interesting to see how the same person curates different content for different platforms (e.g. Facebook tends to be focused more on social activities, posting about parties, meeting friends, also selfies while the same owner’s Instagram tends to be much more focused on beautiful photographs of interior, artworks, food...). Facebook is used most to show the best of our social lives, Instagram the best of our environment and Pinterest our aspirations. This insight can be useful for WS to understand better why not all content is suitable for all platforms.

- There has been an increasing interest in dystopian and post-apocalyptic movies catering to the target audience similar to WS’s. In the past we have seen the rise of vampire-related content first appearing in movies, then being translated into several series out of which many have been positively accepted. The same happened with reimagining fairytales and the boom of movies based on old stories. Series are now taking over that field as well. With not much being done in the field of series for the topic of a dystopian/apocalyptic genre this could be a relevant opportunity topic-wise for WS. It is both contemporary and engaging for the t.a.

CONCLUSIONS

The target audience is largely active on social media platforms. They spend a lot of their free time online and are also constantly engaged with it while being busy ‘offline’. They are never truly disconnected. They are interested in various things from food to new technology, to ‘top 20 abandoned places’. Their environment and social networks largely influence their interests. They engage with various topics, as long as they managed to grab their attention (either by being liked by a friend on Facebook or posted by an online magazine they follow).

Their content consumption is led by ‘snacking’ and they go from one topic to another in a matter of seconds (one link leading to another page, leading to another image, leading to another video resulting in “wait, what was I looking for?”)

It is important for Welter Shelter to understand it can not be everything for this target audience, but it does have a great opportunity to be something that can catch their attention and keep it for longer than other brands in the same niche.
"WHAT CHANNELS SHOULD BE USED TO REACH THE TARGET AUDIENCE?"
Q5: WHAT CHANNELS SHOULD BE USED TO REACH THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

INSIGHTS

- Preliminary research revealed the most popular and efficient content type for the WS t.a. is video content. Based on this insight it is evident that content type to be created must include video. The channels to consider are therefore to be focused on distribution of the video content as well as its promotion.

- The t.a. consumes content via various media simultaneously. It is very common for them to have the TV turned on while doing something on a laptop or tablet and in parallel engaging with a smartphone. Thinking multi-screen with all components equally important. Mobile should not just be thought of as a secondary screen. The content must be flexible and not just copy-pasted across platforms so it uses a full potential of each individual platform.

- 98% of users watch videos on their smartphones (vs. computer 56%). Smartphone consumption of YouTube content is on the rise. Research show that when Millennials watch video on smartphones, they are far less distracted than when watching video on any other screen, including TV. Mobile video should play a big role in WS’s content creation.

- Every spare moment is used to engage with communication devices. It is more and more common to see people using their smartphones any time there is a chance for it (on the trains, waiting in lines, in a restaurant waiting for your date to come back from the toilets..). A lot of times it seems to be even subconscious, which is when a danger to be overlooked appears. Being actively present across different platforms decreases this chance.

- 76% of the generation C(ontent) visits YouTube on weekly basis and 36% on daily basis. As a large part of the WS fitting into the gen C profile, YouTube is another relevant platform to consider when it comes to distribution of content.

- Facebook is one of the main drivers of traffic to YouTube. When long video content would be published on YouTube, WS must use Facebook to promote the content.

- Platforms supporting short video formats such as Instagram can be used to trigger interest and direct viewers to the main content.

CONCLUSIONS

The main social platforms they make use of are Instagram (for stylized images), Pinterest (for curated content) and Facebook (for showing their social life). Facebook might lead them to YouTube and Pinterest to blogs they also visit frequently.

As online video is the most popular type of content platforms supporting this format are the most relevant. Not just considering the ‘typical’ video platforms such as YouTube, there are also opportunities on Facebook, Instagram etc.

As mobile is becoming our prime screen and 98% of users watch video on their smartphones it’s important to not just create long but also short format ‘mobile-friendly’ video content.
CHAPTER 2.1:
EXECUTION - CONTENT CREATION GUIDE
BEGINNING

NOTES:
- I do not like the chosen imagery for the book. Many of them connote depression too much.
- need to replace them by images that show more the “cinematic survival” and/or have a dark, eerie mood.
- the presentation of ‘non-acceptable’ and ‘acceptable’ ways of doing things are a clear indicator what is recommended for content creation for Welter Shelter and what must be avoided. This gives clear guidance to anyone who’d work on content creation for the brand any time in the future.

UPDATE

NOTES:
- the general look & feel is now much more consistent with the brand identity
- keeping all images in one colour tone helps with the consistency
- adding a spread with the brand but not using the brand’s photoshoot image because that’s deceiving. Instead a combination of an eerie photo and the designs gives a clear indication of what the brand product as well as the image is.
NOTES:

- the guide is to be a lead for content creation in the Welter Shelter manner. This is why it’s especially important the look & feel of the entire guide is consistent with the image of the brand itself.

- it includes both visual guidelines but also a look into how to distribute the content after creating it

SUMMARY:

Welter shelter can best differentiate itself from their competitors by having a unique take on survival by following ‘cinematic survival’ as a lead theme for all content creation, creating cinematic storytelling-like content that is evolving around a sinister, eerie look and feel.

To create compelling content their target audience would actually be interested in, Welter Shelter should treat content as a brand asset rather than promotion tool. Video being both the most efficient and popular type of online content this is what they should focus on.

In line with their brand identity a short survival horror web series Come Hell or High Water have been created. This is to serve as an example of how to treat content in the Welter Shelter manner (look & feel, type of content, ways to distribute it).
CASE OVERVIEW
A SUMMARY OF CONTENTS USEFUL FOR THE CONTENT CREATION GUIDE

1. BACKGROUND SUMMARY
- Who is the client? What is the product or service?
Welter Shelter, a niche brand focusing on weather resistant but fashionable outerwear.

- What are their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).
S: distinctive brand image & tone; good quality product with a fashionable look; differentiation from the competitors in communication type & genre; improve presence; content creation
W: not much existing content; due to that not much customer retention
O: need for distinctive style of communication in a fashion world filled with too nostalgic or too realistic stories
T: brands with similar product categorization; no recognition due to content overload

Direct competition: Stutterheim, Rains, Norwegian Rians …
Indirect competition: North Face, Patagonia …

- What does this client value?
They value good quality, persistence. They wish to stand out from the competitors by a distinctive look & feel in communication.

- What is the client’s mission statement?
Their mission is to shelter. In brand book described as “We shelter and guard, with layers of pure defiance.”

- What does this brand authentically stand for?
They stand for providing good product but also good content.

- What is their view on content creation?
They wish to distinguish themselves from their competitors especially in communication. Choosing a distinctive visual identity and genre to be associated with is of high importance.
Everyone is doing realism and nostalgia… Welter Shelter wants to tap into the cinematic storytelling and provide compelling content to the t.a.

2. OVERVIEW
- What is the project?
A content creation guide; including an executed example of video content.

- What are we creating and why?
The brand has an idea about content they wish to produce but they do not have much content so far (and the one they have does not reach the expectation). Therefore a content creation guide can help them keep a consistent identity to all that is to be produced while still allowing space for various executions.
The executed video content will serve as an example of the content creation in the Welter Shelter manner.

- Why does the client need this project?
The project will ensure all content created by the brand (or any other third party) is consistent and distinctive from those of their competitors. Moreover it will give guidelines on how and where to distribute it to reach the target audience. This will bring more consumer retention and upsell. Making sure to be delivering the right content at the right time on the right platforms.

- Are there any emerging ideas and trends to consider?
Brands as publishers, creating editorial content, content that the target audience is genuinely interested in. Big brands are doing it more and more but niche brands tend to feel they cannot afford this.
Growth in online video consumption.
Web series rise in popularity, brands starting to produce own web series.

- What’s the real opportunity here?
The opportunity is to make use of content marketing to create attractive content the target audience would actually want. Instead of spending time and money on creating brand-oriented content Welter Shelter can focus on consumer-oriented content (think of what people like and share and why). That is what can put them on the map as brand entertainers instead of sellers or promoters and bring them closer to their audience.
What is the reason to do this project?
The reason is to lead creation of valuable content and achieve brand differentiation within its niche.

The reason for making the video (web series) is to use the most popular content type to provide a story. Creating both long- and short-form videos makes use of the core characteristics of each platform (long on YouTube, short on Instagram). Showing how to make use of divisible content strategy and engage with multiple audiences on several platforms at the same time, by not repeating yourself but rather delivering content that complements each other.

What is the existing brand strategy?
The brand is currently not following any strategy. They merely have the product and a first photoshoot (which is claimed to be too mainstream).

- How do they feel about what they already have? Why does/doesn’t it work?
They are not happy with their current content (photoshoot). It is said to be too mainstream and it does not communicate the brands identity in the right way. It should be way more extreme to create impact. The founder describes an ideal shoot as: “A guy and a girl standing in a lake with some trees in the background and moonlight. You don’t really see the product, just the silhouettes of the figures, and the guy is holding an axe and there is blood dripping from it.”

3. DRIVERS

- What is our goal for this project? What are we trying to achieve?
The goal is to create a distinctive content creation plan for Welter Shelter and execute a part of it as an example. We are trying to support their vision on content creation and setting a plan ensuring it can be applied on a big scale. By this they can stand out in their niche and provide valuable content to the target audience.

General goal: To differentiate itself from the competitors, by embracing ‘cinematic survival’ as a central theme and treating content as a brand asset instead of a mere promotion tool.

- What are our top three objectives?
1. To establish Welter Shelter as a brand with a distinctive horror inspired identity.
2. Have Welter Shelter be recognized amongst the target audience by the content they produce, with no further explanation.
3. To boost the number of likes and shares across social media and the number of return visits to their online platforms.

- What are the essential consumer, brand, and category insights?
BRAND: Welter Shelter provides weather resistant but fashionable outerwear. They stand for endurance and persistence. To distinguish themselves from the competitors they aim to tap into cinematic survival, following an eerie, sinister feel.

CATEGORY: Most direct competitors play on the nostalgia, ‘authenticity’ and personal narrative style, there is a lack in distinction in the filed. Most indirect competitors portray survival in adventurous or extremist manner. It always has to do with overcoming obstacles or weather conditions and is very serious.

CONSUMER: The target audience likes entertaining content (preferably visual) to spend their free time on. They watch a lot of series, films, other video content of all types of genres; anything that has an interesting storyline can get them hooked or happens to come by on their newsfeed and raises their curiosity. As many brands in the same niche tend to use the same communication ‘style’ the consumers start doubting the truthfulness of the content. They all seem to be just ‘one of the many’.

- What thought, feeling, or action can we bring to life?
The feeling content created by Welter Shelter should convey is a feeling of cinematic survival. Like being in a midst of an eerie movie, not too realistic, but still not too far fetched. It should satisfy the lust of the target audience for such content.

- What qualities should the project convey?
The content needs to be intense, to be able to get through the clutter. It should be easily accessible and in different formats for different purposes (long for viewing on laptops, short for ‘snacking’ on mobile). It is important to be multi-dimensional, multi-platform. It should at all times represent the brand core and keep the consistency:
"come hell or high water" * persistence + dark, eerie feel + form of content the t.a. likes + platforms suited for the content

- Ask the client to provide some descriptive adjectives for the product/service/company.
Product: weatherproof, innovative, enduring
Brand: persistent, eerie
- **Describe any known opportunities for growth.**
The opportunities in growth are at this point mainly in increasing engagement and brand advocacy. By generating content that is engaging and shareable Welter Shelter can gain loyal audience that becomes the brand's ambassadors.

- **How will our success be measured?**
This can be measured in: return visits, social media shares across channels like FB, Pinterest, YouTube, subscriber/regular visitor count, growth in overall traffic to website across multiple channels; growth in traffic to videos, social media, time spent on individual pieces of content; pages/content consumed per visit.

4. **AUDIENCE**
- **Who are we talking to? Who are we designing for (really)?**
The modern-day style-savvy men & women with contemporary urban lifestyles, pursuing a creative career. Part of them a.k.a. the fixie-hipsters.

- **Ask the client to provide demographic information: who, what, where, when?**
Age is not that relevant, it’s more the life stage they are at. They are quite young-spirited but also ambitions. They are mainly young professionals pursuing a creative career. They are style savvy and are following an urban lifestyle. They value niche brands and rather buy less but carefully pick the brand they buy from (based on the product but also important; brand image).

They value success in career but also like to take care of their private life (social life, nice interior, holidays). They are a part of the ‘fixie-hipsters’ group (man buns, fixie bikes, Pinterest lovers) and carefully curate what image of themselves they portray to the world. The main social platforms they make use of are Instagram (for stylized images), Pinterest (for curated content) and Facebook (for showing their social life). Facebook might lead them to YouTube and Pinterest to blogs they also visit frequently.

- **What do they think of the client?**
They are very interested in product, especially as it has a very fashionable look but is also very good technically. They are curious about the brand but there is no content for them to consume yet so no bond can be established (apart from fancying the product).

- **What will make the client's product/service/company more appealing to them?**
Producing interesting content over and over again instead of just showing new product launches or behind the scenes will bring the brand closer to the target audience. The consumers will then not just appreciate the brand for it’s product but also for the content, content will become an added value of the brand.

- **Why should they care about this brand?**
Welter Shelter will be more than just another niche brand whose products they like by delivering content they will actually enjoy.

- **What inspires, motivates, interests, and amuses this target audience?**
The target audience is largely active on social media platforms. They spend a lot of their free time online and are also constantly engaged with it while being ‘busy offline’. Online and offline is not a thing anymore as they are constantly connected. They are interested in various things from food to new technology, to ‘top 20 abandoned places’. Their environment and social networks largely influence their interests. They engage with various topics, as long as they managed to grab their attention (either by being liked by a friend on Facebook or posted by an online magazine they follow).

Their content consumption is led by ‘snacking’ and they go from one topic to another in a matter of seconds (one link leading to another page, leading to another image, leading to another video resulting in “wait, what was I looking for?”)

* It is important for Welter Shelter to understand it can not be everything for this target audience, but it does have a great opportunity to be something relevant and engaging.

- **Who are they talking to? How can we help to connect better with their community?**
They are influenced by people in their social network circles – friends, bloggers they aspire, people they follow on Pinterest. Getting the interest of the few people (the sharers influenced by the brand ambassadors) who would share the content produced by the brand and ensure it to pop up on their newsfeeds could generate better reach. This would be a more natural, owned/gained-media focused way of reaching the audience.
It is especially important not to focus on paid media as the target group dislikes and ignores obvious advertising and product promotion. The only reason why they subscribe to a brand newsletter is discount and after a while of receiving it they start hating it as it’s mainly all promotion based and starts feeling like spam. Getting content they would actually be interested in instead of ‘push’ content could change that.
5. COMPETITORS
- Who is the competition?
Direct competition: Stutterheim, Rains, Norwegian Rian
Indirect competition: North Face, Patagonia

- What differentiates the client's product/service/company from them?
The product differentiation is in the combination of technical + fashionable. Even though other brands do that as well they are mainly focused on a fashionable cut whereas Welter Shelter uses fabrics that normally have a mere fashion aspect (e.g. wool) but uses different finishes and membrane which makes it weather resistant. It therefore provides outerwear that does not look like water/windproof but surprises with the fact that it is.

The other differentiation is in the style of communication. As most competitors focus either on the "realistic" survival or the nostalgic/authentic storytelling Welter Shelter differs by stepping on the side of the cinematic, survival horror genre.

- Why/how are they really better (or not) than our client?
The advantage they have is that as they have been existing for a longer period of time they have more content the target audience can engage with. They do however have a lack of truly interesting content (from the t.a.'s perspective). It's mainly all about new product launches, moving lookbooks, behind the scenes... But that content is not necessarily intriguing for the consumers and it's moreover not something worth sharing. This is an opportunity for Welter Shelter to fill that gap and instead of producing brand-driven content focus on consumer-driven content.

- How and where does the competition engage with the audience?
They mainly focus on owned and earned media. They have own websites and (some) social networks. However posts on social networks are nearly exclusively about the products. Product and lookbook photography is now accompanied with 'Instagram' photos of the fans wearing the items.

There is also an opportunity for Welter Shelter to make use of video content in a more engaging manner. Instead of producing one-off video content producing episodic content raises the probability of the viewers coming back for more. Content produced (no matter which type) should also include elements of shearability, so instead of producing something for the sake of producing they can focus on producing things people would be exited about and want to pass on.

6. TONE
- How should we be communicating about the client's product/service/company?
The communication should feel like narratives in movies (deeply descriptive). There is a difference between the brand and communication about product related things and creative content coming from the brand (all led by the same central theme and tone tho).

- What adjectives describe the desired feeling, personality, or approach?
Sinister, eerie, obscure. The approach is cinematically storytelling-like.

- Discuss with the client how content (images and words), flow of information (narrative), interaction (physical or virtual), and users' behavior (pro and con) should affect mood and style.
The style and mood are determined by the brand’s vision: dark, eerie, apocalyptic feel. Content created should be compelling and interesting for the target audience instead of brand-focused and aim to have an impact. As the target audience prefers visual content and there is an increasing interest in online video content Welter Shelter will be focusing mainly on images and videos. Informative content may be used but the main focus is on entertainment, followed by inspiration.

7. VISUALS
- Are we developing new images or picking up existing ones?
Welter Shelter will be primarily focusing on creating own content, however for platforms such as Pinterest (and/or Tumblr) curating content is also an option. With this they can gain more reach but also behave more like their target audience (instead of posting brand’s photo images also (re)posting inspirational, mood images).

- If we are creating them, what, and where are we shooting? And why?
As the product is outerwear most imagery should be produced (or made in association) with outdoors. Dark, mysterious locations with sinister feel are to be used so a tight link to the brand image remains at all times.

- How do existing style guides and brand identity manuals affect this project?
The existing brand book is the inspiration for all content creation. The Content Creation Guide gives specific guidelines in what type of content, what formats, on which platforms. This guide is to serve as a lead to all content creation.
DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

Welter Shelter needs to avoid traditional advertising as the target audience dislikes and has learned how to ignore such content. The distribution channels they should primarily focus on are those of owned and earned media.

OWNED MEDIA
In owned media Welter Shelter makes use of their own website, brand microsite (blog) and social accounts. In line with their target group’s social media activities they should be present on - at least - the following platforms:
Facebook: for news-sharing, engagement with consumers
Instagram: for image and short video sharing
Pinterest & Tumblr: for content curation & human-like approach

Owned media are used primarily to engage with customers, the existing fans and brand loyalties. As content distribution method across these platforms Welter Shelter makes use of the Divisible Content Strategy, ensuring them to have enough content to spread across several platforms, but not being too repetitive.

EARNED MEDIA
With earned media taking into account the industry influencers and media publications is crucial. At Welter Shelter they do not want to go mainstream and they therefore aim to gain recognition at a very specific type of online media, such as Selectism, High Snobiety and Fucking Young. These are (besides representing niche brands and interesting content) also the platforms the target group follows frequently.

MULTI-PLATFORM
It is important to keep in mind that the target audience is constantly on the go and consumes most content on mobile screens. Long, difficult content is thus mainly inappropriate unless its goal is to entertain. When creating content Welter Shelter needs to always keep in mind it must be suitable for various platforms.

DIVISIBLE CONTENT
Divisible Content is a content creation strategy that offers brands an easy, economical way to create a large batch of content with minimal investment.¹ Creating one core asset which serves as a foundation is broken down to smaller ‘divisibles’.

The core content is followed by supporting content, followed by micro content. They all drive traffic back to the core content which includes the most information. Supportive content and micro content should not be just parts of the core content but also serve as compelling stand-alones.

E.g.: If Welter Shelter decides to create a web series the series are the core content showcased on our their website and YouTube. Supporting content can in this case be a Facebook post with a short trailer of an episode. Micro content can be distributed in different manners on different platforms (making use of each channel’s strong points). On Instagram they can show a short 15 seconds clip of an nerve-wrecking moment of the episode. On Pinterest and Tumblr they can post some stills. Overall it’s important to not just copy-paste content across multiple platforms, but reveal different bits at different times and places.
EXAMPLE OF THE DIVISIBLE CONTENT STRATEGY

Come Hell Or High Water - the series is a practical example of what type of content to produce and how to distribute it across different media with the help of the Divisible Content Strategy.

MAIN CONTENT = the core asset which is further broken down to smaller ‘divisibles’ of supporting and micro content.

SUPPORTING CONTENT = shorter version of the main content. Made appropriate for mobile use.

MICRO CONTENT = small items extracted from larger content to entice viewers.

1 Divisible Content Strategy: Column Five Media Agency. November 12, 2014
CHAPTER 2.2:
EXECUTION - THE SERIES
WEB SERIES CONCEPT NO.1

THE STORY FRAMEWORK

A psychological thriller web series, following Tom Higgins in a fight with a dissociative identity disorder. The plot does not reveal Tom’s mental state until the final episode. Instead, we see his other personalities as he sees it - his friends. Lost in woods individual characters go missing and reappear murdered, disposed nude in plastic wraps. This symbolizes Tom’s disposal of his ‘other selves’. The story suggests there is a killer (maybe even among the friend group) responsible and there is no direct link to Tom being the one. Little, nonobvious clues revealed at the end of the series make it clear it has all along actually been him, but the true twist in the plot is the realization that all his friends were actually a mere figment of his imagination. It deals mainly with topics such as suspicion, self doubt, paranoia, distrust and questions perception and existence while being wrapped in an eerie, dark thriller story.

(entire concept book in extended process book)

NOTES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- overall too bloody. It’s supposed to be about survival, but the murders are so dominant that message does not come across
- the story is too difficult to grasp the core idea (survival)
- rethink what the look & feel should be. Calling it ‘raw’ is something else than analogue-like!
- inconsistency in word & image: need to find the right vocabulary
WEB SERIES CONCEPT NO. 2

THE STORY FRAMEWORK

A group of young creatives scouting for a new location for their upcoming project wanders to a forbidden area with a mysterious lake, unaware of the danger laying upon them. A series of strange happenings (including a missing colleague, later discovered dead in a lake) make them realize they need to leave as soon as possible. Even though leaving is anything but easy, they must go on, come hell or high water. Based upon an urban legend of the Ghost of Stow Lake.

(Entire concept in extended process book)

NOTES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Using water is maybe too literal with Come Hell or High Water that is supposed to be a metaphor.

- There is no direct relation between ghosts and Welter Shelter. I think that is a wrong subgenre of horror to go for. Rather want to rethink and work with survival horror subgenre.

- The found footage style and “first person” perspective in woods has been done at BWP. To change things it could be more exciting to do it from the eyes of a stalker (creation more tension).

- To avoid bad quality the series are better off not being shot with a phone. Could be a nice idea for an Instagram series for the future but to show the Divisible Content Strategy best, it’s better not to do it in that manner. To still keep it low budget it can be focused on sourcing the right people with the right skills and not wasting the budget on unnecessary content and promotion.
WEB SERIES CONCEPT NO. 3

THE STORY FRAMEWORK

A group of young creatives on a Geocache mission gets lost in the woods after their phones stop catching signals. Discovering peculiar objects along the way, it starts to look more and more like the whole thing has been a set-up all along. A series of strange happenings (including a missing colleague, later discovered murdered) make them realize they need to leave as soon as possible. Even though leaving is anything but easy, they must go on, come hell or high water.

(Entire concept and script in extended process book)

THE LOOK AND FEEL

NOTES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- The quality of the footage is not as high as expected
- The acting is not as good as wished
- The script is plain and not very convincing
- The blue undertones are too overpowering. Needs to be more subtle.
WEB SERIES NO. 3: EXECUTION

THE OUTCOME

- a trailer
- a series of short Instagram teasers
- not enough material to complete an entire episode, not even to make a longer trailer. Therefore need to reshoot.
- things to work on: different location, camera, acting, new script, colouring to be less filtered.
- very nice camera work. The following & running scenes with the steadicam worked out great too bad a lot of footage was overexposed.

- too obvious blue filters
- not consistent

- darker is better, closer to the desired look & feel
- increased shadows work well
- inbetween blue & green

- black & white suits
- nice just for short teasers, too much for full episode
Looking for New Actors
(After the First Take)

After the bad experience of actors in the first filming not being good despite a convincing online portfolio I have decided to do casting auditions for the second film days to make sure that does not happen again. I had 5 guys and 3 girls joining.

The auditions consisted of two parts, part 1: script reading and part 2: improvisation.

**PART 1: SCRIPTED READING**
- script version 1: the script the way they prepared it
- script version 2: the script in a different way (if they did it calm, make them do extreme; if they did it powerful make them do it suggestive...)
- script version 3: if needed

**PART 2: IMPROVISATION**
- impro 1
- impro 2
- impro 3

Options:
FEAR: “You’re being stalked. You know someone is out there but you don’t know where. It’s just a matter of time for them to find you.”
PARANOIA: “You feel something bad is about to happen. No one around you believes it. You are considered to be going crazy, but what you really just want to do is get everyone safe.”
EMOTIONAL BREAKDOWN: “The situation seems unavoidable. You can’t handle it anymore. You break down and cry.”
SUSPICION: “You can’t trust anyone. It’s a matter or life or death, believing the right people. But who to believe?”
BRAVERY: “It is obvious someone is following you. You know there is little chance to escape, but you need to stay strong for the group. Everyone relies on you. Convincing them you need to move on is the only way you can save them.”

**WANTED**
actors and actresses who wish to expand their portfolio
for help at graduation project

**GENRE**
Survival horror
Story based upon an urban legend of The Ghost of Stow Lake.

**CINEMATIC STYLE**
Indie look & feel.
The general look plays with dark, eerie elements, creating a mysterious and scary feel. Using grainy, analogue-like footage.

**FORMAT**
Main content: web series. Duration 10-15 minutes.
Micro content: Instagram series. Duration 15 seconds.

**LAST-MINUTE: CASTING AUDITION FOR HORROR WEB SERIES**
Looking for actors and actresses who wish to expand their portfolio

**GENRE**
Survival horror
Story based upon an urban legend of The Ghost of Stow Lake.

**CINEMATIC STYLE**
Indie look & feel.
The general look plays with dark, eerie elements, creating a mysterious and scary feel. Using grainy, analogue-like footage.

**AVAILABLE ROLES**

**AUDITION TIMES**

More info & plot: ini.krajnc@gmail.com

More info & plot: ini.krajnc@gmail.com
LOOKING FOR NEW ACTORS

The key characteristics I was paying attention to were:
- ability to undertake a character and keep in the character even when not having lines
- confidence & movements
- own input
- ability to improvise
- interest
- accent

NOTES:

- all three chosen actors were great at improvising, very convincing.
- things said in the impro by Maya can be a great inspiration for the script!
- the three also look like they could be friends in the real world (same age group, open personalities..)
COME HELL OR HIGH WATER - THE SERIES, SEASON 1 OUTLINE

Come Hell or High Water is a webisode horror series created by the brand Welter Shelter. The series is a part of their unconventional marketing strategy to treat content as a brand asset instead of merely a promotion tool. The brand’s dark, eerie identity works hand in hand with the survival horror genre to create a memorable look & feel.

Season 1 consists of 8 episodes which launch once weekly, over the course of 2 months. Episode 8 ends with an cliffhanger, suggesting there are more seasons to come.

PLOT

Three friends sick of being oppressed in a future scenario-like world decide to escape their highly secured living environment. In hope for a better future they refuge to a close-by forest, not knowing the forest itself contains dangers as well.

The story follows their fight through the forest in hope to cross the border to freedom, but at the same time also focuses on their inner fights as they grow and evolve into mature and distinctive characters.

EPISODES OVERVIEW

EPISODE 1: THE ARRIVAL
Holly, Ian and Jake escape to a forest. Thinking they are finally free and safe, they’re unaware of the dangers that lay before them.

EPISODE 2: HIDE AND SEEK
After attempting to choke Holly Ian ends up in a fight with Jake. Holly and Jake escape, with Ian following them. What is happening with him is still a mystery and the two need to fight their way avoiding both Ian and ‘the danger’.

EPISODE 3: DON’T TELL

EPISODE 4: IN THE DARK
What seems to be a day long solar eclipse leaves the group having to survive the entire day in the dark. What lurks in the shadows and is fed by the dark is worse than anything they had to overcome so far.

EPISODE 5: YOU AND I

EPISODE 6: THE WAY THEY LIE

EPISODE 7: DEAD END

EPISODE 8: COME HELL OR HIGH WATER
The last problem to overcome is on the rise. Come Hell or High Water, Holly, Ian and Jake will do anything it takes to come out of the forest alive. But will they make it?
**MAIN CHARACTERS**

**HOlLy**
Holly is a very assertive and independent character. She’s no less than her male companions which clearly shows through the relationships they have amongst each other.

In episode 1 she finds a mysterious journal that influences her behaviour. Suddenly she is not brave and determined anymore, but paranoid and uncertain. When things start getting harder she turns from a caring to a selfish person.

The Voice makes her paranoid about that someone’s following them. She fights with the idea of “They’re coming for us.” and “Don’t listen to Them.” being split between the two actions.

**IAAN**
Abandoned at the age of 5 Ian is a very fragile character. At first he’s cheerful and caring but as the story progresses the truth about his emotionally unbalanced life becomes more and more clear. Throughout the series he needs to overcome this trauma to finally be able to live a free life.

Reliving his childhood memory of being abandoned when hearing the Voice causes him to break down and shut off in his own mind, unreachable for the outside world.

**jAKe**
At first Jake is very lighthearted. He seems to be a leader, taking both Holly and Ian to escape with him. He’s the one who’s supposed to know the way that would lead them to freedom but it turns out that is not the case.

After Ian disappears Jake and Holly get into a fight. This is the moment when he becomes harsher and even shows his anger. It’s a whole other side to him we were not able to see at the beginning scenes.

When he hears the Voice the characteristics that cause his inner fight are those of guilt, love and anger. Bravery wins over and he rediscovers his courage and the will to move on.

**CAST**
Maya de Bresser as Holly
Max Croes as Ian
Rutger Diepstra as Jake

**CREW**
Irena Krajnc: concept, story & art direction
Marta Lilliloja: direction
Andrea Casetti: DOP, steadicam
Bijournela Phelipe: second camera
Dylan Sydow: assistant
Fannar Olafsson: sound on set
Pierro Schavion: sound design in post-production
THE STORY FRAMEWORK

In a future-like scenario freedom is taken from all newborns, nurtured to live the lives they have been designated to by their authorities. Stories have been told of those - some brave, some foolish enough - who tried to cross the border and obtain their freedom. We follow Holly, Ian and Max, on their fight for survival. In hope for a better future they refuge to a close-by forest, not knowing the forest itself contains dangers as well.

The series follows their fight through the forest but at the same time also focuses on their inner fights as they grow and evolve into maturer and distinctive characters.

(full film package, script and storyboards in extended process book)

THE SCRIPT OUTLINE

SCENE 1
The three characters running in a forest. Holly discovers a bag that contains some peculiar objects: a map and a journal. The group concludes there must have been someone else ‘doing this before’ and decides to keep the findings as they might turn out to be helpful.

SCENE 2
Holly secretly reading the journal. Ian and Jake discussing something in the distance. We learn Jake doesn’t actually know the way and that Holly has been acting strange since they found the journal.

SCENE 3
Jake and Holly in a fight. Holly is convinced there’s ‘something out there’ and that they are being followed. Jake refuses to leave without Ian. Where he is and what happened to him remains a mystery. Holly and Jake part ways.

SCENE 4
Ian, Jake and Holly are now each on their own. They experience having to fight The Voice, each in their own manner, based on their inner demons. The scene results in Jake’s realisation of his love for Holly and a determination to find the others and get them out of the forest as promised. Ian goes through a childhood trauma which reveals he is an emotionally unbalanced person. He is in a trans and unaware of the world around him. Holly fights between the feeling of being followed and the notion of ‘don’t listen to them’. Running away from the ‘danger’ she trips, falls to the ground and hits her head, leaving her unconscious.

SCENE 5
Jake finds Holly, picks her up and continues searching for Ian. Happy to finally encounter him after a long search it takes a bit before he realizes something isn’t right with him. Desperate with one friend in a trans and the other unconscious he can only hope one or the other will wake up eventually.

SCENE 6
Holly wakes up in the middle of a forest. Headache. Jake next to her, Ian in the distance. She tries to figure out why she’s there and what happened prior to her blanking out.
Conversation between her and Jake continues. She notices Ian. As Jake reveals his apologies and admits he believes her there’s something following them we hear cracking branches in the distance. The group must move on to avoid danger but as Holly runs to get Ian he turns against her and starts choking her.
WEB SERIES STORY NO.4, EPISODE 1: EXECUTION

THE OUTCOME

- cca. 9 minute episode
- a trailer
- a series of short Instagram teasers

- all the elements that needed improvement improved:
  - filmed in woods in Belgium, Ardennes, giving a great location
  - did proper auditions, got great actors
  - used a different camera, resulting with a much better picture
  - less of the steadicam work to have a variation in cinematography, and for it to have more impact when it is used
  - read books on horror screenwriting which helped me a lot in writing a more interesting story

FILM PREVIEW (UNEDITED)

THOUGHTS ON FILMMAKING

Creating a web series required many elements from story to screenplay to auditions and booking equipment. Before this project I have never been present at a real film set, but I knew I want to be prepared so I researched into screenwriting, cinematography, filming angles… Next to that I also looked for and tried out different angles. All this input made me feel better to start approaching the entire assignment.

Having a clear and visual briefing it was rather simple finding a film crew, there was many interested students but also production companies. Due to a short time span I went for a group of SAE Film students who have helped me with the technical part of the filming.

From the two filming days we had these are the core take-aways to keep in mind as improvement points for when to shoot the full episode:
  - do a casting: except 1 actor the 3 were really bad and it influenced a lot of footage looking bad
  - use a different camera: the Panasonic we used resulted in poor quality & overly exposed footage. It’s better to pick a good, chrisp camera and have more freedom in editing than being limited.
  - make sure to not over-use filters in post-production to not make it look amateur
  - location: find a dark forest that is bigger: this location was way too small so angles and movement was very limited
  - camera work: the steadicam worked great for the stalker effect, but it is smart to also use a camera on a tripod for extra shots
  - the least dialog the better: creating tension without using words - importance of good acting! (e.g. Jop)

For the second filming days we decided to go to Belgium where we found an appropriate area in the Ardennes woods. We were camping with the crew and the bonding time also helped us to communicate better on set when working With all the things that went wrong the first time we were more prepared and alert this time giving us a much better result. Working on a film project both on set and especially in post-production made me realize that even though I never had much interest in it before it is definitely a field I’d love to work in more often.
SOURCES FOR "Branded Content: A Strategic Approach to Marketers"
SOURCE LIST


PROCESSBOOK 2


Interview with Peter Landa (founder of Welter Shelter)(2015).

Interviews with the target audience (2015)


Online observations of the target audience: Facebook, Instagram (2015).

Purcell, K. (2013) New data show increases in both the percent of adults who post and who watch videos online


