BUSINESS NETWORKING STRATEGIES

In a Digital Consultancy
A master's thesis written by Anders Ringströmm Nielsen

Abstract

In this thesis, an in-depth analysis of the case company, Granyon, will be carried out, based on their networking activities. The goal of the thesis is to answer how business networking strategies can help maximize growth in a digital consultancy. To answer this, the project will, after introducing methodology and the theoretical framework consist of 3 main parts, which will be analyzed: Granyon's first year of business, their current situation and future strategy. The analysis eventually leads to a recommendation for a future business networking strategy based on the findings.

In the first year of business section of the analysis, I will describe the key event which was determining for how Granyon's first year would turn out. This description includes information about new partnerships, events and the opening of the UK office. Following this section, I will analyze Granyon's financial situation, by looking at their key financial numbers and ratios compared to two of their closest competitors. To end the first part of the analysis, I do a brand analysis of Granyon's current brand positioning and brand identity, to have a foundation for beginning to look into Granyon's future.

In the 'current' section of the analysis I will look into Granyon's network structure through their current business relationships individually. Then, the value of these business relationships will be evaluated through their network substance and network function. These will be evaluated in-depth, by looking at the business relationships' activity links, resources ties and actor bonds. Then Granyon's current network strategy will be evaluated, focusing on which networking activities they are carrying out at the moment. Lastly in this section, the connections between the different relationships and their function and substance will lead to reasons why Granyon should focus on creating a new business networking strategy.

In the future strategy section, I will review Granyon's current strategy to their future business and networking goals. Then I will discuss which networking strategy would be the better choice, for each of the business goals and networking goals, the discussion will lead up to the final recommendation.

In the discussion of which business networking strategy is the most recommendable for Granyon, I will review the three strategies Supply chain management, Customer relationship management and Electronic commerce.

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Declaration of Authorship

(To be placed at page 2 in the assignment.)

Identification	
Title of assignment:	Business Networking Strategies - In a Digital Consultancy
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Number of pages:

According to the exam regulations for this particular exam, the assignment must be of a maximum of [80] pages (insert max. number of pages) exclusive front page, bibliography and appendices. Appendices are not included in the assessment.

Each individual page of the assignment may not comprise more than 2,275 characters (incl. spaces) on average. (E.g. similar to 35 lines of 65 characters). All pages must have a margin of min. 3 cm in top and bottom and min. 2 cm to each of the sides. The fount must be of a minimum of 11 pitch. Tables, diagrams, illustrations etc. are not included in the number of characters, but will not justify exceeding the maximum number of pages.

Code of conduct:

Undersigned author hereby declares:
- that I/we individually or together with the group members listed above have written and completed this assignment.
- that I/we have indicated all quotes with quotation-marks and provided references to their sources.
- that the assignment complies with all regulations stated above regarding size and form.

Date: 13/09/17	Signature(s): *Anders R. Nielsen*

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Introduction

In the fast paced, interconnected, information economy, it is more important than ever to focus on networking and networks as a resource. This is due to the increasing global demand for sharing knowledge and for staying connected and up to date on the latest trends in the markets (Rainer, A., Fleisch, E. & Österle, H. (2002). With the technology being more complex than ever, progress is made every day, which then makes the supply and demand change frequently. With these changes happening, whether it is on supply, demand or technology, companies have to stay informed, to stay competitive and a way of doing this, given the interconnectedness of the global economy, which Christine Lagarde from IMF, talks about in her speech from 2013. She says that the global economy is more connected than ever, meaning that some countries' success or failure can have spillover effects all over the world (Lagarde, C., 2013). The global economy being more interconnected than ever, also scales its effects down to a more local level, and to keep up with the before mentioned changes, a company should focus on networking. But what is networking exactly? Borgatti & Halgin (2011), describes networks as consisting of a set of actors or nodes with a set of ties of a specified type, such as for example friendship or partnership, that link them. (p.1169)

More specifically, human beings use networking every day, whether it is at work or school, whether it is personal or business related, whether it is for giving something and expecting something in return or if it is just to stay connected, networks are all around us and they are impossible to overlook, especially since the introduction of the social medias. Since then, it has been increasingly on the average person's mind, to stay connected to the outside world, the wider the network the better. However, there is a difference between the average person using networks to stay connected with friends and trying to get a new job, and then with actual business networks. In business, networking is more than ever, a valuable resource, on line with intangible resources such as knowledge, and it should be dealt with in the same way that companies deal with strategy. However, networking has been overlooked for some time, also in recent times, where personal contact has been neglected, in favor of the digitalization. There are, however, several scholars who agree on the fact that business networking, is a more powerful tool than ever, in this information economy. For example, F. Ricciard (2014), who describes the relational view on economy, to be that networking not only is a means to an end for external resources (which could be imitated), but also a way of creating new even more valuable resources (which would be harder to imitate) by having companies work together (p.5). Håkansson & Snehota (2006), were some of the first scholars to really bring networking into the business landscape,

with the notion of business relationships being part of a larger network structure. In the modern information and technology economy, it is not enough to do business networking on a personal level, it has to be considered a management discipline, in line with strategy planning. Networking can be managed through business networking strategies (BNSs), which can be aligned with the overall strategy of the company. This thesis will investigate the specifics of how networking can be utilized as a strategy, more specifically in an information technology market. Therefore, the problem statement this thesis will revolve around is the following:

Problem statement:
"How can networking be used as a strategy to maximize growth in a digital consultancy?"

Research questions
To assist in answering the problem statement, seven research questions have been formulated. These will guide by research through the chapters and will eventually lead up to the proposed solution to the problem statement.

- Which key events shaped the financial results of Granyon, in their first year?
- How can brand identity and brand positioning be linked with networking?
- Which current business relationships does Granyon have?
- Which current networking activities does Granyon do, and how are they are related to each other?
- What are the structure and the function of Granyon's business relationships?
- What is Granyon's current business strategy and networking strategy?
- What are Granyon's business goals and networking goals for the future?

Methodology

Research design

The research philosophy can be seen as the outer layer of the thesis and an overall guidance to the research being conducted. Furthermore, it is an explanation of how the world and how knowledge is being perceived. For this thesis, it is important to clarify the way knowledge is being perceived and to uncover the many different thoughts which have gone into the research for, and creation of this thesis. During this methodology section, I will go through the various layers of the thesis, peeling them off, like an onion.

In this section, I will go through epistemology, ontology, and axiology, to give an understanding of how the world has been perceived and more importantly how I have approached knowledge (truth) during the research for and creation of this thesis.

In the following paragraphs, the layers which follows, will dig deeper in the choices which have been made in the research for and creation of this thesis. The choices include thoughts and rationales into the fields of research design, research strategy, type of research, time horizons and techniques. By the end of the methodology section it should be perfectly clear to the reader, how and why the thesis has been shaped the way it has and provide a satisfactory linkage to the rest of the thesis chapters, which includes a theory section, an analysis and a discussion, among others.

The overall research paradigm which this thesis operates in is flexible and dynamic, as this is seen as the optimal setup, for the research on a very dynamic industry and topic. As later paragraphs will discuss, multiple data collection methods are utilized, to secure that the data (or knowledge) is available for the primary purpose of coming up with a satisfactory solution to the research questions. I argue, that my research operates within a pragmatic research paradigm, because the pragmatic paradigm focuses on getting the right data for the right research questions, and not on specific methods. Furthermore, it would not be satisfactory only to focus on one specific method and try to force the solution to the research questions into categories, therefore pragmatism, in the meaning of choosing multiple ontologies, epistemologies and methods, to ensure a satisfactory and in-depth solution to the research question, has been preferred. (Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A.: 2009, p. 109). The decision to operate within a pragmatist research paradigm, affects all the layers of the thesis, as the primary goal is, with the research questions in focus, to generate a satisfactory solution/conclusion, instead of, for instance, generalizing the answers out to multiple organizations,

concluding an ultimate truth or creating new theory. Regarding the reality vs non-reality discussion which other social paradigms bring (positivism and interpretivism), the pragmatic paradigm acknowledges that a(this) reality does exist, however in an ever-changing form, based on actions. It furthermore rejects the notion of an external reality. (Morgan, D., 2014)

The consequence of approaching the data, and the thesis within the pragmatic research paradigm, are multiple. However, first and foremost, it means that I will approach the thesis with a flexible mindset. Whatever epistemology, ontology, axiology and data collection method, which suits the situation and assists in the process of answering the research questions, are allowed to be used. In other words, this means that there are no limitations to the ways knowledge is being perceived and gathered, as long as it ultimately has a purpose in the process of answering the research questions. (Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A.: 2009, p. 109).

In practice, pragmatism allows the researcher to actively switch between epistemological, ontological and axiological standpoints, however, does not erase them completely.

Regarding the ontological positions both **subjectivism** and **objectivism** will be discussed to be clear about how reality is being perceived. In this thesis, having a pragmatist research philosophy, leads me to approach the research with a predominately subjectivist ontology. This means that reality changes with the actions of the individuals in a society or an organization. Furthermore, it means that phenomena, such as networking, only exists as a consequence and perception from the individual's mind. However, as the research philosophy is pragmatist, I also approach the data as objective as possible, meaning that I view networking as a phenomenon on its own, to get a wholesome view of the possibilities that networking presents. The ontological view is very much linked to the axiological view in the pragmatist research philosophy, where values play a significant role in interpreting the data, both subjectively and objectively. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 110-111)

Regarding epistemological positions, that is how knowledge is being perceived, both observable phenomena and subjective meanings, can be utilized and can provide the researcher with suitable knowledge of the research field, as long as it is connected to the research questions. The core of approaching the data with a pragmatic epistemology is to utilize practical research, whichever the method, to assist in the process of providing answers to the research questions. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 112)

Research strategy

The goal of this thesis is to investigate the concept of business networks and networking strategies in an organization. For this reason, a critical case study has been chosen as the overall research strategy, as it allows me to focus my attention on one single organization, and dig deeper into the concept of business networks, by analyzing it in working out in the real world with field of interest in mind. The case study consists of many different forms of data, as discussed in the paragraph primary and secondary data. This data includes qualitative interviews, strategic documents, financial key figures, blogs, YouTube videos and quantitative survey answers. This data is all being embodied by the case company, Granyon (Bryman, A. & Bell, E., 2015, p.68-70). The case company has been chosen with one beforehand settled condition, set by the study board: It has to have an international aspect. This condition was the only binding factor when choosing the case company, however other considerations were made, regarding geography (located in Denmark), size (preferably a startup for having more influence in the process) and lastly regarding general interest of the researcher (marketing bureau or consultancy). The communication between researcher and the contact person in the case company were facilitated via email and has continued primarily with this method, supported by one in-person meeting, one skype-meeting and multiple phone calls (Appendix 8: Emails). The contact person provided primary data regarding financial data, strategy statements and an organizational overview. In addition, the contact person provided contact to the survey respondents and the interview respondents. The reliance on one person to be the gatekeeper, is a great way of gaining access directly into a case company and gaining some initial trust for the research, based on having this contact person

After having established that the thesis is written in the pragmatist philosophy and in addition is a case study, it is evident that the data collection method follows a mixed methods design which means that the thesis will be produced using both qualitative and quantitative methods, both of which will be explained more in detail in the following paragraphs. (Bryman & Bell, 2015, pp.643-646)

If I had chosen only to use one of the methods, it would have been described as a mono method thesis. In this case, it would be more suiting to an objective study, where a general theory or explanation would be desired from the research. The reasoning behind choosing a multiple method research design, is to have a wider variety of data available, this is preferred when it is desired to have an in-depth explanation of one specific phenomena, one case company or if the desired explanation not necessarily should be generalizable to the whole field. The choice of a mixed methods research

design, in comparison to a strictly multi-method design, is more of the pragmatic way to think about the data collection, as instead of being locked into using two different data collecting methods and two different analysis methods for those, the goal is to have a more open approach to the data, having the possibility to analyze quantitative data with a qualitative method and the other way around. The design of this multi-method case study, takes form of an embedded design, as the two methods are used side by side, and within (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.646). The key is to keep all possibilities open, not to be locked in a certain mind set or approach and to make sure that the best possible data and approach to the data is selected, with finding a solution to the research question in mind (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 151-152)

Research approach

As established, I operate in a pragmatist research philosophy, which ultimately means that I will approach the method and research approach with a flexible mindset and utilize any approach which assists in the process of answering the research questions.

Regarding research approach, I consider two important distinctions, that is the **inductive** and the **deductive** approach. Deduction as a research approach, is mostly linked to scientific research and quantitative studies. The core of deduction is to continually test theory by setting up hypotheses and testing them out doing scientific studies. Deductive studies tend to have a large sample size and to be easier to generalize than inductive studies. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp.124-125). The inductive approach focuses more on the creation of theory instead of testing. This is why inductive research is linked to qualitative studies, which tend to be smaller in sample size. However, an inductive study focuses more the environmental factors. This distinction is closely linked to that of qualitative and quantitative methods, a distinction which will be discussed more in detail in the next paragraphs. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp.125-126)

As the main data collection will be done using qualitative interviews, the inductive research approach is mostly utilized in this thesis. This is done to focus on the small sample, one single case, and to focus on the case company and its environment. However, to stay true to the research philosophy, the deductive research approach will also be utilized to assist in the process of answering the research questions. This is to ensure that the most suitable methods are all utilized in the best way possible for answering the research questions, and to further validate the data and the findings of this thesis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp.124-126)

Data Collection

Primary and secondary data

The data is collected on a beforehand set topic and following the conditions. The gathered empirical data will then guide the researcher, through analysis, to one or multiple possible conclusions to the research questions. In this case, this thesis seeks out to investigate how networking can be used as a strategy to maximize growth in a digital consultancy.

Following the pragmatic research philosophy, I use all options possible when it comes to either primary or secondary data. In terms of primary data, the collected data from the interviews and the surveys are the main contributions. This data is the most reliable, as it comes from the first-hand source. In this case the CEO who made the documents, interviews from the CEO and a leading employee, and survey answers from the actual employees in the company. Regarding secondary data, my initial research on the company, before getting access to the primary data, was through their website. This data was secondary documentary data, both in written and not written forms. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 258-259). These included a blog and multiple YouTube videos, the several financial and strategic documents provided by the CEO including organizational map and key financial numbers. This secondary data, I use to supplement the primary data and use it to give an overall outlook of the Granyon organization from other sources than directly from their board of directors and to give a more diverse empirical foundation, which will assist in validating the findings in this thesis. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 258-260).

Qualitative/Quantitative

Quantitative data collection is seen as being quantifiable, that is via numerical data, such as survey answers. Furthermore, analysis of the data samples can be done via quantitative methods, which mostly would include statistical analysis. Quantitative research is as mentioned, linked to the deductive research approach, and is highly relevant when testing theory or a hypothesis and for finding causality in theory into practice. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 118, 143-145). For this thesis, quantitative surveys are being used as a complementary method to the qualitative interviews and the secondary data, which will be discussed further below. But first, I will go into detail with the quantitative data collection I have done in this thesis, that is surveys.

Regarding surveys, it is often a requirement to do sampling, that is to pick out the population you wish to include in your research and to make sure it as randomized as possible, to ensure the least biased

data and the more reliable data for the research. However, when the sample is as small as in this case, with a case-company of only 15 employees, it does not make sense to sample the population. Furthermore, it is possible to ensure 100% response rate, and therefore sampling is not needed (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 222-224)

The surveys were self-administrated email surveys, which were distributed after obtaining the employees' emails through the gatekeeper. This was preferred, as it is time saving compared to administrating the surveys manually and in paper-form. The pros with email surveys are that they are easy to deliver, cost efficient, and ensures anonymity of the respondents. The cons are, however, that the response rate might not be as high, as there is no direct pressure to make the employees respond, other than the request from their superior. Another con is that it is easier for the respondents just to scroll through and not spend a lot of time on the survey. This means that for surveys which require a lot of consideration and subjective answers it is not the best method, and as a consequence, the questions in the survey are kept as simple as possible and not as long and time-consuming. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 361-362)

The most important factor to consider is the content, the questions which are incorporated in the survey. These will be the most deciding factor in whether the data will be of good quality, reliable and acceptable quantity. In the creation of the survey questions, were in mind to get the most relevant data possible, in relation to the research question. In the considerations were also to make the data quantifiable and reliable, which is why basic information questions are added in the beginning. From then, the most important topic is networking, how the company has performed, and how networking will play a role in the future of the organization. This means that the surveys will be focusing on all three question variables, behavioral, opinion and attribute. The attribute variables are from the general data about the respondents, the behavioral questions are about the company; the company's efforts in networking and the company's performance. The opinion variable questions are related to how the respondents feel about a particular topic, in this case networking. Most of the questions will be focused on behavioral variable, as the more opinionated variables are being covered in the qualitative interviews. Furthermore, the opinion variable requires more time and effort from the respondents, than the behavioral and attribute. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 366-368)

In contrast, qualitative data collection focuses more on non-quantifiable data, such as words, videos, and pictures often gathered from either individual or group interviews. Again, qualitative methods have its unique ways of analyzing the data. It is possible to have quantitative data and analyze it with

qualitative methods. The choice of data collection method and analysis strategy must fall into these two categories, either in combination or separated. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 151-152)

In this thesis, I use a mixed model research approach, which means that I am both using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, I also use them combined. This means that the quantitative data mostly is used to verify the qualitative data that is a deductive approach. However, I analyze the quantitative data with qualitative analysis procedures. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 151-152)

In the next paragraphs, the considerations on the main data collection method of this thesis, the qualitative interview, will be discussed. First, the interview method will be described, followed by important interview qualifications. Lastly, the rationale and thought behind the interview guide and questions will be discussed and made clear to the reader.

Semi-structured interview

The interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews. This means that the structure of the interview to a certain point have been written down and planned. In the interviews made for this thesis, there is an interview guide, which involves overall topics to be covered, and questions within these topics. Both open-ended and closed questions are in the question guide. Furthermore, an introduction is included, and general guidelines to keep the interview on track. However, on top of this, the interview is not strictly planned down to each little detail, meaning that there is left room to ask follow-up questions to the respondents' answers and to improvise questions which are seen as relevant.

Interviewing competencies

The interview process presents multiple choices and considerations on which way to go. Whether it should be structured, semi-structured or open. Whether the interview questions should be open-ended or closed, ways of asking the questions, the content of the interview guide, topic of questions, order of questions and so forth. Furthermore, the considerations arise when preparing for conducting the interview, when conducting it and when analyzing the results.

In the preparation phase, it was clear that the CEO of Granyon, was more than willing to help, but at the same time had some concerns and demands for me as the interviewer. These concerns are relatively common, for example, the CEO wanted a summarized description of the questions and a timeframe before the interview. I explained to the CEO that the data could be damaged by him

knowing all the questions in advance. Therefore, he was provided with overall categories, and examples of questions, which would look similar to the ones in the actual interviews. I made sure to start off the interviews by letting the participants know how long the interview would take approximately, how many questions, the main topics and made sure to make the participants feel as comfortable as possible. The interviews were conducted on Skype, which allowed the participants to be interviewed wherever they wanted and feels comfortable with the location. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, pp. 336-339)

There are several qualifications which are considered specifically important when conducting semi-structured (or in-depth) interviews, according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009). The following is my considerations regarding the most relevant ones (pp.336-339):

Opening the interview – I approached the opening of the interview with a relaxed and informal attitude. I let the participants know that I was recording, introduced the study and what it was about and lastly, I talked to them about their day and personal questions not related to the study. The function of opening the interview informally is to get the participants to relax and to be comfortable with the interviewer.

Using appropriate language – The language was, of course, a consideration when forming the interview guide and when conducting the interviews. It is important to use professional language, to gain the participants trust and respect, and ultimately to secure reliable data.

Questioning – For the questioning, I had several considerations and methods to secure as usable and reliable data as possible. First of all, the wording of the questions was set up as open questions for the most part (See Appendix: Interview questions), to make the participants answer openly and freely, with vivid accounts of their own first-hand experiences and to avoid standardized answers. Furthermore, I used probing. Probing means that you ask the participants, specifically to dig deeper in certain answers that are interesting in some way. Either if the participants sound like they are bringing a standardized answer or if the participant is going too fast over a good point, probing can be used to set focus.

Interview guide

The interview was conducted with the CEO of Granyon, and the manager of the UK based office, a subsidiary of Granyon. These two individuals were very willing to help, and they possess the necessary knowledge of the organization and the business, to give a helpful look into their business.

Furthermore, their reliability as trusted sources are high, given their positions and wish to improve the organization.

The interviews were conducted via Skype and lasted 1½-2 hours each. They were semi-structured in nature, meaning that I had a question guide to stay on topic, secure a flow and have a general plan for the questions, but allowed myself to ask follow-up questions and improvised questions to dig deeper into their responses and to react to the feelings the respondents showed to the different questions. The interviews were 1 on 1 interviews, meaning that it was only myself as the interviewer and the interviewee who participated.

The overall theme of the interviews are business networks and are created with the purpose of gaining the optimal data for answering the research questions in depth. The objectives are to gain information about the role business networks have played in Granyon's first year of business, which role it is currently taking and what strategies for networking are for the future.

Interview design

The interview starts out with introductory questions to get the interviewee comfortable with me and with the questions. The goal of these questions is to make the interviewee relaxed and build a trust between us. Thereafter, the questions take specific themes, starting with the 'brand.' This category is important to clarify Granyon's position in the market and its relationship to its competitors. Furthermore, this category of questions will look into the perceived image of Granyon.

Next category of questions focuses more on the cultural aspect of Granyon. These questions' purpose is to look into the perceived values of the company, and the correlation between the market, their performance and how they want to be perceived by competitors, new employees and themselves.

The last category of questions in the interview is more focused on networks. The primary focus of the questions is on business networks, and how the company utilizes these to gain new clients and maintain existing relationships.

Triangulation

To use triangulation of the data means that multiple sources of data collection, theoretical stand or methodological considerations are utilized around the same research question or phenomena. The use of multiple sources of information, will, in theory, validate the data, as it will be considered, analyzed and covered from more than one single source. It is clear that triangulation can be easily linked with

the use of pragmatism, as it is the same main thought which leads both concepts forward: the use of multiple sources of either data collection method, research paradigm or theory, is considered more reliable and valid than the use of only one source. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 154)

The multiple methods research approach allows me to investigate all possible methods of collecting and analyzing data and the way I view the world in general. Neither the ontology, axiology or epistemology is specifically important to this thesis; the best possible options are the ones which provide the optimal conditions for providing satisfactory responses to the research questions. What triangulation of the data can mean, is that if the multiple sources of information, methods, and theory all correlates and comes to together, they have the possibility to validate the research to a higher degree, than if it was solely one single source. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill: 2009, p. 154)

Exploratory

I acknowledge that I as the researcher enter the field, with my communication skills as the main tool to collect data. I approach the collection of data at first with an explorative mindset, meaning that I let the data unfold by itself, with a broad focus of the relevant research field. Starting out with an exploratory approach to the research questions, allows me to gain a comprehensive overview of the relevant literature and to put the chosen research field in a 'new light' (Lewis, Saunders & Thornhill: 2009, p. 139) I review the literature in the chosen research field with the goal of finding links and relevant literature to the case company, which also allows me to be flexible in my approach to the research questions and narrow down my focus. Furthermore, I approach the data as objective as possible but acknowledge that I have certain prejudices and opinions which will be incorporated and be an active part of the collected data.

Descriptive

In the first section of the project, the approach switches from exploratory to more of a descriptive approach. Here I use both qualitative and secondary data, to give an overview of the first year of business in Granyon. This overview serves as a starting point, from which the reader and I can reflect on events and strategies that could have been done differently or was done well. It is important to use hindsight and describe the past, to be able to understand the present and thereby sensibly plan the future with that knowledge in mind. As the thesis progresses, through the lifespan of the company, switches back to a more exploratory approach, to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the complexities that the analysis of the data and the proposed strategies will bring. With the pragmatic

research philosophy in mind, an explanatory approach is also adopted, to discuss whether there is a linkage between the collected data. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009, p.140)

Reliability

Reliability is crucial to all academic research if academics cannot be trusted in their work, who else can? To evaluate the reliability of academic research, 3 questions can be assessed according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009). These are: "Will the measures yield the same results on other occasions?" "Will similar observations be reached by other observers," and "Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data?" (p.156) several measures have been taken to secure the reliability of this research, being aware of the most common threats to reliability, which I will go through in the following paragraph. (pp.156-157)

Subject or participant error: This means that the participants might respond differently giving their enthusiasm for the subject which is being investigated. In the interviews, the CEO of the Danish office, and the CEO of the British office were interviewed. Both interviewees can be expected to give answers that favor the company and neglects the negative sides of the company. However, by triangulating the data this error will be limited, as if there is a negative correlation between the different answers, it will show, and that data will be considered as false.

Subject or participation bias: This bias means that the participants of the surveys or interviews, might feel that they are being watched, or that they cannot say how they really feel, in fear of getting negative consequences from the management. This bias is overcome in this thesis, by guaranteeing the participants the possibility for full anonymity.

Observer error: Observer error refers to the possibility of the data being seen differently at different times or by different people. Without structure and guidelines to for example an interview guide, there is the chance that the questions will be asked in several different and contradicting ways and accordingly that the answers will be affected by it. To avoid this error, I used a semi-structured interview guide, to make sure the interview questions and answers stayed relevant to the project and similar in nature.

Observer bias: Observer bias refers to the fact that the data could have been interpreted in several different ways, and that the data could have been collected differently, with different results. I deal with this bias, by approaching the thesis with a pragmatic approach, meaning that I use multiple data

collection and data analysis methods, to secure triangulation, and thereby the most reliable and valuable data for answering the research questions.

The most important step to secure reliability of academic research is according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009), planning. This is something I have put a large portion of my time into making sure the interview guide was right for the company, making sure I had sufficient knowledge of the company and the industry and in general that I was well informed about the company and the different tools available for me when collecting my empirical foundation.

Case: Granyon

In this section of the thesis, the case company Granyon will be presented briefly. This presentation is based on the interviews with the managing directors of the two departments, on secondary data such as their website, blog, YouTube videos and market analysis from Estatistik.dk. The goal of this section is to present the reader to the company and to give an empirical standpoint, before introducing the theoretical framework. In the analysis, the case company will be analyzed in-depth according to the same empirical framework and with the theoretical framework as the main tool.

Background information

Granyon is digital consultancy in the communication design and graphic design business in Denmark. (Estatistik.dk). it is a young startup, which had its beginning in February 2016 (See Figure 7: Timeline). Granyon is led by the managing director Mikkel and the creative director Jesper, who founded the company together. Granyon offers a broad range of digital services including website design, app creation, strategy planning and branding. (granyon.com/services) However, what differentiates Granyon from its competitors is the tool they call prototyping. Prototyping is an example of a response to the dynamic and fast moving modern economy, as it allows Granyon to create prototypes of finished products for the customers. The customer can follow the process all along and can change it accordingly at any point in time. If the prototype is not what the customer.

Organizational structure

Overall, Granyon has two offices, one in Copenhagen and one in Cambridge in the UK. In the main Copenhagen office, Granyon is build up by two teams. The first is the more strategy based team, with the managing director in charge of a strategist and a data analyst. In this team, the initial part of projects is built, and the 'legwork', regarding data analysis and planning are established. The second team is led by the creative director, with a team of designers under him. This team will take over when

the initial work is done, and the customer is ready to proceed to the design phase and to talk creative ideas. This is the initial thought of how the structure is and should be in Granyon, but as the UK country manager expresses it, it is a very fluid hierarchy, where the employees take the roles which are needed of them for the specific projects. Furthermore, it is a flat hierarchy under the two managing directors. This is a consequence of the company being a startup and there only being around 8 employees hired at the moment (Interview 2, p. 2).

From the launch in February 2016, the company was seen as being international minded. The main focus was not only on Denmark but on expanding as soon as possible to the UK. The UK office was scheduled to open in 2018 when the company was more established on the Danish market. However, the launch was moved to November 2016, to speed up the growth of the company. In the UK office, there is currently only one employee, the country manager, who is doing research, networking and strategy planning. Furthermore, as a part of the fluid hierarchy, he is assisting in projects from the Danish office. (Interview 2, p.1)

Strategy and Vision

The first years of being in business is according to the managing director to create brand awareness and to use networking to create projects (Interview 1, p.1). Regarding the current organizational structure, then it is the plan to use the same structure to scale the business into other markets (Interview 1, p.2). Granyon's vision is to have more focus on the people involved in the projects, than to scale and make as much money as possible on processes and other 'business bullshit' (interview 1, p.2). They want to exploit being a startup with more time for each client. However, a big part of the vision is to get the results faster, via the prototyping tool, this is what differentiates them from their competitors (interview 1, p.2).

In the UK office, the strategy has been to do market research and to understand the culture before reaching out to a lot of clients. The initial research has been on potential partners, on market differences to the Danish market and to expand their network in the UK. As a recent addition, they have hired salespeople to pitch Granyon's ideas and know how to potential clients and this way to begin doing business. (Interview 2, p.2)

Market description: Communication design & graphical design

The communication design and graphical design business in Denmark where Granyon is a part of, have had a steady growth over the last 5 years. Most of the company's in the business are located in the Copenhagen area, where Granyon will meet most of the competition. The business is seen as a high-

risk environment, as the bankruptcy rate was higher than of other businesses in 2014. The general profitability is, however, growing at a steady pace (Estatistik.dk, table 2).

Granyon is both a startup and a small company, compared to its competitors. The managing director explained that 5 years ago, the competition would have been measured on size, but recently the competition has focused more on specialization and the specific projects they are bidding for. Therefore, size does not matter in most of Granyon's projects, only know how and best-practice (Interview 1, p. 2).

Theoretical Framework

Defining business relationships and business networks

Networking is not just limited to Facebook, Linked-in or to find apartments or jobs. Networking is happening every day, not just between individuals, but between businesses as well. Business relationships are one of the most valuable and important resources or tools; a company has in their arsenal. According to Håkansson and Snehota (1995), a business relationship can be regarded as part of larger whole, a network of relationships which are all connected somehow, instead of individual relationships.

In such a view, the explanations for what is happening in the business relationships between companies should also be sought after in factors external to the company and the specific relationships. The specific relationships should be understood as a part of a larger context, and as connected to all of the companies' relationships. It is in the network perspective that the company will find explanations and meanings in the specific business relationships (Håkansson & Snehota, 1995).

In this thesis, I follow the definition of a business relationship, as Håkansson and Snehota (1995) describes it:

> *"Business relationships of a company are connected and that this applies for companies (...) we have to consider possible chain dependencies between relationships. We might also call these 'indirect connectedness' (...) Generalized connectedness of business relationships implies existence of an aggregated structure, a form of organization that we have chosen to qualify as a network. Because of the connectedness, a relationship is a part of a larger whole". (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 19)*

This means that business relationships become the links between the actors (the companies), and the whole market will be seen as one big network, with the center in the case company, Granyon. This structure between network and business relationship is further acknowledged by Ford and Mouzas (2013), who defines business networking as:

"the conscious problem-driven attempts of one or more business actors to change or develop some aspect(s) of the substance of interaction in relationships in which they and others are involved" (p.436)

Business networking is therefore defined as the meta-structure of the market, where the actors are the companies, and their relationships are the bonds and links if compared to traditional network theory. This further means that business networking in the market is the attempt of the actors to change the substance of the market. (p.436)

Characteristics of Business relationships

According to Håkansson & Snehota (1995), the previous research on the concept of business relationships pointed in many different directions but described some similar characteristics. The main similarities have been characterized in two different categories, that is structural and process features. The structural characteristics describe the importance they have for the company, and the process characteristics describe the interaction processes and the development in these (p.7).

Structural

Continuity - Business relationships are often long-term and relatively stable over time. The phases that the two parties go through, at least regarding supplier and customer relationships, often are quite similar and organized. From the initial contract, delivery, maintenance, and service; these phases can be repeated and keep the business relationship going for years. When it comes to the major supplier or customer, the relationship is often build up from limited involvement in the beginning to a more close and complex relationship over time. There are furthermore factors that point to that the longer a relationship has existed, the more use the two parties will get out of it, and the more likely it is that the relationship will be a factor of change or development in the company (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 7).

Complexity - Another structural feature of a business relationship is complexity. Networks, in general, can reach out into a thousand different directions, and business relationships are no different. One way of describing the complexity is regarding how many people are involved in the process, which type the relationship is and the contact pattern of the people involved in the process. Generally, business

relationships will have 5-10 people in direct contact, which all have different roles and status in their companies. Another way of looking at the complexity is the way companies use their already established business relationships. Whether it is services, knowledge or goods, many intercompany transactions are made every day, which affects the relationships between businesses. The outcome or expectations to the different business relationships vary greatly in the overall business network, which furthermore increases the complexity.

Symmetry - The symmetry in business relationships refers to the balance of resources the relationships offers. The initiation of relationships is often a result of the two parties offering something, which the other needs, or in better quality (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p.8).

Informality - The longer a business relationship has existed, the more likely it is that it is informal in nature. In most cases, a formal contract will be a part of the relationship, however, in general, the communication and the nature of the relationships will be informal. This is because formal contracts will not be able to capture the complexity of the intercompany communication and the conflicts which is bound to happen in long-term relationships. In general, informal bonding and networking in between the employees of the companies, are also a valuable resource in initiating and maintaining business relationships (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 8).

Even though the networks might be seen as rather stable, long lasting and mutually benefitting, this is not always the case. When business relationships develop over time, multiple factors in the process might change or affect the relationship (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 8) these are described in the next paragraph.

Process

Adaptations - Adaptations are crucial for business relationships to be initiated and maintained over time. By adaptations is meant that both parties in the relationship to some degree adapt to meet the other party's needs. Adaptations happen every day in a business relationship, in small scale, in deadlines, meetings, routines, and processes that are changed or modified to suit both parties equally well. (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 9)

Cooperation and conflict - Just because a business relationship is established, and even if it is successful, it does not mean that it will be free of conflicts. In the nature of any relationship is the possibility of conflict, it is the way these conflicts are handled, which shapes the relationship going

forward. As long as both parties have something to gain from the relationship, they will lean towards finding constructive solutions to the conflicts. (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 9)

Social interaction - Even though business relationships, in nature, revolves around business specific actions and behaviors, the individuals involved in the processes of business networking, play a significant role in initiating and maintaining the relationship. This means that the social interaction between the people involved and their values and beliefs can affect the business relationship both to the negative and positive. (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p.10). Furthermore, the social ties and bonds between the different individuals in the organizations are specifically important to build up trust and strengthen the business relationship. What more is the networks of the individuals also become a part of the company's network, colleagues, relatives, etc. and these can potentially add value to the company. (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p.15) This is also why the business relationships and the whole network is seen as connected and why it is of great importance to maintain the relationships. A change in the relationship can impact other parts of the network either positively or negatively, as potentially the whole network is connected. Positively, the knowledge and tools gained in one relationship can benefit in another, or new relationships can arise from already existing ones. Negatively, if the company have a bad experience in one relationship, the word can spread out and damage the reputation of the company (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 17)

Routinization - Over time, as a part of our human nature, we find and thrive with routines. The same thing is true in business relationships, where routines, implicit rules, and rituals become a large part of the relationship. These routines can both serve as ways to reduce the complexity and as a way of reducing cost, as the complicated transactions between the companies will be a manner of routine and implied in the methods of handling it (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, p. 9).

Value of business relationships

When looking at the market with a relationship based view, the company is no longer facing a market with numerous separate customers and suppliers; it will then look more like one big network, with links and bonds all over. All relationships are potential links to new relationships. According to Håkansson & Snehota (1995), there is a link between having few relationships and poor performance, as there is to having more links than the industry average and better performance. The biggest influence on the performance is regarding the main suppliers and the biggest customers, and the company's relationship to these. It is important to note that no relationships are the same and they require individual attention, not just as a whole.

The business relationships of a company are all unique, but at the same time have things in common. What makes them unique is that over time the combination of resources and the cooperation on different projects produces results which neither of the companies could have accomplished by themselves. The ways that all business relationships produce similar results can be categorized in two factors according to Håkansson & Snehota (1995). These are *who* and *what* is affected by the relationship, or the function and the substance of the relationship. (p.26) the establishment of a relationship and the outcomes of it is variable and will take on different forms and produce different results given the situation. This is why it is important to narrow the focus on the relationship and look more on the various parts and effects of it.

Substance

According to Håkansson and Snehota (1995), what the business relationship affects can be described as the substance of a relationship. This substance has three layers:

Activity layer - Also referred to as 'activity links', as the relationship is the factor that links the internal and individual activities of the companies together (P.26). The two companies will have thousands of different individual activities, which are complex to organize and control. When collaborating in a business relationship, some of the companies' activities will often overlap, such as technical, commercial and administrative activities. These processes can help organize the individual activities better and create a stronger synergy overall in the business relationship. This happens by linking together the activities, adapting them to each other, developing best practice for both companies and if carried out right, effectivizing the process and minimizing costs (P.28-29). However, looking at these activity links in a network perspective, all activity links a company have, in all of its business relationships, will affect each other. All negative processes, or relationships with negative synergies, will affect your company's activity processes, and thereby weaken them when operating in other business relationships, and the other way around. Therefore, it is of particular importance to assess how wide your company's activity network (chain) reaches out, and how many business partners you link activities with, and which activities these are. If there is no structure in your approach to this process, your company's activities will suffer from all ineffective processes from all the companies in your business network (p.29).

Resource layer – also referred to as 'resource ties', as the relationship develops, it can tie together different resources of the companies. (p.26). Resources can be anything from materials, machinery, financial resources to knowledge and manpower. Often a relationship is formed because the parties

have resources that the other company needs and cannot produce internally. Furthermore, an assessment of the resources of the individual companies is needed, to evaluate which resources can be tied and which are not needed in the relationship. However, a business relationship is not only about trading resources, it is about creating new opportunities and innovating to create different resources in the synergy between the two companies. (P.30) As relationships often are used directly to gain access to resources, the relationship itself can also be seen as a valuable resource for a company, even on network level, where a company can establish secondary ties to companies, which resources they need. Therefore, business relationships can be seen as investments as well (p.31)

Actor layer - also referred to as 'actor bonds', as the relationship creates bonds between the individual actors of the two companies. (p.26) the individual companies, can in business relationship be considered as individual people as well. They form relationship roles and the relationship can get stronger or weaker dependent on how much effort the actors put into it. As the relationship develops, the companies will get closer linked and tied together, and will give the other party more attention and priority. This priority will for example be to prioritize companies in your network for certain tasks and trades. The relationship between the actors will furthermore give identity to the companies involved, identities which will spread across the network, either negatively or positively. However, the relationships have very different lifespans and develop in different manners. If a business relationship is not beneficial for both companies in the beginning, or if it ceases to be beneficial over time, it can end abruptly for no other reason than the effectivity. The bonds between the actors, can also be seen as rules or guidelines, which guides the behavior of the companies involved, and the future collaboration between not only one specific relationship, but all relationships in that network. (p.32-33) It should be noted that the actors not always can be seen as an individual in terms of organizations, as there is also the question of departments and subdivisions of a company, which might have different goals than the main organization. (p.34)

These three layers largely make up the 'substance' of a business relationship, and have up until now been seen as three individual concepts. However, in reality the three are strongly connected. Some relationships use some of the layers in large extent and some others, not at all; it all depends on the individual relationship. For example, a company which rents some machinery from the other company, who are in the same building, this can be seen as a resource tie, and will not necessarily have actor bonds or activity links. Another example is a company who makes use of the other company's

distribution system, but provides some materials themselves, this can be seen as activity link, again there is no necessity for other layers to be included.

However, there is also an interdependency between the layers. It is actors who activate resources and link activities, and the amount of activities being linked are limited to your resources. In that way, many relationships can benefit from putting more emphasis on their relationships, by either linking more activities, tying more resources together or bonding the actors deeper, depending on the situation they are in; because of the interdependency, changes will happen, and adjustments will be needed (p.34-36).

Håkansson and Snehota (1995), explains that the stronger these layers are connected, the more complex the relationship will be. Furthermore, by analyzing these three layers, you can explain the nature of a relationship, evaluate the importance of it and predict the future use of it (p. 27). These effects were the 'what' or the substance of the relationship. To answer the 'who' or the function of a relationship, we have to look into three different functionalities:

Functions

Function for the dyad - The relationship will, first of all, have an effect on both parties involved as a whole, also referred to as 'the dyad' of the relationship. First of all, the two parties will establish some relation in the three substance layers and if successful the relationship will develop further. The relationship is now consistent with the substance of the relationship, the activity links, resource ties and the actors' bonds, but also more than that. When relationships are successful, something more than the sum of individual company's substance will emerge. Håkansson and Snehota (1995), refers to it as a 'quasi-organization' (p.36), the fact that when teamed up in a relationship, companies can gain larger substance than when outside of the relationship.

Function for the individual company - each individual company in the relationship is affected in different ways, and the resources provided by both companies and produced by the relationship itself is likely to have different functionality to the two companies. But not only different functionality, but it will also vary how much a company potentially can gain from the relationship, related to how large the costs are for establishing the relationship, in direct costs and indirect costs such as effectiveness and innovation. (p.38-39)

Function for third parties - There is likely to be effects of the relationship between two companies,

which will affect other companies and even other third parties, such as government or privates. Other companies might monitor changes in the relationship, to potentially benefit from negative changes or errors being made, to take place in the relationship. Governments and societies can benefit if two companies decide to cooperate on projects to improve human rights of their workers, to increase their involvement in third world countries, or even just to increase production in a certain country, thereby creating jobs for the community. (Pp.39-40)

To evaluate the effectiveness of a business relationship thus, the substance and the function of the relationship will have to be analyzed. The substance consists of three layers: the activity links, resource ties and actor bonds and the function of the relationship which can be analyzed in three categories: the function of the dyad, the function of each individual company and the function of third parties. Thus, in a network perspective, it means that a company's actions will not solely affect its performance, but will also depend greatly on all the actors' in its network. (p.41)
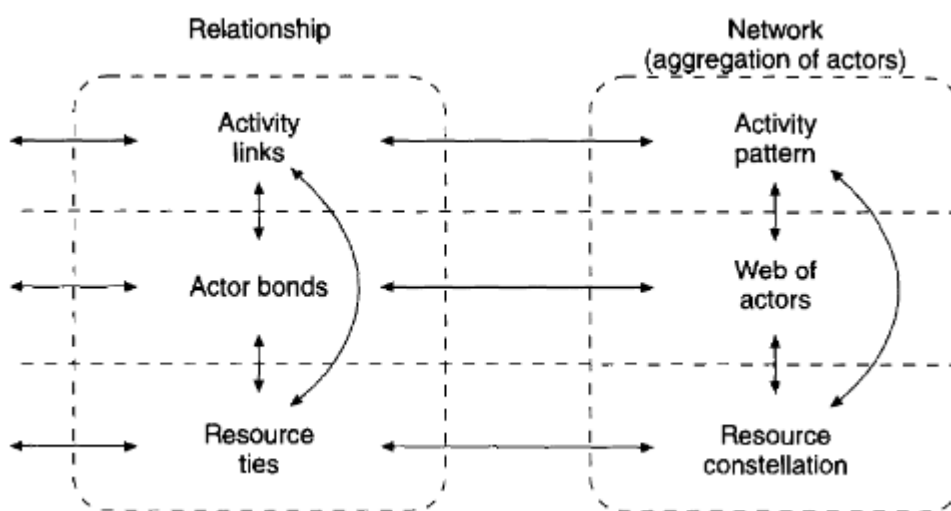
Figure 1: Relationship and network substance. Source: Håkansson & Snehota (p.44)

In figure 1, the networks function on the relationship and thereby on the individual company is illustrated. Here it can be seen that the substances in the individual relationships are being scaled up to the whole network, and the whole network influences each substance layer in the relationship.

The logic of business relationships

According to Ford and Mouzas (2013) definition of the logic of business relationships:

"(..) The logic of business relationships is that they provide the essential means for participant actors to combine adapt and develop their resources and activities directly with those of others, to indirectly

access remote activities and resources from elsewhere in the network and to address their respective and common issues and problems". (p.436)

 This definition focuses on the resources which the two business partnering companies can offer each other, thereby eliminating geographical, political or financial issues. Ford and Mouzas (2013) furthermore gives four characteristics of business relationships which are:

- *Relationships define the business actor*: In the traditional market view, the actors are clearly defined. There are buyers, suppliers and everything in between. However, the links between them are not deeper than supply and demand. In the networking view, there is a more open definition of the roles in the market. Here the business relationships in between the actors will define the roles and the rules of the market, by determining which companies are in business together. (p.436)

- *Relationships are the prime assets of the business actor*: The resources that companies get out of and generate from their business relationships are the main value which they compare all other assets to. It is, therefore, a top management task to generate and maintain business relationships (p.436).

- *Relationships activate resources and activities*: In the network view of the market, all actors are dependent on all of the combined resources in the market. These resources can be activated and distributed through the business relationships. Furthermore, the value of the resources is determined by how they can be utilized in the network (p.436).

- *Relationships challenge conventional accounting:* According to Ford & Mouzas, the boundaries of traditional costs, investments and resources are unclear and will vary across the network in different business relationships (p.436).

- *Relationships determine the management process*: The network cannot be managed in a traditional fashion; the outcome of the relationships will mostly be determined by the sum of already established relationships and the interactions between them (p.436).

Business networking

Business networking in the new economy is according to Österle et al. (2015), one of the most important qualifications for the company in the modern information economy. Here it can be seen as the link between both internal and external business processes. (p.2). for inter-organizational networking to happen, efficient internal processes and integration are a prerequisite. Examples of these processes could be strategy coordination, software, and code of conducts. (Österle p. 27-28).

To adapt a company to being more open to networking and increase its 'networkability,' multiple steps can be taken. For example, the approach or the strategy towards networking is essential to gain an overview and to coordinate the networking efforts of the company. This strategy can be coordinated and integrated into the general strategy of the company. This will be discussed further on in the theory section, but first the notion of this networkability, and what else can be done in the company to increase it. Fleisch & Österle (2015), describes networkability as "*the internal and external ability to cooperate as well as the ability to rapidly and efficiently establish, conduct and develop IT-supported business relationships.*" Furthermore, they mention 6 layers which should be optimized to gain the optimal networkability (p. 78):

Products and services – Products and services should be flexible regarding changes to suit different business relationships. These changes should be easy to make and inexpensive (p.78)

Process – Internal processes should be easily and inexpensively linked and coordinated with external processes and business partners. (p.78)

Information Systems – Information systems should be easily linked up with external systems. (p.78)

Employees – The employees will understand the value of their personal network and will bring this to the company. Furthermore, they will understand the value of win-win situations and seek them out. (p.78)

Organizational Structure – The organizational structure should be flexible to the fast changing and dynamic market (p.79)

Company Culture – The culture of a company with a high degree of networkability should be focused on being open to changes and should have a high degree of mutual trust (p.79)

Business networking strategies

When developing a BNS, a company has to consider three essential strategic elements according to Alt, Puschmann & Reichmayr (2015): 1) Core competencies and future business segments. 2) Partnering characteristics and 3) Processes to be considered in the strategy. (p.90)

According to Alt et al. (2015), the business strategy will revolve around four main activities:

1) The analysis of the initial strategic situation.

2) The decision about the future position to be established in a competitive environment.

3) The selection of different elements (technologies, etc.) that determine the competitive advantage and the appropriate allocation of resources.

4) The commitment to criteria and standards that can be communicated and that permit a strategy's success to be measured. (p.91)

To develop a BNS, it is important to consider the organizational strategy. Alt et al. (2015), describes that in the decision of the BNS, it has to be clear what the goal of the business relationship should be. In this consideration, the company has to make two major distinctions: whether it is an old or new business segment, and whether the core competence is already in the company or not. This consideration is visualized in figure 2, where three main organizational strategies have been placed according to the function of the business relationship. The three organizational strategies are outsourcing, virtual organizing or insourcing. (pp.91-92). However, the focus of this thesis will be more on the BNSs which will be linked to these three strategies. Those will be described in depth in the following chapter.
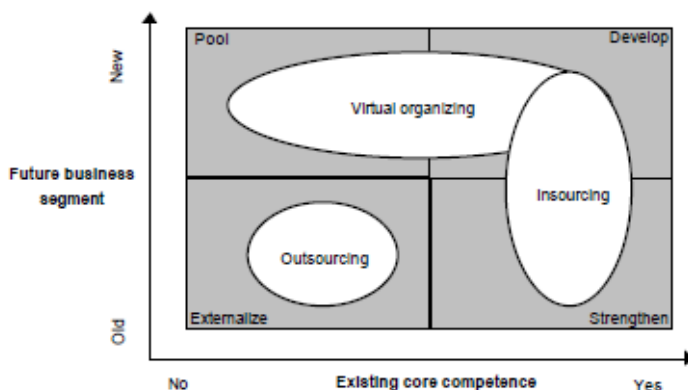
Figure 2 – Business networking segments. Source: Alt et al. (p.92)

The three main BNSs which Alt et al. (2015) focuses on and which have been chosen for this thesis are:

Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management (CRM) has its main focus on establishing and maintaining business relationships. It aims to support all parts of the business relationship process and the customer buying cycle, for example the buying process, marketing and after-sales efforts (p.99).

Supply Chain Management

Supply chain management (SCM) has its main focus on the supply chain and the value chain, and not so much on the customers or the IT systems. The main goal of SCM is to ensure a stable and effective flow in the supply chain of goods, information and funds (p.99).

Electronic Commerce

Electronic commerce (EC), has its focus on the transaction process in itself, and the IT systems of the companies. EC is very relevant to use when linking activities, for example through outsourcing (p.99).
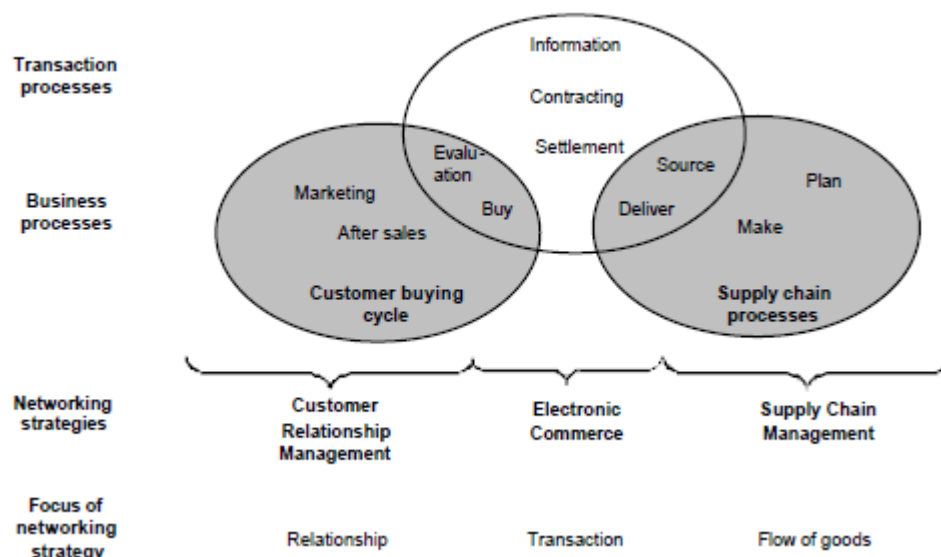
Figure 3- BNSs. Source: Alt et al., p.99 (2015)

The three BNSs are summarized in figure 3, here it is clear that they sometimes overlap, and therefore the links between them are important to note when creating a strategy for the company. First of all the organizational strategy has to be picked after deciding on whether the core competency is new for the company or already owned, and if the business segment is the same or a new one compared to what the company wants out of the business relationship. After this process, the company then have to evaluate whether a focus on the relationship itself, on the supply chain or the transaction process is most beneficial for the current situation. (p.100)

In the following section, the three networking strategies will be discussed further, as an evaluation of Granyon's BNSs is a core element for the analysis of this thesis.

Electronic Commerce

In the EC strategy, the company has to focus on the processes in which transactions and IT systems are developed, innovated and maintained. Alt et al. (2015), discusses three phases which are essential to go through to develop an EC BNS.

The information phase - In the first phase, all the necessary research on potential partnering products or services is done. This research can be done through search engines, social networks, content providers or community pages. The main idea of this phase is to gain a lot of potential vendors and business partners. (p.101)

In the contracting phase, the transaction is still the main focus, as well as establishing contracts and a binding business relationship. The contract will include all specific terms of the relationship, however for this part to be incorporated in the electronic commerce strategy, the legal aspects and technologies must be up to date and accessible online. (p.101)

The settlement phase is the last of the three phases. Clearly, it is in this phase that the transaction will be finalized and a business relationship will be established and possibly already terminated. The goods or services will be transferred, however, if the previous phases have been fruitful for both parties, the relationship might extend further. Furthermore, in this phase, the company might offer extended services after the delivery of goods or services, such as a tracker or after purchase service. (p.101)

Supply Chain Management

In the SCM focused BNS the main focus of networking is to optimize the company's supply chain and related processes, by improving the flow of goods and services in the supply chain of the company. This means that the business relationships which the company seeks out mainly are relationships which will improve or effectivize the supply chain and the flow of goods or improve the distribution systems etc. (p.104)

An example of using SCM as a BNS is to imagine a company expanding to India. The company is already established with their production facility in New Delhi. However, they keep facing problems with finding proper distribution channels, which can meet their needs of delivering nationwide. On top of needing the distribution channel, the company is a newcomer to the market, with little recognition and even less cultural knowledge about the market. In this instance, it would be profitable for the company to reach out to an already established company in India, with distribution channels ready to

deliver nationwide, and with the necessary market knowledge. A relationship or even better, a merger, with this local partner, would benefit the company and make the expansion possible.

Customer Relations Management

CRM is the BNS which main focus is on the business relationship itself, and on building and maintaining relationships for the gain of the company. The main idea of focusing on the relationship is to put the customer (or business partner) first and putting efforts into pre-sale and after-sale activities, such as networking, follow up meetings, etc. A company using a CRM strategy for networking, will increase efficiency and profitability through being coordinated and throughout with all communication and interaction with its network and focus on integrating marketing, sales and after sale activities. Furthermore, the focus is on how these activities can achieve the best possible outcome for both parties in the business relationship. (p.107)

 These three BNSs are the main strategies which will be considered regarding evaluating Granyon's current and future networking strategies. However, all three interact and can be used in different environments and situations. Alt et al. (2015), divides the three strategies further, in three profiles, which the company can use, depending on the particular situation, which the company is in (p.108):

Cooperation intensity – regarding the intensity of the cooperation, EC has the weakest intensity, since most of the interaction with the business relationships will be through online channels and the main focus is on strengthening internal information systems and processes. CRM and SCM however, both have high-intensity cooperation with business partners, as the duration and depth of the relationships will be high. This is because both the supply chain and the customers require individual attention from the company. (p. 108)

Flexibility – regarding the flexibility of the business relationships, EC and CRM will be more flexible to changing demands and changes in the market structure, as both are relatively low demand processes. However, SCM is less flexible due to the high involvement required, and the time it takes to develop and install the changes in the value chain. (p.108)

 Specificity – Specificity is defined as the amount of business partners and the ease of which these can be replaced (p.108). In EC, the specificity will be low, as it will require a lot of business partners who will not be in depth relationships, this makes it easier to replace the business partners. SCM will have a higher degree of specificity, as the amount of business partners who can do exactly the process which

is needed internally in the company is lower and the dependency on these providers will be higher. (p. 108)

Goals of business networking

After describing the BNSs used in this thesis, it is interesting to look into the relevance of having a networking strategy and why it is beneficial for a company. According to Alt, Betts, et al. (2015), a BNS is essential to organize, clarify and achieve networking goals, from the networking strategies. These goals could be to optimize internal processes and its systems, it could be to focus on the transaction systems or to improve the overall customer experience. These goals are essential for the company, to improve and optimize its services and maximize the profits. However, to convince business partners to do business with your company and to agree on terms and linked processes, a networking strategy serves as an organization and planning tool, which structures and makes the goals easier to achieve. (p.266)

some questions to consider when developing a BNS could be: Which networking strategy will help the company achieve its networking goals? How many business relationships are relevant to achieve the goals? In which area of the organization can networking be beneficial?

Alt, Österle & Fleisch (2015), describes three specific aspects of what the goals of business networking is and why it is essential for a company to consider (p.325):

Business Networking supports business goals - As mentioned earlier, there is a link between the organizational strategy and the BNS. This means that by optimizing processes, strengthening the supply chain or improving the overall customer experience, it will not only improve the networkability of the company but also have a direct influence on the performance of the company. This task is in line with creating an organizational strategy and should be thought out and delegated by top management. (p.325)

Business Networking integrates strategies - The three BNSs discussed in this thesis are all highly interactive with each other and requires multiple solutions for all strategies. In this way, BNSs are more flexible and dynamic than traditional business strategies and require different planning (p.325)

Business Networking aims for successful implementations - It is a goal of a successful BNS to align different internal processes and ensure an internal stability between organizational and technological factors of the company (pp.325-326)

Challenges/Changes in networking

One of the most important factors to consider when looking into business relationships are the constant flexibility and change that the business network goes through. Every day, thousands of changes in the internal processes and the linked activities, happen across business relationships all over the world. Håkansson & Snehota (1995) identify three factors which can cause a need to change:

Endogenous and exogenous change – A change in the market is normally seen as either caused by external factors (exogenous) or internal factors from the actor, or the company (endogenous). According to Håkansson & Snehota, it can also be seen the other way around. That the change is endogenous regarding the network and exogenous regarding the actor. This is because that the actor always has the possibility to alter the structure of the network, by initiating new relationships and terminating others. However, the network itself will change in line with the structural changes that the actors promote individually (p.271). The actors consist of individuals and resources. As long as the individual workers will find a new way of using and innovating on the resources, they will promote change internally in the actor company, and in the relationships, they are involved in. On the other side, however, the individuals in the actor company, will perceive the linked activities in the relationships between the companies differently, and there will be confrontations and issues with the difference in perceptions. For example, if one individual performs a process in a linked activity, slightly different than his counterpart in the other firm, there will be some sort of confrontation. These confrontations will most likely spark changes, in some form, in the business relationship. Lastly, regarding the individual employees in the actor companies, these individuals will try to enhance their changes of an improved position somehow, sparking changes in the relationships themselves. (p.272)

Interactions and joint actions – For changes to happen in the network structure of business relationships, some sort of interaction between the actors is necessary; a single actor cannot fundamentally change the network structure on its own. To make change happen, the actor need allies, to found business relationships with, and to then establish joint actions, structured by activity links, resource ties, and actor bonds. However, because of the network structure, both negative and positive aspects of the relationship is being projected to the entire network and thus is it only through relationships that changes in the network can happen. No matter how well performing a company is, their outcomes will depend just as much on the efforts of their allies in their business relationships. (p.273)

Change in the business network is preferable when one aspect of the company's business relationship is rather stable because this is often a sign that some sort of innovation or optimization is needed to move forward. Change in a certain aspect of the relationship can stabilize or optimize a process in another aspect of it, thereby facilitating new interactions and joint actions in other aspects of the relationships. (p.274)

Network change – Changes on a more objective level, in the overall network structure of the company, happen evolutionarily in line with the actors in the structure. It is the joint actions, interactions and individual efforts which create the network structure, and those factors are also the only ones who can alter it. The actual structure of the network is formed by the past interactions of the actors and will to a large extent indicate how the future structure will look like. It is rather clear that changes in the network structure will be initiated in these interactions between actors, trying to exploit the system and position themselves better, by using their relationships to their gain, through establishing activity links, resource ties, and actor bonds. These three structural dimensions are connected through what Håkansson & Snehota (1995) calls "network vectors," which are divided into the possible connections between the structural dimensions (p.275):

Activity links and resource ties - The most obvious connection between activity links and resource ties, are the fact that resources are needed to perform and thereby also to link activities of the two companies. Therefore, the two dimensions are interconnected, the more resources the companies have in between them, the more activities can be linked. However, also worth considering is the resources which are created directly from the relationship itself, which will benefit in planning more activity links. (p.276). In terms of resources needed for the activities, it can both be in terms of financial resources, but also in technical and more intangible resources. The activity links will be measured in how much they will cost the companies involved in terms of direct cost, but this cost will be calculated in both tangible and intangible resources. (p.277) Thus, to measure the efficiency of a business relationship, a most important factor to take into the calculations is the connection between activity links and the resource ties. In terms of how these connections influence the actor bonds, they will either strengthen or weaken the bonds, depending on the efficiency and effectiveness of the activity/resource connection. (p.278)

Activity links and Actor bonds – The connection between activity links and actor bonds is both strong and deep. It is between the actors which the organization and planning of the activity links are being made. In the longer run, actors will create stronger bonds with some relationships than others,

thereby having preferred partners for specific activities. This will further strengthen the resource ties between the companies with a higher collaboration of actor bonds and activity links. On the other side, some companies might try to strengthen bonds with other companies in the network, by finding possibilities to link activities. (p.278-279)

Resource ties and actor bonds – The connection between resource ties and actor's bonds are that they are strongly linked together. An actor's activities are linked to the combined amount of resources it has available, as it will limit which activities and how many activities it can do. Different resources will have different value for certain activities, and will thereby determine which activities can be carried out and which will be limited. Thus, by gaining an overview of critical resources for certain activities, an actor can gain an advantage over other actors who need the specific resources. Thereby business relationships and the network structure can also be seen as a strategic game on who have the critical resources and who they chose to do business with. Furthermore, this is a testament to how important a BNS is for the overall performance of a firm (p.280-281).

Brand theory

After having presented the main theoretical framework, which revolves around business relationships and their importance, and how to obtain these relationships through BNSs, another angle to the theoretical framework will now be introduced. Brand identity and brand position are essential to Granyon to know how the first year of business has been and how the current situation is. The business relationships and BNSs are ways of improving the external relationships, for them to improve the internal factors, where the branding theory is about looking inwards first and realizing strengths and weaknesses about the brand, before then looking outwards to the networking and how the brand can assist in achieving the goals.

Whether a company is in the service industry or financial planning, whether it is a small or large company, whether it sells to consumers or other businesses, the brand matters. The brand of the company can be seen as the core of the company, the identity and it is how the outside world (and the internal one) perceives the company. In short, branding is for almost all companies, what it all comes down to when creating a profitable business. The brand should be a result of the core principles; a company must consider when just starting: market segmentation and product differentiation. From this, the strategy of the company will be laid out, and as a result of this process, a brand will have been created (Jean-Noël Kapferer, 2008, p.31). The brand of a company can be considered to be like the

identity of a company, if we view the company as a person, the brand would be the characteristics, the personality of that person. In this thesis, I further adopt the view that networking, in general, is as important for a company, and a brand, as it is for an individual. This means that the networking should be a top priority of the management of a company, alongside the strategy, and the marketing of a company.

To go deeper into what a brand is and how it can be utilized in this thesis, I will discuss Kapferer's branding theories, and his figure; the brand prism. This can be used to describe what a brand is, what brand identity is, the most important factors of a brand and additionally, serve as a link between the brand identity of a company and its networking strategy. I have chosen only to include Kapferer's theories, as these are covering the brand identity and brand positioning, the two aspects of brand theory which I will utilize in this thesis. The choice to only include one theoretical view on branding will have a slight effect on the validity of the analysis. However, the branding part is only an addition to the main theoretical framework, and Kapferer is widely acknowledged for his views.

According to Kapferer (2008), it is not enough just to have a brand. The brand of the company must have something unique to offer its customers, it must have attitudes, beliefs and values; in other words it must have a certain kind of identity. Kapferer (2008), specifies 6 characteristics, or facets, of a brand, which encapsulates its identity. These will be discussed in detail in the following paragraph. These characteristics are furthermore displayed in figure 4. (p.182)

Physique: The physique of the brand, is the main characteristic of the brand. Whatever comes to mind when the customer thinks about the company when asked at point blank. Kapferer (2008) refers to it is the "backbone" of a brand (p.182), meaning that it is the core value or belief of the company, something that cannot be replaced, as it will result in a completely different brand. Furthermore, it is a tangible value, the actual value of the company, something that cannot be imitated and cannot be left out of the discussion. The physique is ultimately the first characteristic to figure out: what is exactly the company, what does it have to offer, what does it look like, etc. (p.183)

Personality: The brand's personality, is the way it communicates its messages, values, beliefs, mission, and vision out to the customer and the world. It is similar to that of an individuals' personality; it defines who will want to be linked with the brand and who fits in the life of the brand. The brand's personality can be everything an individual can be: funny, strong, emotional, creative, etc., all these characteristics are projected through the brand personality. (p.184)

Culture: A brand culture is a way for followers of the brand, whether it is customers, stakeholders or employees, to identify with and become a part of the company. The end product or service of a company is a reflection of the company's culture and a way that the company can communicate their values and their other characteristics out to the outside world. The brand culture is often a reflection of the country of origin of the company, and possibly a reflection of the core values of the country. Kapferer (2008) calls it the most important feature of a brand, as it is often neglected. However, the culture is why it is possible to see such big differences and rivalries between quite similar companies, for example, Nike and Adidas, or Apple and Samsung. (pp.184-185)

Relationship: In this thesis, the brand relationship is highly linked to the business relationship discussed earlier, under the network theory paragraph. Kapferer (2008) refers to a brand as a relationship in itself (p.185) that both individual consumers and b2b customers (other businesses) through the brand will have some sort of relationship to the company. Whether it is a positive or a negative relationship, whether it brings happiness or sadness, whether it is a direct relationship or an indirect one, it all goes through the brand. This is the most obvious connection from the business relationship, to the brand identity: the brand is the relationship, and it is through the brand that all relationships are created. Networking revolves around the brand of your company and other brands. Lastly, the brand relationship, much like networking, is of utmost importance when your business does not sell physical goods, but primarily services. In this sector, the relationships the customers have to your brand, and the overall network and reputation of the business are what keeps the business alive. (p.185)

Reflection: Ultimately, it is the customer's reflection of your brand, which tells the most about your brand and its customer base. Over time, it will be the customer who creates and shape the brand, through stories, associations, and emotions regarding the brand. It will not necessarily be the exact person who uses the brand, who will be associated with it, it will more be the person who the customer wishes to be or once have been (p.185). The customer reflection is highly correlated to the brand positioning and targeting, which will be covered more in depth in the next paragraph.

Self-image: The self-image of the customers, is who they want to see themselves as, who they want to show the world that they are, and who they want to prove to themselves that they are. By associating themselves with the specific brand, they automatically tell the world something about themselves, as they incorporate the brand's culture, values and so forth. The self-image of businesses is ultimately linked with the network, as they want the right kind of associations with their own brand. For example,

if a certain company has scandals with child labor or racism, most other companies will not want their brand associated with the signals those kinds of actions send out, no matter the product or value. (p.186)

The six facets of the brand identity prism, are all interrelated and ultimately gives an image of the brand's identity to the outside world. It is a part of the communication a brand has with the outside world and should have continued to keep the brand alive. This aspect can be linked to that of business relationships and networking. By itself, a company rarely is large enough to get far and will simply die away. However, if it succeeds in communicating its culture, values, and targets, it will build up a network of loyal business relationships and customers, who buys into the brand identity of the company. (p.186)
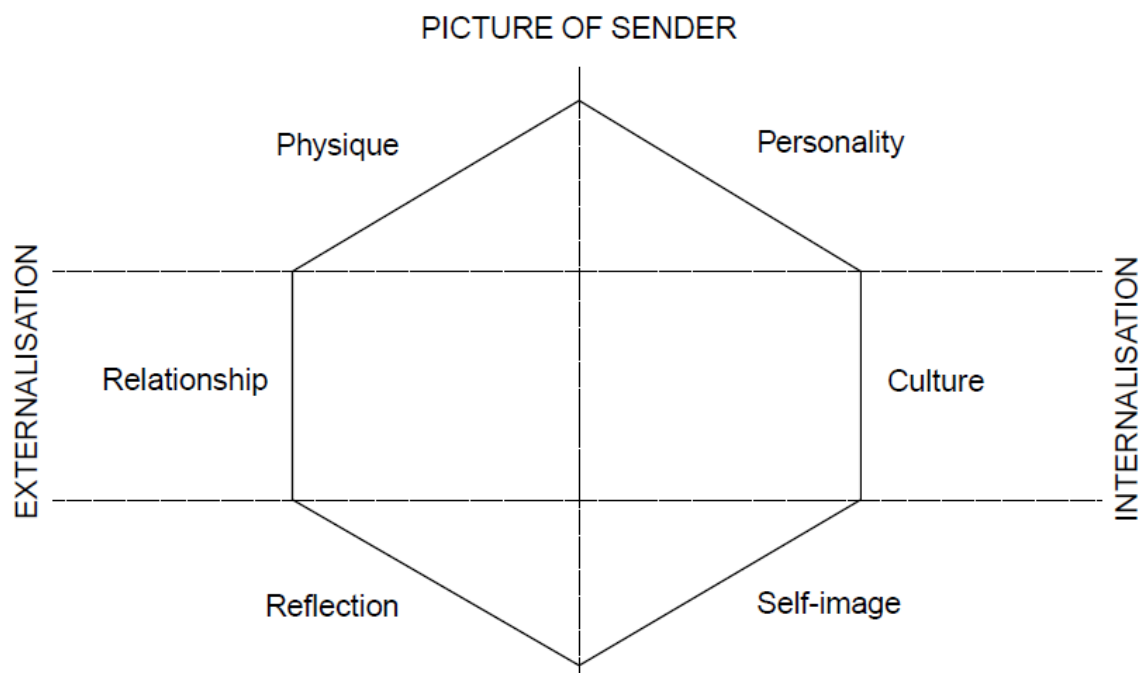
Figure 4- Brand identity prism (Kapferer, 2008, p.183)

Brand positioning

Another way for a brand to create and shape their identity is through brand positioning. Brand positioning is essentially a diversification strategy, as it is through this that it is emphasized which characteristics are unique for the brand, how the company wants the brand to be perceived, who the target group is and how the brand is different to its competitors (Kapferer: 2008, p.175).

Kapferer (2008) suggests that the brand positioning will result from asking four analytical questions about the brand role, these are: 1) A brand for what benefit? – This question covers the issue of finding out what the company offers the customer, which the competitors do not; what key characteristics are important to the customer and how they will be perceived. 2) A brand for whom? – This question covers the target group; who is the main customer and how will they be reached most effectively. 3) Why this brand? – This question is a follow up to the first one, by asking into why the company has the benefits it does. 4) A brand against whom? – It is almost as important to consider potential 'enemies,' as it is allies. A brand must have cause to exist, and the customer must have a reason to choose your brand over the competitors. But who is the competitor, not only direct, but in all possible way, and how can we use this to our favor? (p. 175)

Furthermore, brand positioning is relevant to business relationships and networking, as they are strategies which should be considered simultaneously. While in the analytical process of creating brand identity and brand positioning, it is essential to ask questions about the BNS as well, as it serves as a tool, to create and maintain this identity. The analytical questions can be merged with the network perspective, considering how networking can be linked to brand positioning.

What benefit? - The company might ask how their business relationships can assist them in benefitting the customer. For example, they can consider which suppliers, which products, services, etc., will create a certain benefit for the end customer if they are included in the business network, or the other way around, how the existing relationships can benefit the existing customers in new ways.

For whom? - The company can use the network to create a positioning strategy. They could ask questions like: Who are our existing customers? Who are in our network? How does our network perceive us? What does our network want?

Why this? – The company could use the existing network to get an idea of the perception of the brand and why they have chosen to do business with them. This is more of a hindsight approach, with an established business, however, if it is a startup, the business relationships sought after and the networking strategy should be aimed at maintaining the reason on to why the brand should be preferred over other brands.

Against whom? – In branding, it is important to have an enemy, someone the core customer can choose not to do business with because your brand is more suiting to their self-reflection, the classic examples are Coca Cola and Pepsi, Nike and Adidas, etc. In this enemy narrative, where the brand

should be the hero, the network of that brand will be helpers and will assist in that narrative. For the narrative, it is important to have the right business relationships on your side of the fight, and keep those out, who does not fit into the roles.

Delimitation/Limitations

Selection of case company: I chose to select my case company by searching for companies within my fields of interest and my settled topic, instead of first choosing the company and then settling on a topic. This lead to a rather random selection of the company, which meant that the company was not selected because it was the perfect fit, but because they responded positively to my email and were already interested in networking. If I had chosen the company first, the project would have been more tailor-made for their specific needs and would be more relevant in which resources they had to offer me. Furthermore, it turned out that the managing director of the company had less time and resources to offer than we first agreed on, this lead to the thesis being limited throughout the process, regarding data.

Inductive method: Going into the data collection with an inductive method, having the data unfold before me, meant that the planning could have been better. I relied heavily on the case company and their time and resources, therefore when it turned out that they could not live up to their initial offer, I was left to search for secondary data and eventually to give up on obtaining more primary data than the two interviews they agreed to from the start. This also meant that time has been an issue throughout the research process, as it was hard to communicate and obtain the data.

Communication issues/Few data sources: The thesis' reliability suffers greatly from only having these two sources of primary data, as first of all, the data is only coming from management and secondly because it is very one-sided. I wanted to include multiple sources of data through surveys to all employees and business partners. However, the managing director did not agree to include the business partners, and only when it was too late agreed to send out surveys to the employees (Appendix 6, Emails). The survey, therefore, ended without any replies, which leaves the only primary data source to be the qualitative interviews. This means that the triangulation of the data, is hard to achieve, giving that the only other sources of data were secondary and most of them came were send out by Granyon. Having less reliable data, and focusing on one single case company, means that the results of this thesis are to a high degree based on assumptions and will not be generalizable to other situations or companies.

Analysis strategy

To approach the analysis of the collected data, I primarily use qualitative data analysis tools. These tools allow me to gain an in-depth understanding of the data, to categorize it and to create meaning from it. Ultimately the data analysis strategy is what leads me through the data and to the creation of a reliable solution to the research questions. In the next paragraphs, I will describe these tools in detail, to give the reader an overview and a clearer understanding of how I have approached the data analysis.

Scanning

When approaching the data analysis, it is rather easy to assign implied meanings to words, phrases or sentences, based on biases, environment and background knowledge, these biases when caught can be categorized as 'red flags' (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 97). Furthermore, different words, phrases or sentences can mean something different between the respondents and in my view. Therefore, I approach the data knowing that it is important to be aware of these biases and try to understand the environment and circumstances in which the data has been collected. I try to keep an analytical distance to these biases, but I acknowledge that they will be a part of the generated analysis, which will affect the results of the research. I scan the data for important words or phrases and check in which circumstances they appear and what meaning they take in those circumstances (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 90), before using them actively in the analysis. Also with the scanning, I use coding, which I will elaborate further below, and comparisons. Comparisons are the first step towards coding. While scanning the data, for words, phrases or sentences, I looked for similarities and differences between the different data sets, whether it is between the different interviews or between the interviews, the secondary data and the survey data. By making the initial comparisons, I found specific categories, which then can be coded further. Furthermore, the comparisons can be made on specific objects and events, by looking at them in the different datasets from different sources (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 94). Lastly, comparisons are made between the theories by using both brand identity and networking theories, and within networking theory to compare business relationships and business networks. This comparison technique is known as systemic comparisons, (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 95).

Questioning

Regarding the data analysis, questioning is a powerful tool to get a deeper understanding of the data and to be able to proceed with the analysis if encountering a block (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 90). Questioning in the data analysis refers to being curious about the data and asking into why, how, when, by who, etc., to the data itself or other sources of information. Following this method, I will be able to understand more about the whole research paradigm and of the environment from which the data has been generated. This is an initial data analysis strategy, to approach the data objectively, and not to take the validity of what is being said for granted. Therefore, it is also important to consider who is providing the data, at which circumstances it has been given, etc. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 90). I ask these questions about the data, before analyzing them, to get a better understanding of the field in which I am operating and to generate ideas for follow-up questions or for where the answers might be hidden. I would, for example, ask why the data from one interview seemed more positive and not aligned with the data from another interview, then look into who the respondents were and reasons to why their answers might have deviated from each other.

Open coding (Color Coding)

As mentioned above, the categorizing made from initial comparisons is the beginning steps of coding. In this thesis, coding means to categorize the data systemically, to gain an overview and to be able to better analyze the deeper meaning of the data. By making comparisons between the different data set, for example by comparing the two interviews to each other, and then to the secondary data, patterns will appear into where the key concepts are located. From these key concepts, I make categories which consist of key phrases, words, sentences, and topics (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, Chapter 8). I then use color coding for these categories, meaning that they get a color assigned to them. This allows me to get a better overview of the data and to find quicker the related categories to what I am writing about. Additionally, I will search for the different data sets and add the associated colors. If the data overlap and contains multiple key elements, they will be given multiple colors. By having these colors, it is easier to get an overview of the data and to know where to look when analyzing the data. In this thesis, 6 color codes were used with the following groupings: Brand, Culture, Network, Relationships, Prototyping and General Information & Strategy (Interview 1 + Interview 2).

Analysis

First year of business

In the first chapter of the analysis, I will give an overview of Granyon's first year in business. The function of this part of the analysis is to give the reader an in-depth understanding of what state Granyon is in, what key events have shaped the current state of affairs, which clients have been key and which partnerships have been created. In the last section of this chapter, I will analyze Granyon's brand identity through Kapferers' brand prism to indicate how they want the brand to be perceived, how the brand is being perceived through secondary data and my observations. The brand identity will give the reader a better understanding of which kind of company Granyon is, how the culture is and will serve as a link over to talking more about the network. In the next chapter, I will analyze how networking is a part of Granyon's current activities. First of all, this is done by describing the networking structure of Granyon and analyzing how they are utilizing it, using Håkansson & Snehota's substance and function concepts for business relationships.

First, following figure 7, the timeline, I will now go through the key events of Granyons' first year of business. Since the start in February 2016, the focus was on putting Granyon on the map, in the sense of gaining new clients and brand awareness. The market had to know that Granyon was there. In the first year, the managing director explained that almost all new clients were signed using the two founders' network. Their network was build up during more than ten years of experience in the same business, in larger consultancies (Interview 1, p. 3). Therefore, most of their core projects were on board, very early on. However, the first event to happen was the creation of the "little Friday" events (Granyon.com/journal). These are monthly workshops for everyone interested in Granyon and their business. This event was a lot about attracting talent and proved to be a success early on; this is why the event is still a monthly event, 1½ years after it began. In May, the first big clients were signed, among them were DR, Velux, and Samvirke. These boosted the awareness of the brand and led to more work. However, the most important step in May was to establish a partnership with Solar, which included a long-term agreement to share know how and to work together on multiple projects (Granyon.com/journal). In June 2016, another project was done, this time for CBS executives. This event is mentioned as a key event, as it boosted awareness among CBS students, from where the main recruiting for internships have been done (Granyon.com/journal).

The last big event of 2016, was the perhaps premature launch of the UK office, in November. The country manager from the UK office explained that other circumstances let him be able to open the office earlier than planned, however, after almost a year, the first project is yet to come (interview 2, p. 1). The UK office has from their launch only consisted of one part-time employee, whose primary responsibilities have been to do market research and networking, to build up awareness and to find potential clients (interview 1, p. 2).

 So far, 2017 has been mostly about establishing partnerships, both for the UK office and the Danish office. The two main partnerships were both made in January, with IAdvize and 3dar. These are especially important alliances in the UK market, where both the country manager and the managing director mentioned that it is in the route to market, to have strong alliances with technical partners (interview 1, p.1, interview 2, p. 2).

The last key event mentioned in the timeline is Granyon's presence and presentation, at the Danish Industry sales conference in February 2017. This event marks the 1st year of Granyon's existence, and here they had the possibility to network and to pitch their main concepts to a lot of potential clients, business partners and other additions to their business network (Granyon.com/journal). Furthermore, the managing director explained that this convention also functions as a source of inspiration and a way to stay ahead of the recent trends, by hearing out ideas and presentations from other industries. (Interview 1, p. 4)
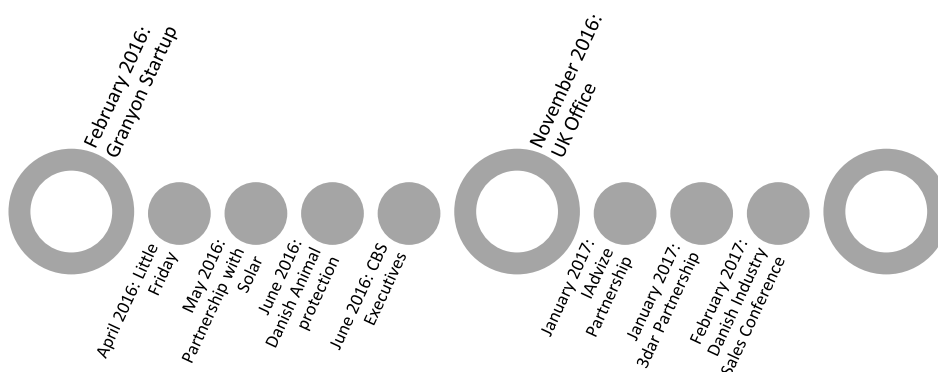

Figure 5: Timeline of key events. Source: Own creation

After having explained Granyon's first year regarding key events, I will now shortly look into the key financial figures, from their financial statement and balance statement (figure 8). Together with the description of the key events, this part of the analysis will function as a tool to give the reader an even deeper understanding of the current state of the company, both financially and more regarding the general position, compared to the market, partnerships, and foresight. After this part of the analysis, I will give the reader an understanding of how Granyon has positioned itself in the market, and what the long-term strategy is, by analyzing their brand identity.

Financial analysis

It is hard to evaluate Granyon's financial situation, only based on their income statement and balance sheet, as they have only been in business for one year. It would be ideal to compare their key financial figures to previous results, to evaluate the key results relative to the development. However, to indicate their financial state, I have compared 4 key financial ratios to two of their competitors, Hello Monday, which are their biggest competitor and which is located in Copenhagen as well, and DesignIT, which is a company similar in size, but from another part of Denmark. Both these companies have been in business more than 5 years and can be considered rather stable companies in the market. They are companies that Granyon should compare themselves to, regarding financial performance.

The key financial ratios show that Granyon is doing averagely, compared to their biggest competitor Hello Monday and better than their slightly larger competitor DesignIT. Most of their returns are negative, but this is expected in the first couple of years of business.

Granyon — Income Statement

Revenue	2016
Service revenue	1.330.686
Total Revenues	1.330.686
Expenses	
Salaries and wages	(1.819.942)
Depreciation	(2.995)
Operating profit	(492.251)
Interest expense	(8)
Total Expenses	1.822.945
Net Income Before Taxes	(492.259)
Income tax expense	(106.996)
Net Income	(385.263)

Balance Sheet

Assets	2016
Cash	307.862
Property and equipment	13.004
Accounts receivable	129.375
Pre-paid expenses (tax)	106.996
Other	112.502
Total Assets	669.739
Liabilities	
Owner equity	164.737
Accrued wages	4.835
Accrued compensation	40.540
Income taxes payable	459.627
Total Liabilities	669.739

Key financial ratios

	Granyon	Hello Monday	DesignIT
Current ratio	1,30	1,80	1,05
Return on equity	(2,34)	0,35	-5,02
Operating profit margir	-0,37	0,15	-0,72
Return on assets	(0,58)	0,21	-1,03

Figure 6: Income statement and balance statement for Granyon (2016) + Key financial ratios for Granyon, Hello Monday and DesignIT. Source: own creation (figures from annual reports)

Brand analysis

After understanding Granyon's current financial and general state, having looked at key events and key financial numbers, it is now interesting to analyze how Granyon have positioned themselves in the

market and how they see the long-time strategy. Initially, I will analyze this using Kapferers'(2009) brand positioning questions and brand identity prism. This brand identity can then be linked to the overall strategy and BNS in the next part of the analysis. Understanding who Granyon is right now, their brand identity, is an essential step towards understanding their overall strategy and to plan for a future networking strategy. This will be even clearer in the last chapter of the analysis.

What benefit - According to the country manager from the UK, Granyon's size and flexibility is a great benefit they can offer their customers, as they can adapt to their needs and stay ahead of current trends in the market (Interview 2, p.1). Furthermore, according to the managing director, Granyon tries to cut down on processes and unnecessary bureaucratic steps and focus on the core business. Combined with the prototyping, which is their key core competency and what they see themselves as experts in, this is what Granyon offers the customer's which their clients do not (interview 1, p. 2).

For whom - Granyon's target group is rather wide, as it consists of all companies who are looking to launch a new digital service or to maintain an old one. It could be in apps, marketing campaigns, websites, webshops or digital strategy planning. Most of their clients are found in Denmark. However, they see themselves as more of an international company, which they show by having an all English website and the UK office. This way it is hard to define an exact target group. (Interview 1, p.3)

Why this - Granyon is a small and flexible company largely due to its startup status, only having been in business for a year and a half. This allows them to act flexibly to the market trends and changes which frequently happen in the modern, fast-paced economy. As to why Granyon can be more effective and faster in its processes than its competitors, the answer lies in the prototyping, which is a deliberate tool used for this purpose.

Against whom - According to the managing director, the main idea that the Granyon brand is opposing is large digital consultancies who treat their clients as cases and numbers instead of people. Their structure is more similar to that of a factory, and the projects are run through a lot of unnecessary processes and bureaucratic steps to take advantage of the clients and to earn more money (Interview 1, p. 2). Granyon is focusing more on the people involved in the projects instead of the projects themselves, this gives them a more personal feeling to the projects, and they would be an alternative choice to the larger more established digital consultancies. This is the core message of the managing director, and why he chose to leave one of these larger competitors to create his own company (interview 1, p. 2).

This first part of the brand analysis should now have given a clearer image of the current brand positioning of the Granyon brand. In the last chapter of the analysis, this brand positioning will be updated and linked with Granyon's networking strategies, as currently there is not a clear connection. In the next section of the brand analysis, I will analyze Granyon's brand identity through Kapferer's (2009) brand identity prism.

Brand identity

Physique: In the first part of the identity prism, we will look at Granyon's physique, meaning what is their core competency, their backbone, the thing that makes Granyon who they are. This aspect of the prism is closely linked to the 'what' question in the brand positioning analysis, however, focused more on tangible value, instead of sentiment.

It is clear, according to both the interview respondents and Granyon's website, prototyping is what separates them from their competitors and what can be seen as their core competence. (Interview 1, p.2, interview 2, p.2, granyon.com/prototyping). However, as it is to some extend imitable, the physique of Granyon must be found in the way they utilize this prototyping, in context with their current positioning and their startup status. A combination of prototyping, combined with Granyon's flexible structure, being able to finish projects fast and too quickly be able to adapt to the changing demands of the market, is what makes Granyon who they, their physique.

Personality: The brands' personality, we will have to find in the communication Granyon is sending out to the world, this can vary broadly, from their web page to social media communication, blogs, YouTube videos, interviews, and advertisements. Every piece of communication from the company, or a representative, addressed to the public, will be assessed and all makeup Granyon's brand personality.

For example, their post from Facebook (Facebook, 2016), about the opening of the UK office. This post shows that the Granyon brand has compassion for the complications after the Brexit, but also that they are excited to start working in the UK. They give the post a personal touch, by showing the new country manager for the office and thereby puts a face to the brand, which is thereby easier to relate to.

Another example is their Instagram post from 2017, which shows two colleagues from Granyon playing table football, with the caption "Sometimes the best ideas come when you don't expect it." This post shows that the Granyon brand or the employees find creativity and ideas in fun activities, which are

not necessarily related to work. This post shows Granyon as a more relaxed and fun brand. (Instagram, 2017)

Culture: By establishing from their beginning that Granyon would be an international company, with the main office in Denmark, but with intentions to do business all over the world (interview 2, p. 2), the brand identity culture of Granyon has its main emergence in the Danish culture, however, takes in elements first of all from the UK, however, also from the future clients from other cultures. The country manager from the UK, tells about a mismatch in the culture between Granyon and the UK market. In the first year, he was there to make research on the market, included in this research were also an element such as culture. He noted that in Denmark, there is more of a trust based culture, which means that it is easier to get to talk to new business contacts and people in general. This is because people are usually who they say they are, at least this is where the trust element comes in. However, in the UK, they often require contracts to be set up and official business documents to be in order, before even talking to you (interview 2, p. 3). This cultural aspect will likely be something Granyon will absorb and adapt to, depending on where the client is from and where the office is located. The UK office will realize fast, that they have to adapt to the cultural differences, to get new contacts and get the business running and to give new potential clients a culture to relate to and to reach out to, in Granyon.

However, as important as the culture from the country of origin of either the company or the office, is the culture of the company itself. Granyon needs a company culture which makes them stand out from their competitors and which the customer can relate to. In Granyon's case, they want to stand out from their competitors by cutting the process time of the projects down, by avoiding a lot of administrative bureaucracy. This combined with Granyon's focus on prototyping, gives them a competitive advantage in their expert field of knowledge. This, however, will only continue as long as they keep this focus on cutting down the process time and maintaining the quality level which their clients expect.

Relationship: The Granyon brand in itself, is the relationship the client has with the company. The services and the end-products, such as web pages, ad campaigns, and strategy plans, will determine the nature of the relationship, whether it is associated with something positive or negative, whether it will be a long-lasting relationship or not. Furthermore, Granyon's networking events, such as 'Little Friday' or the 'Creative Mornings,' is another way of altering these relationships, based on what the customer receives from the brand, either in terms of products, services or valuable knowledge, such as

presentations or other input. The nature of the relationship the customers have to Granyon can be altered through networking, which will be covered more in-depth, in the next chapter of the analysis.

Reflection: The way the customer reflects themselves in the brand, is highly important for the brand identity of Granyon. This reflection will be altered through the projects Granyon finishes, and the messages they send through it. The reflection comes a lot down to word of mouth, what the customers tell their network about Granyon and how they perceive it. An example of this customer perception is from the project Granyon did with Solar, concerning a prototyping app. From this process, the representative from Solar describes that the collaboration has sparked innovation and that they could see the benefit of the agility in the prototyping tool (Vimeo, 2017). These comments are examples of the customer reflection of Granyon and these, combined with the comments from all other customers, will create the overall reflection of Granyon's brand identity.

Self-image: The self-image of Granyon, is the overall image of the brand identity. How Granyon wants to be perceived and which signal they want to send out to the world. This can be through direct communication and action, through their projects and their daily business. Both the managing director and the country manager from the UK describes how they see the Granyon brand, and how they want the brand to be seen. They want it to be seen as the better alternative to the large corporations and their assembly-line processes, they want to have less bureaucratic processes and thereby be faster than their competitors, and they want to have a focus on people instead of processes. The most important aspect of their work, according to the managing director is the people involved in the projects, whether it is the customer itself, or the designers and the strategists on their side of the table. (Interview 1, p. 4)

Current situation

In this next section of the analysis, networking is now being presented as the main theme. First, the network structure of Granyon will be analyzed through their current partnerships, business relationships, and alliances. Second, the networking activities which makes these business relationships possible are being presented, regarding which value they add to Granyon and how they use these events as networking strategies. Lastly, through the two first parts of this chapter, the value of these relationships will be analyzed through Håkonsson & Snehota's substance and function concepts (1995)

Network structure

Currently, Granyon has several links, ties, and bonds to other companies. All of these business relationships make up the network structure, which is illustrated below, in figure 8. First, the relationships will be described individually, before the value of them will be assessed in the next part.

IAdvize – The partnership Granyon has with IAdvize, is on the customer support side. IAdvize is a customer support platform, which allows companies to set up their customer support platform up as communities, where they can interact with the customer, and where the customers can interact with each other. (Granyon.com, 2017)

3dar – the partnership Granyon has with 3dar, is a strategic partnership. 3dar has capabilities and knowledge within 3D and virtual reality, which adds to Granyon's strengths. (Granyon.com, 2017)

Technical partners – Granyon has multiple partnerships with technical partners, such as Umbraco, which allows Granyon to offer more finalized project solutions. These technical partnerships are strategic, and adds to the capabilities of Granyon, allowing them to offer wider solutions than their expert fields.

Salespeople – Granyon has partnerships with external salespeople. These partnerships are investments in a wider network and customer base. Granyon has agreements with multiple salespeople, both in Denmark and in the UK.
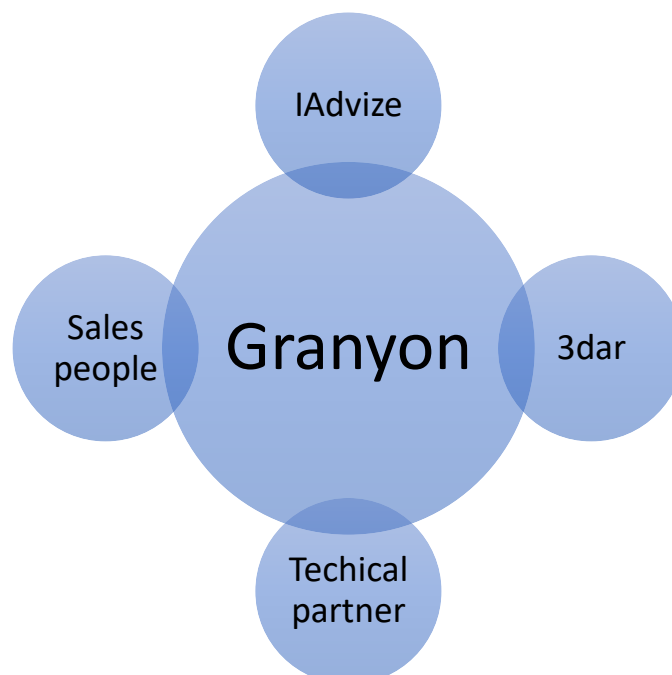

Figure 7: Granyon's network structure

Network substance

Next, the value of these relationships will be analyzed through looking at the substance and function of the different business relationships. The substance covers *what* is affected within the parties involved in the business relationships and can be analyzed through the three layers already introduced: The activity links, resources ties, and actor bonds. This section of the analysis, evaluates the value of Granyon's business relationships, what they get out of having them and if these are relevant to keep in the future.

Activity Links: Activity links are technical, commercial and administrative activities, which overlaps within a business relationship. It is important to keep track of these and have a strategy to which activities your company links with their business partners.

First of all, Granyon needs to keep track of which activities they have. Both the networking activities, but also all internal activities, events, and processes, which they are currently working with or on. The most important activities Granyon utilizes currently, is their prototyping tool and their networking events. These are not shared with any business relations directly but through indirect activities.

In the partnership Granyon has with IAdvize, multiple activity links are formed. IAdvize offers Granyon advice and direct use of their customer service platform. Thereby Granyon links their customer service activities with IAdvize, who gains Granyon's business. Much like this relationship, is the one Granyon has with both their technical partners and the external salespeople. This is because they take advantage of sharing the partners' activities, without sharing much of their own, as Granyon gains a service, and the partner gains Granyon's business.

In the partnership with 3dar, Granyon has linked all of their processes with 3dar, as it is more of a strategic alliance. Granyon gains all of 3dar's expertise, in areas where they themselves lack. This partnership will lure in new customers, as Granyon will have a larger potential for fulfilling all of the customer's needs, compared to without 3dar's expertise. However, 3dar gains the same advantages and will have the advantage of Granyon's activities as well, through this partnership. Most of both companies' activities will be linked to each other, which means that Granyon only will benefit from it, as long as the projects they make together will meet the customer's standards, and as long as 3dar remains a positive impression of the linked activities.

Resource Ties: Resource ties are the sharing of resources between parties in a business relationship. These resources can be financial, material or more intangible resources such as knowledge or know-how. In Granyon's partnership with IAdvize and their other technical partners, they gain knowledge and the physical products, which is this customer service platform. The knowledge and know-how are exemplified in setting up the platform, adapting it to Granyon's needs and maintaining it, and for example in coding a web page, which does not fall under Granyon's capabilities. In return, IAdvize and the other technical partners' gains financial ties from Granyon who pays for the services. However, they also gain the know-how into Granyon's business, as this is necessary to build up the platform for Granyon's needs. This requires a certain amount of trust between the two parties and why it is important to maintain a stable relationship.

In Granyon's partnership with 3dar, the resource ties are on knowledge and know-how. Both companies benefit from these resource ties, as Granyon utilizes 3dar's know-how in areas they are not currently able to work within, and 3dar utilizes Granyon's strengths. Both companies gain a wider potential customer base and will continue to benefit from the partnership, as long as both parties and their customers remain satisfied with each other's work.

In Granyon's partnership with the external salespeople, the resource ties are exemplified in the knowledge the salespeople bring to Granyon. The knowledge is the relation to new customers and how to sign them. In return, the salespeople receive financial ties, their salary.

Actor Bonds: Actor bonds are the interactions and relationships which form between the individuals involved in the business relationships. As the business relationship progresses, just like with individuals, the businesses will develop an attachment to each other and give the other priority in certain trades and deals. In terms of most of Granyon's business relationships, it has not developed long enough to create strong actor bonds, given that Granyon have only been in business for 1½ year and most of the partnerships only have lasted for about half a year. However, the partnerships in themselves can be seen as a bond between the individuals in the relationship, as they agree to prioritize each other when it comes to projects related to their strengths. For example with IAdvize, Granyon will prioritize using their customer support platform over other ones, because of the partnership they have. Another example is with 3dar, where Granyon will forward any work related to VR and 3D to 3dar, and the other way around that 3dar will forward any work related to design and prototyping to Granyon.

Function

After evaluating the substance of Granyon's business relationships through the three layers of connections, it is important also to consider the different functions the relationships have, to gain a complete valuation.

These three functions are the function for the dyad, the function of the individual company and the function for third parties. The function of the dyad is how the relationship affects the two companies involved in a business relationship as a whole. This is highly connected with the function that the relationship has on each individual company which is the second function which is analyzed. Lastly, the function for third parties, meaning other organizations, people or societies getting impacted by the relationships.

Granyon & IAdvize – This business relationship is strategic for Granyon, as it allows them to obtain a customer service platform, which suits in their brand perception and their business concept. They obtain this platform without having to spend resources on research and development of it but shares it with IAdvize, who on the other side gains business insights and financial resources from Granyon. Depending on the size of the financial compensation Granyon has to pay IAdvize, Granyon gains more out of the relationship, as they get access to this platform and intends to make their customers more satisfied going forward. As Granyon is a Danish company, and IAdvize is French, their partnership can be seen as boosting the economies of both countries. Furthermore, the companies already in partnerships with either party will benefit from another successful business relationship.

Granyon & 3Dar – This business relationship is strategic for both companies, as it allows them to share their knowledge and know-how in their respective fields of expertise with each other. This collaboration allows both parties to expand their customer segments, as they can utilize on each other's expertise and therefore offer the customers a wider solution than what they could before the collaboration. As Granyon is smaller in size and less known than 3Dar, who has internationally acknowledged clients, Granyon stands to gain more from the relationship than 3Dar. However, both companies gain more from the relationship than what they could accomplish separately. As Granyon is a danish company and 3dar is American, both societies can potentially gain from this partnership, regarding having their economies boosted through potentially more jobs being created. Furthermore, the competitors of both companies will be affected as Granyon and 3dar together now is a bigger threat than they were individually.

Granyon & Technical partners – This business relationship is similar to the one with 3dar, as both companies gain new projects which they would not have been able to do separately. For Granyon it is of high importance to have technical partners to carry out the wishes of their customers, which they cannot do themselves, in-house.

Granyon & External salespeople – This business relationship allows Granyon to gain new clients without having to actually to recruit them. It potentially saves Granyon resources, depending on how the salespeople perform and it adds to Granyon's potential client base. The salespeople gain financial compensation regardless, which leaves them in the better position compared to Granyon because Granyon is not guaranteed results.

Current network strategy

After having analyzed the value of Granyon's business relationships through a deeper look at the substance and function of the relationships, I will now focus more on Granyon's current business networking efforts. First of all, I will give an overview of all of their efforts and describe them individually. Then, I will evaluate these efforts in relation to the three BNSs described earlier. Lastly, the concept of change, both regarding market changes and changes in the networking strategy will be discussed, to lead up to the final part of the analysis, which focuses on the future strategy of Granyon.

Granyon currently splits their networking efforts into the UK and Denmark. In Denmark, multiple events are being carried out both to strengthen the brand, to recruit talent and to network new potential clients and partners. Granyon themselves arranges two separate events, 'Little Friday' and 'Creative Mornings.' Moreover, they attend conferences and other events with the same goal of networking.

In the UK, it is Granyon's primary activity at the moment, to network and creates brand awareness (interview 2, p.1). The country manager from the UK is in charge of doing market research and preparing Granyon for entering the market in a higher degree than what they have done already. Primarily this research has been done while attending conferences and networking events such as their own 'creative mornings' in Copenhagen. In figure 9, these events are illustrated regarding their effect on the network structure of Granyon. All events and conferences add to the total network of Granyon, which is free for them to utilize. However, the network of the participants at these events who potentially will become a part of Granyon's network is also at play. This is illustrated by the blue arrows in the figure, and this fact makes the events even more valuable for Granyon.
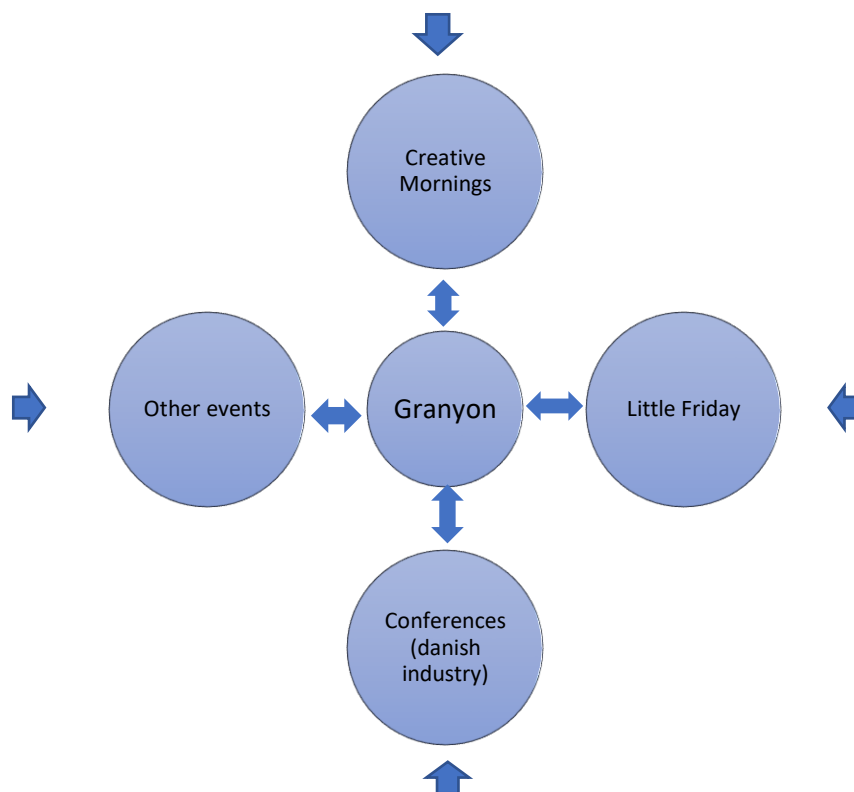
Figure 8: Networking activities   Source: Own creation

= Network

Creative mornings - Creative mornings is an internationally acknowledged event for entrepreneurs and other creative people to come together, share ideas and get inspired. The main idea of the event is that it is a shared breakfast, with an included lecture on a beforehand settled topic of innovation. Furthermore, it is a platform for interested people to share ideas and gain inspiration. The event started in New York in 2008, but have spread all across the world since then. Granyon is one of the Danish partners, who made this event possible in Denmark. Granyon's employees attend these events, and it is here possible to network and recruit potential new employees and business partners. (creativemornings.com)

Little Friday – Little Friday is Granyon's own networking event. In this after work seminar, Granyon invites all interested parties in coming in for a drink and a lecture on a topic within Granyon's business field. This could, for example, be prototyping. These events lure in people who are actually interested in Granyon and their business and is, therefore, the best way to increase their network, either regarding new business partners or employees. (granyon.com/journal, 2017)

Conferences – Granyon annually attends multiple conferences to gain insights into new market trends and to network with the participants. This is both for recruiting and for finding potential new business partners and clients. The last conference they attended, the Danish Industry sales conference, the managing director of Granyon gave a presentation talking about prototyping (granyon.com/journal, 2017).

Other events – Other events refers to all other networking events, whether hosted by Granyon, other companies or publicly held events. The UK efforts are primarily based on these other events, which revolves around getting brand awareness and getting a feeling about the market, while at the same time getting contacts, business partners and potential new clients involved in the business network.

Why change at all?

After evaluating Granyon's current networking strategies, I will now analyze the concept of change within the market and in networking activities. The demand for change, to a large degree, is found within the network, sparked by the relationships and the individual actors. Therefore, the connections between the substance layers will be analyzed as catalysators for change. This analysis will then lead over to the last section of the analysis, where I will recommend a future networking strategy for Granyon.

The demand or the desire for change in a business network can come from various sources. Whether it is from exogenous factors, external sources outside of the market, or endogenous, internal factors from the individual actors and companies. It is most commonly thought to be the market which alters the success of the individual companies, however, regarding the network it might as well be the other way around. In the individual companies and their relations with each other, there will be factors which spark the demand for change in the network structure.

An individual actor from Granyon, cannot change the network structure alone, he or she will need allies, business partners, both in individual level and on actor level. Therefore, some joint actions between Granyon in their business relationships will as well spark a demand for change in the network structure. Lastly, in the interactions between Granyon and their business partners, as they progress over time, their combined actions will change the network structure, because their interactions will alter the network's perception of the individual companies. In the next paragraph, the connections between Granyon and their business relationships will be analyzed through the substance layers, the

activity links, resource ties and actor bonds. In this analysis, the main focus is on what triggers a demand for change in the network structure and the BNS of Granyon.

Connections

Granyon & IAdvize – In the partnership with IAdvize, Granyon offer their resources in terms of financial compensation for the use of IAdvize's resources, their knowledge and know-how with the new customer support platform. This exchange of services facilitates the links of the customer support platform, which will be a linked activity between the two parties. If the relationship continues over time, with success for both Granyon and IAdvize, there is a possibility for them to build actor bonds and thereby prioritize each other in future business. If successful in their partnership with IAdvize, Granyon will send a signal out to their related network that IAdvize's customer service platform is viable and trustworthy. This might lead to that more of the companies in Granyon's network will also want to integrate their customer service platform with IAdvize and thereby it can disrupt the existing standards in the network.

Granyon & 3Dar – In the partnership with 3Dar, Granyon offer their resources regarding expertise and know-how in prototyping and design. This resource allows 3Dar to sign from a potentially wider customer segment. The other way, 3Dar also offers Granyon access to a wider customer segment through the resource of their knowledge in 3D and VR. For these resource ties to form, it is necessary for the two companies to link their activities, as they both need to understand each other's business, to inform the new potential clients. As with IAdvize, there is a possibility for them to build actor bonds and thereby prioritize each other in future business if the relationship progresses without any major conflicts. If successful with their partnership, Granyon will send the signal to their network that they now offer more services through this partnership. Competitors might seek other similar alliances, and the whole network structure could potentially be changing because of this. Granyon will have to be aware of any changes in the network structure, and be ready to adapt.

Granyon & Technical partners – In the partnership with their technical partners, Granyon shares their customer base and their know-how in prototyping and design, in exchange for the resource of technical services such as coding. These resource ties allow Granyon and the technical partner to link their activities, as it would not be necessary without the ties in place. As with IAdvize & 3dar, there is a possibility for them to build actor bonds and thereby prioritize each other in future business if the relationship progresses without any major conflicts, however, as these deals are already in place, the prioritizing is in some sense already a reality. If Granyon continues to use external technical partners

for tasks they do not offer solutions to currently, the technical partners might gain more power in the network, forcing Granyon to give them better conditions in their work. This is something Granyon needs to stay aware of, how the network and market changes in relation to this partnership, as they might want to invest in in-house coders, going forward.

Granyon & External salespeople – In the partnership with their external salespeople, Granyon offers their financial compensation for the salespeople's knowledge and know-how, in terms of getting new customers. These are the resource ties, which allows the salespeople to form actor bonds to Granyon if their relations continue. This will likely depend on the quantity of new clients the salespeople can put in contact with Granyon and their general level of satisfaction with their work. As with the technical partners, all external parties, such as the salespeople, will have a certain amount of power to use over Granyon, as Granyon is on the salespeople to create more business and thereby continue their operations.

Future strategy

In the analysis so far, I first gave an overview of Granyon's brand identity and brand positioning, through an analysis of their first year of business in terms of key financial figures and events. Then I looked into understanding their current networking activities and business relationships through an analysis of their activity links, resource ties, and actor bonds.

In this last chapter of the analysis, I will first give a short recap of Granyon's current brand positioning and overall strategy. Secondly, I will analyze Granyon's current networking strategy in relation to the three BNSs defined by Alt et al. (2015), then I will look into Granyon's goals in terms of their business networking and brand positioning for the future. In the following chapter, I will then recommend a future BNS for Granyon to reach these goals and lastly discuss consequences of this choice and the importance of having a networking strategy in general.

The analysis of the initial strategic situation: Granyon's current brand positioning is based on the fact that they are a start-up. This means that they can be flexible regarding which kind of projects they take on with which type of clients, in which kind of market, they choose. Of course, Granyon is specialized in making faster solutions than their competitors, with their prototyping tool, however, as the managing director mentioned, this tool might be something everyone uses in a few years and even something which will be outdated too. (Interview 1, p.2-4)   Therefore, it is an essential factor to consider in their brand positioning and brand identity, that they can be flexible, because they are still a

startup who are not widely known and acknowledged for one single field of expertise, and because they do not have a lot of employees to restructure, this allows Granyon to do research on what the current trends are in other markets, and stay ahead of their competitors by adapting to these changes. Granyon's current target segment is rather broad, as it can be all companies in either the UK or Denmark looking for any kind of digital service or solution, which Granyon operates in. The target group is formally not set, as most of their clients have come through their own networks up until this point. Going forward, the target group will be of more importance, to choose the appropriate strategy and BNS.

In terms of their current brand identity, Granyon first of all is identified by their method of using their tool, the prototyping. This goes together with their brand positioning, as the method is linked to being flexible and fast to adapt to the changing conditions in the market. Granyon tries to build up a company culture with a flat hierarchy and with focus on the value creating processes in the business, not on bureaucracy and top management, but more on the designers and on getting results for the clients as quickly as possible. With this culture in mind, Granyon hires employees who can adapt to clients' needs and who can work fast under pressure. Furthermore, they try to communicate to the outside world, that Granyon is a modern and fun place to work, with an international environment and with room for other things than work. With Granyon's company culture comes their perception to networking and to relationships, which for them, is key to a successful business. The fact that almost all of their clients have come in through the managing directors or the employees' networks shows how big of a role, relationships, and the network have for Granyon in their current brand identity.

Granyon's current strategy is split into two, as Granyon has two offices, one in Copenhagen and one in Cambridge, with different market positions and with different sizes. From the main office in Copenhagen, the strategy revolves around a few main points:

Current strategy:

- Active networking approach – All their current networking activities are an active part of Granyon's strategy. They help bring in clients and create brand awareness.
- Inspiration from other markets and conferences – Granyon utilizes external inspiration to stay ahead of competitors.
- Sales team – Granyon uses an external salesteam to bring in new clients.

- Content marketing – Granyon utilizes content marketing, meaning that they use their finished projects and customer testimonials to market themselves. (Interview 1, p.5)

Future strategy:

- Scale – Granyon has an intention of scaling to multiple markets and a larger size, with using the same team structure as they are now. (Interview 1, p.1)
- More international – Granyon wants to have more clients in more countries.

From the Cambridge office in the UK, the strategy revolves around a few main points which are:

Current strategy:

- Understand the market – Granyon has hired a country manager to do market research.
- Understand budgets and processes – the country manager furthermore does research on budgets needed, special processes and culture.
- Networking – the main task of the country manager is to network with new potential clients and business partners.

Future strategy:

- Move into the market – eventually, Granyon wants to move into the UK market, having the initial understanding of what is required.
- Obtain first clients – Quickly after properly establishing themselves in the market, Granyon intends to obtain a steady flow of new clients.

BN Strategies in relation to Granyon

In this section of the analysis, I will analyze Granyon's current networking efforts, using the three BNSs introduced by Alt et al. (2015). This understanding will assist in understanding which strategy is right for Granyon to use, moving forward.

Supply chain management

Supply Chain Management (SCM) is an active networking strategy which focuses on improving the flow of goods and services in the company. When it comes to Granyon, who does not directly have a supply chain, as they do not have a physical product, SCM might not seem that relevant; they do not need production facilities or a functioning distribution network. However, SCM can also refer to the services a company provides, which is what Granyon have specialized in, digital services. In this case, all

partnerships or relationships, which have an impact on the flow or quality of services, can be reached by using the SCM BNS.

Granyon's partnership with 3dar can be seen as obtained through an SCM strategy. This is because the partnership adds 3dar's capabilities in 3D and virtual reality to the overall catalog of capabilities and resources which Granyon has to offer. Furthermore, the addition of knowledge and know-how from a more experienced and well-known player, such as 3dar, will improve the overall knowledge of Granyon and as a direct consequence, the quality of the service which they offer.

Granyon's partnership with their technical partners is similar to the one with 3dar, as this partnership adds value to the overall quality of their service, through knowledge and know-how that Granyon did not already have and which will have a direct impact on the service which they provide.

Electronic commerce

Electronic Commerce (EC) has focused on the processes and transactions of a company. Furthermore, it focuses on integrating IT solutions which improve the company's performance. In EC, it is essential to go through three phases to develop the best possible networking strategy. In Granyon's example, the last two phases have been the most relevant, that is the contracting phase and the settlement phase. The first phase, the information phase, has not so far been used, explicitly in this thesis.

In the partnership with IAdvize, Granyon has used an EC strategy, to improve their IT and transaction processes, mostly in the last phase, as this is where the end customer gets involved, either in terms of the transaction itself or after purchase services. However, as the partnership is ongoing, the contracting phase is relevant as well, meaning that the platform will be maintained, and knowledge and insights will be shared between the two companies. IAdvize offers Granyon a platform where they can understand more about their customers' need and habits. They can interact with the customer and through this platform build brand loyalty. All of this is an online platform, which of course is a part of the electronic commerce concept. EC seems like the most relevant strategy for Granyon, as it is a digital company, with most of their end products being digital or online. However, so far, Granyon has only made this one partnership, with this strategy. Going forward, there might be a change to utilize it better, as EC is essential to Granyon as a digital consultancy with most of their products being digital or online.

Customer relationship management

In the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) BNS, Granyon would have its main focus on the business relationships and all activities related to them. As Granyon is a (digital) service company, offering no physical products, the customer satisfaction, and their brand perception is the key factor for a successful business. However, the CRM strategy focuses all the strategy on the presale and after-sale activities, meaning that the quality of the service itself will not be as important.

None of Granyon's four active partnerships have been established with the sole purpose of improving their relationships with their partners or customers, however, with all four active partnerships, the end customer has benefitted in some way, making CRM a part of their strategy.

First of all, with 3dar, the main focus of the partnership is on improving the quality of the service, however, by improving the end service which will be provided to the end customer, the customer benefits as well. With their partnership with IAdvize, the main focus in on improving the digital experience and know-how in the electronic commerce field, however, this improvement is a customer service platform, which means that it also benefits the customer in the end. With their technical partners, Granyon improves their overall knowledge and know-how and expands the fields in which they operate which makes the service they offer of better quality, however, this fact also benefits the end customer, as the service they receive is of better quality.

The decision about the future: After having recapped Granyon's current brand positioning and strategy, and analyzed their current networking efforts with regards to the three BNSs, I will now evaluate Granyon's future goals and how they can be linked to the goals of business networking. This section will function as a transition into the final part of the thesis, the recommendation for a future BNS for Granyon.

Granyon's business goals

Getting known for something good and something right – Granyon is still in the early stages of being a startup, this makes brand awareness the key to success. Even if Granyon has a great idea or a quality product, this does not matter if nobody knows that they are out there. Granyon has an ambition not just to be known, but to be known for doing good projects and for doing the right projects. This means that ideally, Granyon wants to turn down projects which are not aligned with their brand, because they want to keep their brand identity. By staying true to their brand core brand identity, Granyon wants to build up trust in the market and let their current customers and potential customers know

that there is a correlation between what they communicate and what their actual work is like. This trustworthiness will be a key factor in staying successful in the long term.

Right position to the market at all times – Granyon's managing directors are aware the company's strength is in its flexibility and its core tool, the prototyping. In the first years of business, Granyon has to utilize the possibilities this gives them, in the market. While Granyon still is relatively small, with under 20 employees, it is not complicated to relocate their resources and restructure their organization to fit the market at any given time. The logic behind this goal, is that the market is fast paced, dynamic and unstable, meaning that it can change its preferences at any point. Granyon intends to stay ahead of new trends and movements in the market, for example by going to industry conferences and events for other markets as well. Right now, prototyping is a core competency that Granyon can market their brand on and which not a lot of company's do, however, as the managing director put it, in a few years everybody might do it (interview 1, p. 3), and then Granyon has to stay ahead of their competitors, by doing their research on new trends. Furthermore, a long-term goal for Granyon is to move more of their current external activities, in-house. This could for example be the technical partners, which currently do the coding for Granyon, moving forward, this could be done by Granyon's own technical employees.

International scaling – Granyon does not only want to stay ahead of their home market in Denmark, and sister market in the UK. Their ambition is to scale their operations into multiple markets. This ambition has its roots back to the foundation of the company. Since the very beginning, a core value of the company and the company culture, was to have an international mindset. This is both seen in the ambition to move into the UK market very early on, in their English website and in their multicultural organization. The managing director have an ambition for the company, that they scale their operations into multiple countries, which can they then can be flexible across borders with, and utilize best-practice from multiple countries at the same time. The scaling also depends in a high degree on Granyon's brand and how they perform in the first international projects which comes their way. They will have to adapt their brand positioning in the different markets they move into, and have a similar approach to new markets as they had in the UK. (Interview 1, p.4)

Dependent on the salespeople's success: more staff – The external salespeople in the UK have only just recently been hired. They have a big influence on the future of Granyon's organizational structure, which of course is not an ideal situation for Granyon. This is because they do not entirely have their future in their own hands. If the salespeople do not perform, there are no guarantees for their success.

However, Granyon's current goal in regards to this topic, is that if the salespeople bring in enough business, Granyon will hire new employees to handle the demand. In terms of their brand identity, it is key to make sure that these employees will be integrated into the company culture and understand the importance of their values, to ensure Granyon's brand perception and their customer's brand loyalty.

Granyon's networking goals

Networking goals are created to get an overview of what is expected and what is necessary for the company to successfully continue their business. Networking goals are crucial, especially for service companies without actual physical products, as networking has a direct impact of the performance of a company. In this paragraph, I will link Granyon's business goals with networking goals. This means that I will set up networking goals for Granyon, which correlates with their business goals, and which will support in achieving these.

Getting known for something good and something right

In order for Granyon to achieve their goal of increasing their brand awareness simultaneously with maintaining their brand identity, that they want to do the right projects and do them well, a networking goal is important to assist this goal. To do the 'right' projects well, Granyon will have to use their network actively, first of all to obtain new clients, which buys and fits into Granyon's brand identity. A networking goal to this, could for example to obtain 10 new clients, using networking events. To then be known for something 'good', would first of all require Granyon to maintain their quality, it is an assumption that this aspect is already in place, then to make sure that word spreads. A networking goal to support this aspect could be to contact a client at least two times after having finished a project, to follow up on the customer satisfaction.

Right position to the market at all times. - In order for Granyon to achieve their goal of being flexible to the market, staying ahead of trends and being proactive to changes in the market, they can formulate a networking goal to assist in this. With regards to this business goal, the connection to networking is that Granyon has to continue attending industry events in order to stay informed about current and future trends and they have to act on these trends. Another aspect of this business goal, is the ability for Granyon to be flexible and restructure the organization if new trends or tools appears, which makes sure that Granyon can stay ahead of its competition. An example of a networking goal related to this business goal could be to attend 5 different industry events from different industries a year.

International scaling - In order for Granyon to achieve their goal of scaling internationally, networking is a way of assisting. Networking is crucial for doing research and getting deep and invaluable knowledge about the new international market. For example, in the UK market, the country manager has almost entirely relied on networking for his research. Through networking events and industry conferences, he uses networking to gain potential clients, but most of all to understand the underlying cultural factors, which cannot be understood from just reading industry reports. From his research, he found out a preference in the UK market, that they prefer to select the platform first and then the agency, was the complete opposite of the preferences in the Danish market. Especially for Granyon, being a digital service company, networking is a key strategy, not just for their current market and business, but also for potential future markets. A networking goal to support this business goal, could be to formulate a concrete strategy on how to use networking in doing research in a new market, based on their experiences in the UK market. A more concrete example of a networking goal, could be to attend at least 2 networking events a month, in other international markets.

Dependent on the salespeople's success: more staff In order for Granyon to achieve their goal of potentially adding more staff, depending on their external salespeople's success, networking is key. If Granyon succeeds in scaling, both internationally and nationally, they will also need more staff. However, to keep in mind their current brand identity, and not to deviate from their company culture, the right kind of employee has to be found and hired. Employees who believe in Granyon's core identity and who can be a prolonging of the brand. Therefore, networking events such as their 'Little Friday', will lure in new potential employees who already before sending their application, understands what Granyon has to offer, and will evaluate if they will fit into the Granyon brand. An example of a networking goal to support this business goal, could be to keep hosting these 'Little Friday' events once per week and to hire at least three new employees per year, from these events.

Recommendation

Until now, I started the analysis with describing the first year of business for Granyon regarding their financial situation and key events. This gave an overview of what has lead Granyon to be in their current situation and pointed out how they are positioned compared to their competitors. This initial analysis then leads to a more in-depth analysis of the current brand positioning, brand identity, business relationship and networking activities. Finally, I analyzed the BNSs about Granyon's key partnerships and their business and networking goals for the future. In this last section, I will now

come with my recommendation for a future BNS, which will assist Granyon in achieving their business and networking goals. This recommendation will be based on the previous findings in the analysis and on further discussion and analysis of the three BNSs, proposed by Alt et al. (2015). In this recommendation, first of all, I will look into how Granyon can increase their networkability, through Fleisch & Österle's 6 layers of optimization (2015). Secondly, I will formulate questions and consider these, in regards to Alt et al.'s three essential strategic elements. Then, based on the previous formulated business & networking goals, and the formulated questions, I will recommend a specific BNS for Granyon. Lastly, I will discuss the consequences of my choices in regards to the strategy and the advantages of using networking compared to traditional marketing, considering Ford & Mouzas' definition of the logic behind business networking.

Ways to increase networkability

Products and services – To improve their networkability, Granyon can adapt their services to the changing market. They need to always stay on top of current and future trends and be able to adjust their core competencies and tools to these changes. For example, the prototyping, which at the moment is a tool which is not widely used and which gives Granyon a competitive advantage over their competitors, as it allows them to finish projects faster. However, in a few years, there might be other ways of doing projects even faster and better, and Granyon needs to stay flexible to these upcoming changes.

Process – To increase their networkability, Granyon should have their processes linked with external business products and processes. They are already doing this to a degree, with their partnership with IAdvize and with their technical partners. However, more processes, for example, the payments system or other creative tools could be linked through partnerships as well.

Employees – To increase their employees' networkability, Granyon has to incorporate networking as a core value of the company. They have to encourage their employees to do personal networking, host events for them to attend and encourage that their personal networks should be linked with the network of the company.

Organizational Structure – To increase the networkability of their organizational structure, Granyon should keep their current flexible structure as long as they are in the startup phase, with few employees. It should not be complicated to switch their focus to other niches of the market, whichever is the most profitable for Granyon moving forward.

Company Culture – To increase the overall networkability, Granyon has to focus their company culture around networking. It is important to have it as a core value, to make sure their employees appreciate it, to host and attend events and to make it an active part of their strategy. This will ensure that Granyon can live up to the demand of the Danish market to appear trustworthy and build up this personal trust which comes from interpersonal relations.

Questions to consider when developing the new BNS

When developing a BNS, a company has to consider three essential strategic elements according to Alt, Puschmann & Reichmayr (2015): 1) Core competencies and future business segments. 2) Partnering characteristics and 3) Processes to be considered in the strategy.

According to Fleich & Österle (2015), it is important to formulate questions to consider, when developing a BNS. I will formulate these questions based on Alt et al.'s strategic elements (2015):

1) Core competencies and future business segments – For Granyon, it is important to consider that the market is dynamic and can change characteristics at any point. Therefore, the BNS needs to support the business goal of being flexible and being able to adapt. A question to consider at this point is: *Which networking activities will keep Granyon flexible to market changes?*
    For the future business segments, Granyon has to stay ahead of current trends, by attending networking events and industry events in other markets as well. A question to consider at this point is: *Which networking activities will help Granyon to understand future market trends?*

2) Partnering characteristics – Granyon has to have an understanding of which kind of partnerships will help them achieve their networking goals, and through them, the business goals. This will require a strategy to be built, which organizes which partnerships would be ideal for Granyon, instead of developing them at random through networking events. A question to consider when planning for this could be: *Which networking strategy will assist Granyon in obtaining the needed partnerships?*

3) Processes to be considered in the strategy – As a prolonging of the partnering characteristics, it is essential for Granyon to consider which processes are better to have internally, and which would benefit from being in collaboration with an external partner. A question to this could be: *Which networking strategy will support the external processes?*

Recommending a BNS

1) *Which networking activities will keep Granyon flexible to market changes?*

- For Granyon to invest in a BNS, it will have to support their goal of having the right brand and market positioning at all times. This goal cannot be achieved with the SCM strategy, as this is considered to be low in flexibility, as it requires investments in the supply chain, which will take up a lot of resources and will leave Granyon more bound in their current operations. This leaves the EC and CRM strategies, which both supports flexibility. With the EC strategy, Granyon will focus on the transaction and processes, which mainly are digital solutions. For Granyon, as a digital consultancy, this strategy seems like the optimal choice, because most of Granyon's business is being done digitally. However, it will depend on what exactly the changes and trends in the market are, and in which direction they will steer Granyon towards. If the changes are technical and lead towards an alternative to the prototyping tool, to the platforms or the layout of their website, etc., EC will be the recommended strategy, however, if the changes are more cultural or interpersonal and lead towards a change in their customers' perception of quality and service, the CRM is a more recommendable strategy. As I intend to recommend only one of the three strategies, my recommendation will be based on the evaluation of the last three questions and business goals as well.

2) *Which networking activities will help Granyon to understand future market trends?*

- As in the first question, for Granyon to stay ahead of current and future market trends, they will have to attend networking and industry events to gather information and understand the challenges and potentials of other businesses as well as their own. CRM is only of the three strategies which focus on the relationships and people who are outside of Granyon's current organization, and therefore would be recommendable to follow for this goal.

3) *Which networking strategy will assist Granyon in obtaining the needed partnerships?*

- When Granyon has evaluated which partnerships, they need in new markets and their current ones, to stay flexible to the market and to understand future market trends, also considering that they want the right kind of projects to fit into their company values, they will need to obtain these partnerships through a thought out strategy. Again, CRM is the only one of the three strategies which focus directly on the partnerships and the relationships to these partners. Following this strategy will allow Granyon to obtain the right partnerships for the right situations.

4) *Which networking strategy will support the external processes?*

- For now, Granyon intends to keep some processes external, both to stay flexible to the market and their organizational structure and to take advantage of being a startup. For now, it is,

therefore, recommendable to focus on the CRM strategy, to make sure the right partnerships are found, to support these external processes. Going ever further in time, however, it would be beneficial for Granyon to look into the SCM strategy, to potentially bring these processes in-house, to be less dependent on outside sources.

My recommendation based on the previous discussion on Granyon's business goals and BNSs is for them to follow the CRM strategy going forward. The following points are an overview of the main reasons for this recommendation:

- CRM allows Granyon to focus on the cultural and interpersonal changes in the market.
- CRM is a flexible strategy, which allows Granyon to restructure and adapt to these changes.
- CRM allows Granyon to focus on finding the right kind of projects and to evaluate suitable partnerships for these projects going forward.
- CRM will allow Granyon to hold on to their key brand identity, as they will keep focusing on their customers and the humans involved, instead of unnecessary bureaucratic processes.

Consequences of choice

After having recommended Granyon to follow a CRM BNS going forward, I will now briefly discuss the consequences of this choice.

First of all, Granyon has to reevaluate their brand identity and brand positioning to follow the CRM strategy. This would require at least that the brand culture would be shifted even more towards being focused on networking and trust. It should be a core value and the first thing that comes to mind when the customer thinks about the Granyon brand. Furthermore, the brand positioning and the segmentation should become focused on companies and employees who buy into the Granyon's core identity and who can support them in achieving their networking goals. After having looked inwards and started over with evaluating their brand identity and core competencies, Granyon has to incorporate the CRM strategy in their overall strategy; this will allow Granyon to evaluate their progress based on their business goals and networking goals and the activities they arrange to achieve these. For example, Granyon should keep focusing on hosting their networking events, they should keep attending other networking, and industry events and they should make specific targets for these events.

Lastly, Granyon needs to focus on activating the CRM strategy and to make it create results for the company. It could, for example, be to host at least one networking event and to attend another, each

month. Furthermore, the success of doing these events should be measured in either new business projects coming in through these events, on new employees being hired as a result of the events, or something less formal, such as followers on social media.

"What is the advantage of networking compared to traditional marketing?"

For the final brief discussion in this thesis, I will discuss why companies should focus on business networking instead of for example just using traditional marketing.

Why use resources on business networking when marketing is a proven tool to create new business? This was a question which the managing director for Granyon was wondering when starting the collaboration for this thesis. It was meant as a starting point and a source of inspiration for this thesis. Through working with this thesis, I have shown that business networking can be an essential tool to achieve business goals if integrated into not only the strategy of a company but in the core brand identity. Marketing is about communicating the company's core values and brand identity out to the outside world, about branding the company as the company wants it to be perceived by the customer and about creating value for the company through these messages. Marketing can be seen as many things, for example, campaigns, commercials, and sponsorships just to mention a few. Also, some of Granyon's networking activities can be seen as marketing, for example, their sponsorship of the event Creative Mornings, their hosting of the Little Friday event and their presentation at the Danish Industry conference. However, networking is more than just communicating a message out to the outside world to create value and to alter the perception of the brand identity; it is about creating value through relationships, both tangible and intangible value. For example, the partnerships Granyon has with 3dar and their technical partners; these have nothing directly to do with marketing, however, they help increase both the brand awareness of Granyon, but also the overall brand perception, through the increased potential customer base and the quality of their work. The value Granyon gets from hosting and attending networking events, even though they can be seen as marketing efforts, goes far beyond that. This is because, on top of the tangible value from increased brand awareness and potential new clients, they also gain intangible value such as business contacts, knowledge about new industries and trends and the attention of bright new potential employees. In my view, the value of using extra resources on top of traditional marketing, to integrate a BNS into the overall strategy, far exceeds the cost and the trouble. Particularly in an industry such as Granyon's, where services, and thereby, the customer, is essential for the success of the company, networking and business relationships defines the true value of the company and should be treated as a resource, as much as

gold is. Of course, unlike gold, networks have to be maintained and be kept happy, for them to have the intended effect, on a company's success.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have given an in-depth analysis of my case company, Granyon, based on their networking activities. This analysis consisted of 3 parts: their first year of business, current situation and future strategy. The analysis eventually lead to a recommendation for a future BNS based on the findings.

In the first year of business section of the analysis, I described the key events which was determining for how the year would turn out. This description included information about new partnerships, events and the opening of the UK office. Following this section, I analyzed their financial situation, by looking at their key financial numbers and ratios compared to two of their closest competitors. This revealed that Granyon was doing averagely, compared to the largest competitor Hello Monday, and better than a slightly larger competitor in DesignIT. However, being only in their first year of business, it is not optimal for a financial analysis, as it would give a clearer picture to compare the results over a couple of years. Lastly, in regards to the first year of business, I did a brand analysis, looking at brand identity and brand positioning. In this analysis, it became clear that Granyon has positioned their brand to be a niche and an expert in a specific field, that is prototyping. They want to be perceived as the better alternative to larger competitors, as they want to have focus on the important people in the processes instead of the processes themselves. Also, being a small startup, they want to be known for being flexible and agile to market changes.

In the 'current' section of the analysis I looked into Granyon's network structure, network substance, network function, network strategy, the connections between their business relationships and the reasons for Granyon to change their network strategy.

Granyon's network structure is build up by four key relationships. These are with IAdvize, 3dar, external salespeople and external technical partners. IAdvize is a strategic partner, which allows Granyon to set up a customer service platform where they can interact with their customer's, and in that way, earn more brand loyalty and understand the demands of their customers first hand. 3dar is also a strategic partner, however, the primary function of this relationship is to be able to reach a wider target group, as 3dar gives Granyon the possibility to offer services in 3D and virtual reality, which they could not already do. The partnership with the external salespeople is a way for Granyon to

gain new clients, these are primarily used in the UK, to set up new business for the UK office. The last mentioned partnership is with the external technical partners, this allow Granyon to offer their clients services which they do not have in-house, for example coding.

The value of the partnerships were evaluated through their substance and function. These are categorized in activity links, resource ties and actor bonds. In their relationships with IAdvize and 3dar, Granyon shares both activity links and resource ties. The activity links can be seen in the way that certain activities, for example with IAdvize their customer service platform and with 3dar their methods and knowledge, are shared between both parties. With regards to resource ties, again knowledge and know-how is the primary resource being tied between the two parties. With regards to actor bonds, if the relationships develop over time with success, the bonds can form and make sure there will be continuous operations between the two parties, however at the moment, these relationships are still too new to have formed close bonds between the individual employees and between the companies as a whole.

Granyon's current networking strategy, is not actually a strategy, but a range of networking activities. They one networking event themselves, their 'Little Friday' event, here Granyon will provide a lecture on a specific topic and drinks, and then the participants can network and share ideas. Furthermore, Granyon sponsors the Danish version of the international event 'Creative mornings', where entrepreneurs come together to share ideas and listen to a lecture. Other than these events, Granyon attend multiple networking events and industry conferences, to gain inspiration from different markets on current and future trends and to recruit potential clients and employees. Lastly, their relationship with IAdvize can be seen as a networking strategy, as the customer service platform allows them to engage with their customers directly, even after the projects are finished.

Granyon's current business relationships leads to there being disruptions in the network structure of the market. Granyon will favor some of these business partners, and that might lead to changes happening. To stay proactive to these changes and to be flexible to the dynamic market, it is important for Granyon to develop an actual networking strategy. This is what the last section of the analysis was covering, the future strategy.

In the future strategy section, I reviewed Granyon's current strategy to their future business goals. Then I created networking goals to support these business goals and to lead up to the final part of the

analysis. In this part I discussed which networking strategy would be the better choice, for each of the business goals and networking goals, the discussion lead up to the final recommendation.

The business goals which were created in this last part of the analysis were: Getting known for something good and something right, Right position to the market at all times, International scaling and to hire new employees. For each of these business goals, supporting networking goals were suggested. These were: obtain 10 new clients using networking events, to contact a client at least two times after having finished a project, to attend 5 different industry events from different industries a year, to attend at least 2 networking events a month and lastly to keep hosting these 'Little Friday' events once per week and to hire at least three new employees per year, from these events. These networking goal were to support the business goals, and to serve as a prerequisite for the discussion of which BNS would be recommendable for Granyon.

Appendix

1: Literature

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2: Survey
Introduction

1) Age
2) Gender
3) Nationality
4) Position

5) Can you describe how you see Granyon's company culture?
6) Can you describe a typical day at the office?
7) Why should the customers select Granyon instead of the competitors?
8) How do you collaborate with external partners in your job?
9) Can you give me some examples on the process of getting new clients (from signing, maintaining and future handling)?
10) How would you characterize networking?
11) How do you use your network in your daily life?
12) How do you use your network in your work life?
13) Is networking an active part of Granyons strategy?
14) If yes, how?
15) Have you ever used your network to strengthen Granyon's network?
16) If yes – please elaborate
17) If no – What would it take for you to use it?

3: Interview guide

Interview: Mikkel

Introductory:

1) Tell about the company and how the last year has been?
2) Can you walk me through the organization?

Brand

3) How would you describe the Granyon brand?
4) Can you walk me through the market structure and how you are positioned?
5) Do you react actively to changes in the market?
6) Why does the clients choose you?/What can you offer that your competitors cant?
7) In which areas are you lacking behind?

Culture

8) Can you tell me about the values of the company?
9) What is important when you hire new people?
10) Why would new employees choose to work for you?
11) What has been the best/worst single event for the company?
12) Tell me about a typical day at the office?
13) What is a good day at work?
14) What is a bad day at work?
15) Can you tell me about the overall strategy of the company?
16) How does the next 5 years for Granyon look like?
17) What does the company have to do to make that happen?
18)

Network specific:

19) How would you characterize networking?
20) Is networking an active part of Granyon's strategy?
21) How does the company utilize social networking?
22) How does the company utilize physical networking?
23) How does the company facilitate networking?
24) How would you describe a business network?
25) How big would you estimate the company's network to be?
26) Tell me about a specific time where the company gained from networking?
27) Tell me about a specific time where you (or the company) went out of what was expected to assist a company (or person) in its network?
28) Tell me about a specific time where the company did not gain what you wanted from a business relationship?
29) Give me some examples on the process of getting new clients (from signing, maintaining and future handling)
30) What do Granyon do to gain new clients?
31) How does Granyon maintain their relationships with clients?
32) What is a good business relationship?
33) What is a less good business relationship?
34) How do you personally utilize social networks?
35) How do you personally utilize physical networking?

Interview: Jens

Introductory:

1) Tell me about your role in the company?
2) What is the function of the UK department?

Brand specific:

3) What is the Granyon brand for you?
4) How do you think the Granyon brand is perceived in the UK? Clients, competitors, employees
5) Why do clients choose you over another bureau?
6) Why do new employees choose to work with you over a competitor?

Culture specific:

7) Tell about the department and how the last year has been?
8) How did the company gain clients in the first year?
9) What is the general strategy of the UK department?
10) What is the long-term strategy of the UK department?
11) What does the company have to do to make that happen?
12) What has been the best/worst single event for the department?
13) Tell me about a typical day at the office?
14) What is a good day at work?
15) What is a bad day at work?

Network specific:

16) How would you characterize networking?
17) Is networking an active part of the company's strategy?
18) If yes: How? If no: why not?
19) What do Granyon do to gain new clients?
20) How does Granyon maintain their relationships with clients?
21) What is a good business relationship?
22) What is a less good business relationship?
23) How big would you estimate Granyon's international network to be?
24) How does the company utilize social networking?
25) How does the company utilize physical networking?
26) How do you personally utilize social networks?
27) How do you personally utilize physical networking?
28) Tell me about a specific time where the company gained from networking?
29) Tell me about a specific time where you (or the company) went out of what was expected to assist a company (or person) in its network?
30) Tell me about a specific time where the company did not gain what you wanted from a business relationship?
31) Give me some examples on the process of getting new clients (from signing, maintaining and future handling)

Appendix 4: Interview 1

Interview with Managing Director from Granyon, Mikkel.

Color coding – Decribed in thesis (p. 37)

Brand

Culture

Network

Relationships

General information/strategy

Prototyping

1.45

Start: february 2016

Ambition: do something else than the usual digital agencies.

Focus on creating value faster.

Focus on offering people instead of products.

2.30

First year is about putting them on the map: brand awareness

First 4-5 years, getting positioned in the market.

2.50

Network: now they have to get there and get known.

3.08: Financially speaking:

Goal reach. Nearly 2 million dkk in growth.

Customers: DR, Velux, CBS, Samvirke

4.06:

Organization:

Creative Director (designer) – design, technical, prototyping

Managing director (CEO). Strategy, analysis, first part of projects.

Other external partners – technical development

Work in teams: 1 team – product manager, designer and strategist

Scale with that pattern: same team structure and more projects at the same time.

8 employees at the moment (1 in Cambridge)

5:45

UK department:

Beginning: Understand the new market. What is the potential? Before using resources to go into the market.

Budget sizes, processes, network, to make strategic foundation.

They are ready to move in to the market.

Brand

6.40 – granyon way of doing things.

Granyon – Culture and vision: react against bad behavior and business bullshit. More to drive business than to give advice. Based on their experience seeing that they push stuff that the customer do not need.

New buzzwords to drive extra growth for the agencies.

A lot of agencies sell products, granyon want to sell knowledge/people/teams. More than just products.

Always the account manager and salespeople. They want to have the designer meet them. Cut away sales layer, which is like the factory-pyramid structure.

Support the value layer, the strategy people and the designers. Being curious about what the customer need.

Usual business agencies: a lot of process a lot of bullshit,

9:58

Culture: inverting the usual pyramid. Valuable people on top: strategists and designers.

Granyon: remove as much process as possible. Some of it is valuable, they need knowledge and insight about the business and the targetgroup, but from there, they do not need more time for processes.

Tools –

Work with prototyping as a design thinking tool. Go as fast as possible from ideas and strategy to something you can see and try out.

That's the tool and methods.

11.30

What is the core of Granyon brand: Creating great experiences. Everyone should have a great experience. Employees – feel they get wiser and learn. But also the customer, not only the product, but also about the process and the project. It should be a good experience and they should learn. To have something work in a big organization, they need the people from the organization to understand it and being heard.

Focus on the process not only the end product.

13.20

Market structure and how they have chosen to position themselves:

Ambition: broader market position

In order to have a broader position (since they are still very small) they have to be trustworthy. This is why they have not gone out and said that they cover all parts of the project, that they are a 360 agency(full service).
Right now: focus on strengths – prototyping. They have experience and there are few companies doing it.

Position right now: Experts in prototyping and design.

Future: move either to more focus on strategy or technical implementation.

14:45 – competitors

5 years ago granyon would compare themselves to companies with similar size in the market.

But now it has changed. Size is not that important.

They go up against the largest in some projects, and win over them – at least in the specialized fields they are in. However, if they are to give proposals for full projects, then size matters.

Market: usual digital agencies, not commercial agencies.

Direct competitors: other agencies of same size, but also the largest ones. Depends fully on the project.

17.15 – biggest challenges over the next couple of years.

Getting known, for good cases. Being known for something good and the right things. Balance – growing and doing the projects good. Not saying yes to everything. Scaling right.

Be able to position themselves in the right spot ALL the time. The business is dynamic and always moving. Its all about being on top of the latest trends and getting edges on the competitors.

Major concern: steady flow of good projects and scale in the right tempo.

19.10 – what do granyon do to stay ahead of the competitors. What is their view on the future.

Beginning – Granyons size is their advantage in terms of the market. They are as flexible as the market and can adapt and change accordingly. However, when they scale and get to be 200 people, then it will be harder to change direction.

They try to focus internationally. Not only on the near market. Not only a Danish company. They have an English website, first American customer coming in august. This is a source to inspiration, see how other markets are moving, bring it to the Danish market. When they are in a couple of countries, they can adapt and be flexible across borders.

They try to have a very active networking approach within the Danish industry. They have afterwork seminars, creative mornings, they have to look at own business areas but also others. Try to be inspired.

When they see something moving fast, its often not from their business but in other businesses.

The next couple of years: move into the british market. Still strengthen in Denmark. Next couple of years.

22.30 – how will they make this happen?

UK- partnership. After analyzing it, they buy it differently than in Denmark.

Denmark way: choose the agency, and then they help you pick the digital platform.

Uk way: choose platform first.

Without that knowledge they could have failed.

They are moving in to UK with a partnership on the platform.

Denmark – sales team. Help get the right meetings.

Content marketing and networking. Danish industry and after work seminars.

Network 24.15

24:58

How would you characterize networking?

Hard to create networking between companies. It comes down to the people and putting faces on it.

They need personal connection with someone, especially in large corporations.

One approach: have afterwork seminars, invite some people from the partnering organization, see how it works out. However: be a personal thing, personal level and not business.

The people act for the companies, but will stay be people. Looking out for their best interest not only the company's.

What granyon can do as a business: have clear culture and values. They will not give strict instructions but will try to build a strong culture and then give people inside Granyon the freedom to act as they want.

It comes down to networking.

There is both the business brand, and the company, and then theres the employee brand, on a personal level.

26:45 – do you make a distinction between personal networking and business networking?

27:50 – do you use networking as an active tool?

It's the most important business tool for us. Even the salespeople work through networking.

The traditional marketing they tried a bit, but it fades in comparision to networking.

Marketing – employee branding.

28.50 – can you be more specific on how you use it?

Culture is about value and how they want to go there. Then they hire people who can buy into that culture. They look into skills and to the person and if they are like they want it.

They describe the culture more as a person than a company. So they hire people who fits into the culture.

A part of the culture is having a large network, being able to give knowledge, being humble and so on.

Those people have natural network and natural desire to keep their network.

Only the salespeople are measured on how many meeting etc, the other employees are measured on the work. However, they should also be aware that they are part of the experience and the culture. The networking will be built through people talking about them and having good experiences with the company.

Networking is honest, its hard to fake it. It comes down to the people. They will pay for it if they do a shitty job. They have to live up to their culture, brand and network.

When customers approach them, even if Granyon cannot help them out, they will send them out to other people who can. It's the whole branding experience, which maintains the network.

Human mindset – focusing on people, also as a company. Being able to give, and not always get something back.

33.10-33.42 – summarize networking strategy. Hire people who fits into the culture, who adds something to the company, utilize their network + have events etc.

Not hire people because of their network but because of their attitude to networking. They do not force the employees to mix their network with the company's. its more their attitude to networking.

Granyon is a group of people who love to network.

Business part of the networking is connected to granyon, theres always a face to it. Its very important especially for a small company.

35.15 – have you actively used networking to gain resources?

We use it all the time. My own network is about strengthening the company.

Granyon is not about our personal networks. Our person. A group of interesting people, a brand.

Over time our person will go into the background, but right now, our personal brands and networks are more important.

Granyon should be known, not us (directors)

Brand based on a strong culture.

37.40 – it's a little bit hard to distinguish between a companys network and the employees. Have you actively used networking to gain a client or someone to add value (knowledge etc) - partnerships?

The strategy is to create a brand which is known for a certain culture.

That takes time. We have to proof it, be visible. When we get to that point. Then the brand network is stronger than my network. Then people will seek out Granyon because of the, because of the strong brand. It is known as something.

39.55 – can you tell me about a specific time where you or the company used networking to gain something?

Every client we had, maybe one or two not, but otherwise are based on networking. All the clients we got is because someone knew something about us.

It is a little bit switching now, some international companies approach us based purely on content or on google search or something like that. Before that everything was based on networking somehow. 2. Or 3. Link networking. Or maybe 1st.

41.25 – can you give me an example of the process of getting a new client? From process, maintaining and how you follow up.

There are different ways in.

One could be networking – someone who have heard about us through someone and then they contact the creative director or I and say that they have a project. Most of the time there would be us and a couple of other agencies. We would give our proposal on time, budget etc, and based on that we either win or lose. If we win, then we start up the project. Based on the insights, if they don't have any we have to find them and move on to design and prototyping.

Then there are the people who call us directly, we have to fill out some forms and after that. If we get

through. Then we give our proposal and then they call us.

Then there could be through partnerships, that could be one of our technical partners who have a project and would ask us to do the design. Then its pretty much just to start working.

Then we have our salesteam. Which work a lot with networking. They build a big network based on content. They have some websites where they send out content. Where I also wrote articles. Based on that they get in meetings. Then they meet up and pitch. That's the coldest part of our sales.

Sometimes there would be different ways into a project.

44.40 what about after a project, does your involvement end there?

No, we try. A part of our proposal is that we for free give a follow up meeting every 3 months. We try to keep up giving advice and to make sure the project is a good experience.

We definitely do not want to leave them with just what we created and then get out of the way. We try to keep on helping them. Both because it's the best thing. Stay on top of mind, so we could have the next project. Both common sense to have more business but also to give them a better experience.

46.40 – is there cases where you have stayed in touch and then maybe a new project came up?

We have done three projects on Velux, based on being top of mind and following up. If we have done a project, and I find research or an article or something, I send it out to our clients so they get something from us all the time.

We have seminars 4 times a year, we also invite our clients to that. They are the first to gain inspiration and knowledge. We try to gain a lot.

47.40 – so the seminars are also a part of your networking strategy?

Definitely. We don't see that they come the day after the seminar and give us a project but its more a long term thing. Its about giving something, and then maybe a year after they come back. So that is definitely a thing where you give knowledge and time and resources, without getting back straight away. Over the long run however, it definitely works out.

48.50 – double sided question – can you tell me what for you is a good business relationship? Where you both gain a lot?

It is about respect for eachothers areas.

It start with ourselves. Walk into the room and have respect for decisions and for their situation and business. We walk in and only listening and ask questions. Get data on the inside until we understand.

Then we can point at potentials and things they could do. Its easy to point at something stupid.

If the client experience that you try to understand and listen, then something happens, then we start to actually talk on the same level. Take them bit by bit in the direction we think they should go. Then the respect goes back. Its very much like talking to people for the first time.

It is about try to start listening. Then the next thing is to offer tools which make it possible to be on the same level.

They try to start straight away, and have the client look over the shoulder of the designer and comment all the time through the process. The designer have to get used to this and takes effort. But it is very rewarding. Now they can be a group instead of two people on each side of the table.

Prototyping is a lot faster than the usual process. Go from idea to testing in weeks instead of months. They can test along the way. A lot of flexibility in the process. Not that danguerous, everybody gets to be creative.

56.10 – would you say that this prototyping strategy is built so you can gain a lot of knowledge before the end product, by testing etc?

Yes, we really quickly goes from initial ideas and more about creating business and having the same goal. Its not about the 10 demands i the paper. We focus on the core and how we can gain this.

Prototyping is a way of thinking more than a certain tool. Be open and try new things out.

57.30 – less good customer experience?

First part went well, but after the prototyping went from the project group who understood it and moved to a more traditional it operations thinking, here it was met by the usual way of doing stuff.

They ended up saying no because they couldn't see themselves in the project.

60:00 – so you can actually say no to projects if you don't believe in them?

Yeah. But sometimes not. Sometimes we just have to do it. People should feel that the story about the brand is true all the way.

Appendix 4: Interview 2

Interview with country manager for the UK office of Granyon, Jens.

Color coding – Decribed in thesis (p. 37)

Brand

Culture

Network

Relationships

General information/strategy

Prototyping

5.30 beginning. Your role and the uk department

Almost simultaneous start in the uk and Denmark.

Not a Danish company but an international company. More nationalities.

The uk department is not going so fast as they wanted it to. They have more focus on establishing themselves in Denmark first.

In terms of network: it was the idea to draw on all of their networks in the beginning, but since they are all Danish, most of their network is in Denmark. Hence, the focus in Denmark.

His role: do research and search for partners. The growth strategy is very different in the UK and Denmark.

7:45 – how have the first year been, how have you been welcomed in the UK?

We don't have any cases here yet. Ive been helping in Denmark primarily. So we need to divert our attention to the UK market more and other countires.

Its been difficult being a startup and establishing ourselves in two different countries from the get-go. Initially we didn't plan on opening the office until next year, but circumstances had it that I had to move here anyways, so we just though why not open an office from the beginning, and let it grow organically.

9.00 – so no real business in the UK?

No. we are still in the process of seeking out partners.

9.15 – can you tell me about that process, how you are reaching out to new partners?

Primarily it is the managing director who have a few other partners who are trying to establish themselves on the UK market. We are trying to partner up with them, as they have been in the game a bit longer than us. Which means that they already have cases in the UK.

Besides that im trying to reach out to different companies. Call them up, talk to them, present what we can do. And just try to create an awareness that we are available and that we can offer our competences if they don't have themselves. For example talking to pr agencies etc.

10:45 – what is it that you offer that other companies don't? why should they pick you ?

We are small and agile company. Very transparent. We work with prototyping on very early. So the customers can see and feel the product very on, it makes them happier. It is also more cost-effective, if you early on find mistakes or misunderstandings, its much easier to change it during the process.

So yeah, being agile, transparent and prototyping.

12.30: what are your plans for getting more staff on board?

We currently hired some external salespeople to help the growth in Denmark, they also have a uk partner. Depending on their success, if they prove to be worth our money we will partner up with them. We will play on getting partnerships over here and code calling. Having them set up meetings and interviews with potential clients. Doing all the legwork.

13.25 – what about employees? Any plans?

That's a long way out in the future. Well. If the sales guys comes along after the summer with a lot of projects, then we would need staff right away.

14.15 – would you then go for part time employees in the beginning?

For as long as possible, we would like to make the projects from our Danish office, but at a certain point when we have grown a lot, we would need to divide the two offices and hire full time personnel in the UK as well. Initially it would be part time or freelance even.

15.15 – why should employees want to work for granyon?

Flat hierarchy. A lot of freedom to get involved at every stage. A lot of personal freedom as long as you deliver and apply yourself. You can more of less come and go as you please. The core of Granyon is a trust based culture. So we are looking for talented people, who are looking to do a good job and who trust us to give them the environment to perform. It is like a small family.

17.15 – how is the general organizational plan? External partners etc? overview?

The two founders in charge. Creative director and managing director.

Small company – roles are not that fixed. Various roles dependent on the project. Fluid roles. Strategy and design. Start up – you have to have a lot of roles. Organizational chart is not an option, it is too soon.

19.40 – what are the roles of the external partners?

We are really good at strategy and design. But when the design phase is over and we have to code the website, we would have partners who are really good at coding. Vice versa, often time a company who is good at coding, often does not know a lot about strategy and design. Which is why. Having a lot of partners is so we can focus on what we are really good at. We can focus on design and strategy, understanding the clients needs and actually getting a client.

But only until a certain point. There is benefits of having inhouse coders, salespeople etc. but as a startup we have to make people earn their own wage. If they don't bring any value to the company we cannot afford to have them on board.

23.00 – will you summarize your long-term strategy in the UK?

The long term strategy is to have long term partnerships with company's over here. Its not finalized yet, but we have a few partners who we work closely with. Joint office with these partners.

First couple of years – sufficient cases.

Should choose them because of the work or coming up to them at events. Instead of salespeople reaching out to the clients.

In the long term, we should have a network over here. Like we have in Denmark. Enough cases to be interesting over here as well.

24.55 – do you have some plans to make that happen?

The plan for creating a network is to attend conferences, events etc. like the ones we are doing back home in Denmark. Inviting potential partners and clients to events and getting to know them better. It is a long process. A network does not just happen overnight. You have to invest yourself in the process, it can be tedious but it will pay off more than having sales people running around. It is better to grow your company based on a network, when people have trust in you and your work it is much easier to get known by other people through word of mouth. It is the best way to grow your business. So there is no firm strategy. Maybe there should be. But for the UK it is happening organically. It grows how the time and the economy allows it.

27.30 – can you tell me about the best/worst event for the company?

One of the best things was that building the company via our network was a success. Most of our cases came through our network. Having a network who trust you and support you is key. It can help you deliver on your goals.

29.45 – can you be more specific?

Our first really international client – the US client based on my own network. It is not online yet, but we just signed the contract and we start later in the year. But seeing that we can attract clients from the US already, is very exciting.

English website for example is a good strategy. Attracting international clients.

31.15 – worst thing.

Not a single point in time. Just a process. We haven't been able to grow as fast as I would have liked in the UK, the barrier to entry has been much much harder over here. Which maybe is a given as we don't have the same network. It has been an uphill battle to establish ourselves over here. It hasn't been disappointing, but i thought we would have been further along.

32.26 – why has it been so hard?

I don't know. There is a big culture difference. Denmark is a trust based country since we are small company. Far less processes and barriers for talking and engaging with people.

Over here people want very firm contracts in place and want a lot of things in place before trusting you. This has been hard. The cultural differences, where in Denmark is very based on trust.

But of course it is also a matter of allocating resources. I am alone over here and im not even full time on board. Then it will not go as fast as back home.

Lack of resources

35:00 – can you tell me about a typical day at the office?

 I use my nights, evenings and weekends to do concept development, research on partners, reach out to partners, talk to the Denmark partners, building it up. So a typical day for me is all those things and understanding the uk market. How they are doing things over here. How to engage with clients. Once this is locked in, then we will allocate more resources to the UK, and it will be easier to make an impact that will have a lasting effect.

36:45 – these conferences and events where you do networking, where and when will they be located?

Most of them will be at 4-5. After work events. We haven't hosted anything over here yet. I have attended other events. That's both in Cambridge and in London.

37.40 – how would you characterize networking?

Networking is you providing something to friends and business partners without expecting anything in return. And if you engage with enough people there will be a return at some point. But you have to invest a lot of time in other people. Understand who they are and what they need. Be able to actively give them advice or help them without expecting anything in return. So, being open and honest in your relations. And actually wanting to people because it makes sense to you and not because you want to leverage it. It happens of itself if you interact with enough people, your network will at some point help you out. That is networking for me, if you aren't doing. Just meet people 6 times a year over a table with your arms crossed. You wont get a network. "A network is only as valuable as the time you invest in it"

40:00 – is there a difference between in businesses and personal networking?

Yes. To some extent. Personal networking where you try to get a wider circle of friends, you are more personal in what you share. Where in a business network I would not necessarily share my personal stories but I would share knowledge that is usable for the person im talking to. Then again, if you want to build trust, you have to be you and not divide yourself in "me with my friends" and "me with my business partners". Although there are differences, you act differently. So there are both differences and similarities.

41.15 – I can imagine it's a pretty complicated process. That balance must be hard to find? How do you balance it?

Yes exactly. Hmm. I don't do research on the people at the events im going to or making a strategy for it. Seek out the most important people for my own benefit. You limit yourself in other possibilities you wouldn't have thought about. Business networking happens spontaneously as well, differently than if you meet people from a blank slate. So you cant limit yourself too much from doing too much research on people and networking before the events.

43.40 – is networking an active part of Granyons strategy? Can you tell me the specifics? Strategy?

I cannot say what my coworkers are doing, but for me with these events and conferences. I just want to meet new people and expand our awareness in the field by talking to people, not by talking about the company necessarily but by presenting myself as being from Granyon. Primarily talking about them and their businesses, understanding their needs and then if we can help them somehow. I would much rather talk about them than talk about Granyon. We are only interesting if we can help them.

That is why networking is important. It is not only to have a digital marketing class and a bunch of salesepeople. Its about building trust and relationships. Not force yourself on the customer.

46:00 – how do you choose the events?

Whenever we get invite in on social media or personal invititations.

46.45 – will you have to be invited?

It differs. Sometimes by invitation only. Sometimes theres a fee for attending etc. sometimes its public.

If theres a fee you will also learn something new, there will be courses.

47.30 – is there a strategy to event attendance?

No, but there will be at some point. Hopefully we will be so successful that we can pick and choose.

Looking at high value events, who is coming and if we want to be associated with them.

48.37 – it sounds like doing research on who is coming?

No not really. I would look more in detail then and profile them. I just look at who is coming and if there is enough companies who are high value. I would research who are doing the invitation. More qualitative instead of quantitative.

49.30 – when you are out talking to the people, you have granyons interest in mind. But is it as much you?

Yes, at events like that it is hard to differentiate. We want people who are a prolonging of the culture. It would not differ that much between the different employees, if they have the same values. Im living the brand, because I believe in it.

52:00 – I guess that is how it has to be when networking is a part of the strategy?

Yeah, people will pick up on it. If you are being insensire. You can feel when something is wrong. If you are not true to yourself and to what you are doing, networking does not work.

53:00 – social media.

Not full potential. We don't have the resources. Twitter for the company culture. Linkedin + facebook – business.

Networking strategy – get people to interact with them on social media.

Not that thought out.

58:00 – company culture and values. Is that something everybody in the company knows about? Is it implicit or explicit?

Very implicit.

People reply very positively on the company culture. The people are an extension of the culture. The people believe in the values.

1.02.15: tell about the process of gaining a client in the Uk?

The only one was purely based on network. I had worked together with the guy from the company, I told him about us and then he called. Only way he chose us was because he knew me and what I stood for. It is back to trust and getting to know people. It is our first international case.

I guess the first couple of cases are easier for a startup if you have a well established network. Compared to if you have a good idea and good strategy, and that's it. Unless its an amazing idea of course.

1.04.26 – with this client it might be a little hard, but can you see into the future a little bit. How will you do the project and how is your relationship going forward?

We are really open and honest with our clients. We don't see ourselves as a one off company. We are saying they should view us as a trusted partner, they shouldn't look for other partners going forward if we do a good job and create this trust for us.

Hopefully most of our partners will be long term.

5: Key figures

Granyon	Income Statement
Revenue	**2016**
Service revenue	1.330.686
Total Revenues	**1.330.686**
Expenses	
Salaries and wages	(1.819.942)
Depreciation	(2.995)
Operating profit	**(492.251)**
Interest expense	(8)
Total Expenses	**1.822.945**
Net Income Before Taxes	(492.259)
Income tax expense	(106.996)
Net Income	**(385.263)**

Balance Sheet

Assets	2016
Cash	307.862
Property and equipment	13.004
Accounts receivable	129.375
Pre-paid expenses (tax)	106.996
Other	112.502
Total Assets	**669.739**
Liabilities	
Owner equity	164.737
Accrued wages	4.835
Accrued compensation	40.540
Income taxes payable	459.627
Total Liabilities	**669.739**

Key financial ratios

	Granyon	Hello Monday	DesignIT
Current ratio	1,30	1,80	1,05
Return on equity	(2,34)	0,35	-5,02
Operating profit margir	-0,37	0,15	-0,72
Return on assets	(0,58)	0,21	-1,03

Number of employees
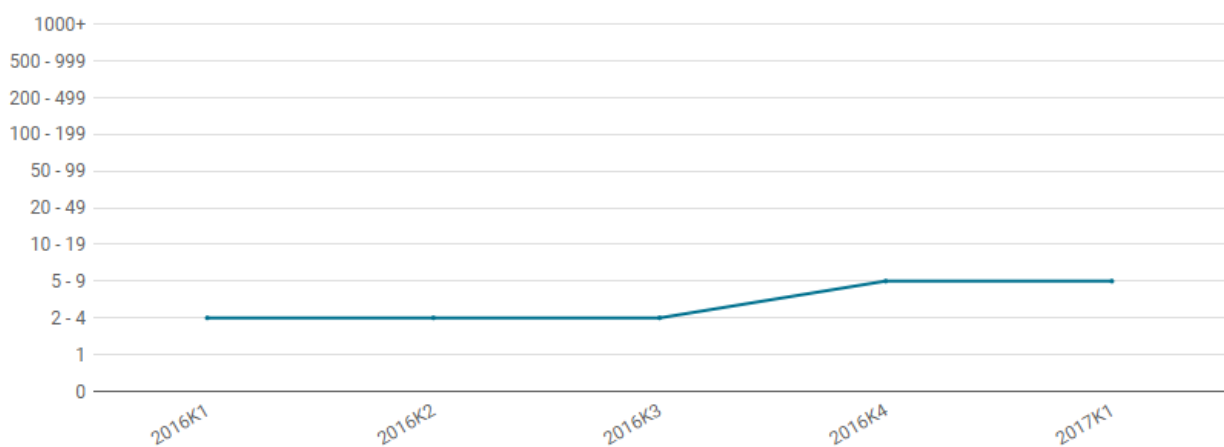
Market analysis from Estatistik.dk
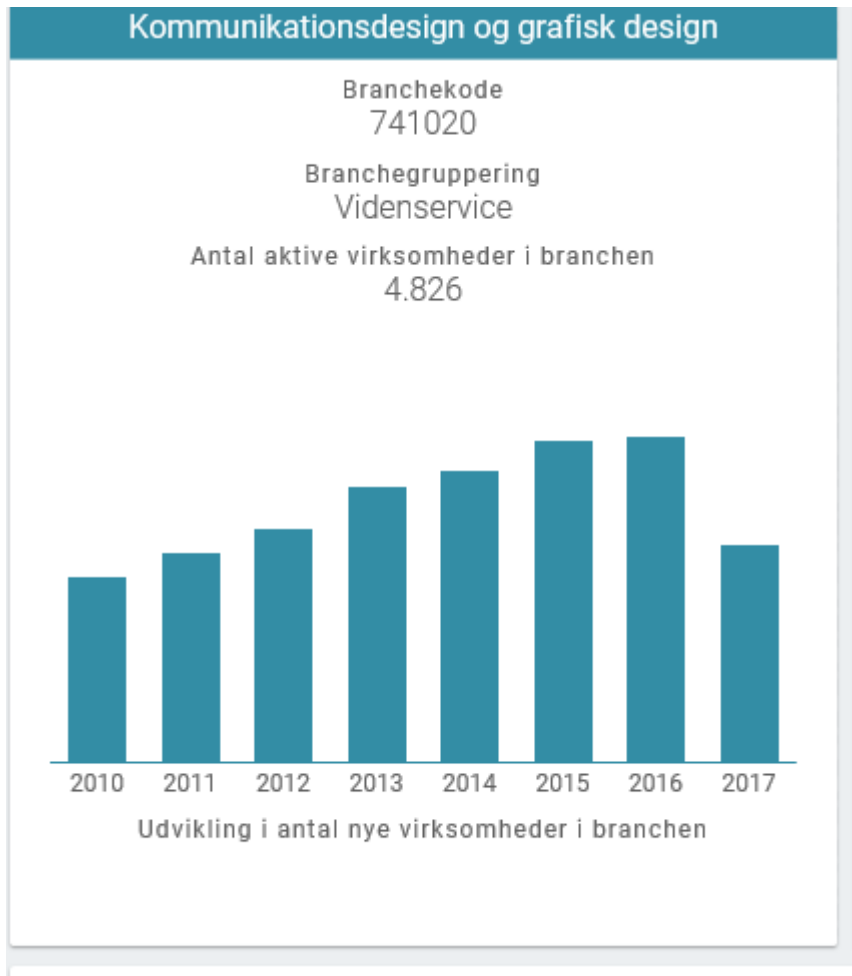
✪ Største virksomheder	Antal Ansatte
DESIGNIT DENMARK A/S	100 - 199
DATAGRAF COMMUNICATIONS A/S	50 - 99
KONTRAPUNKT GROUP A/S	50 - 99
HELLO MONDAY ApS	20 - 49
AMSTRUP SKILTE ApS	20 - 49
Amayse A/S	20 - 49
CADPEOPLE A/S	20 - 49
CADESIGN FORM A/S	20 - 49
CONVERSIO ApS	20 - 49
COPENHAGEN INSTITUTE OF INTERACTION DESIGN ApS	20 - 49
CHRISHOLM GRUPPEN A/S	20 - 49
MACRODOT A/S	10 - 19
LS sydkysten v/Xiuyu Lin	10 - 19
PROREACT SYSTEMS NORDIC ApS	10 - 19

Samlet salg og eksport af varer og tjenester i branchen

Kilde: Danmarks Statistiks FIKS44.
Du kan finde denne statistik og eStatistiks specialkørsler på Danmarks Statistiks statistikker i eDatabanken
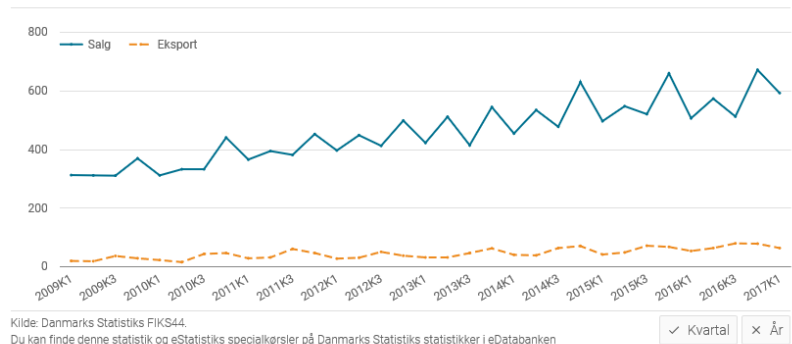
Antal job i branchen (November)

Kilde: Danmarks Statistiks ERHV1.
Du kan finde denne statistik og eStatistiks specialkørsler på Danmarks Statistiks statistikker i eDatabanken
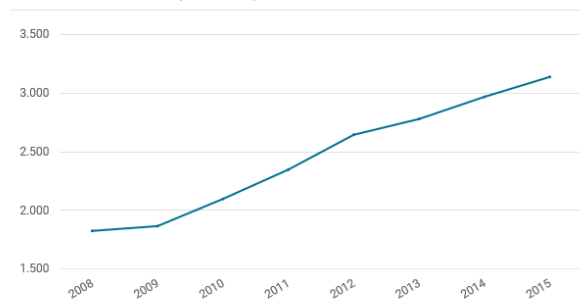
Gennemsnitlig lønsum pr. fuldtidsbeskæftiget

Kilde: Danmarks Statistiks ERHV1.
Du kan finde denne statistik og eStatistiks specialkørsler på Danmarks Statistiks statistikker i eDatabanken
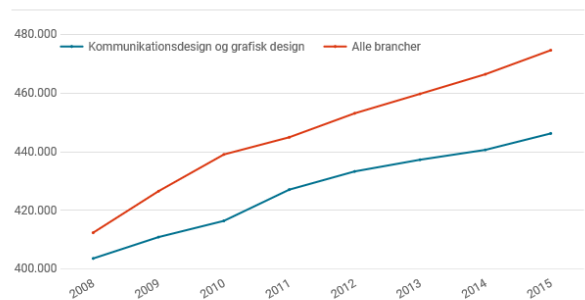
6: Annual Reports

Granyon

Granyon ApS

Resultatopgørelse

	Note	2016 kr.
Bruttofortjeneste/-tab		1.330.686
Personaleomkostninger	1	-1.819.942
Af- og nedskrivninger af materielle og immaterielle anlægsaktiver		-2.995
Driftsresultat		**-492.251**
Finansielle omkostninger	2	-8
Resultat før skat		**-492.259**
Skat af årets resultat		106.996
Årets resultat		**-385.263**
Forslag til resultatdisponering		
Overført resultat		-385.263
Resultatdisponering		**-385.263**

Balance 31. december 2016

	Note	2016 kr.
Aktiver		
Andre anlæg, driftsmateriel og inventar		13.004
Materielle anlægsaktiver		**13.004**
Anlægsaktiver		**13.004**
Tilgodehavender fra salg og tjenesteydelser		129.375
Udskudte skatteaktiver		106.996
Andre tilgodehavender		112.502
Tilgodehavender		**348.873**
Likvide beholdninger		**307.862**
Omsætningsaktiver		**656.735**
Aktiver		**669.739**

Granyon ApS

Balance 31. december 2016

	Note	2016 kr.
Passiver		
Virksomhedskapital	3	62.500
Overkurs ved emission	4	487.500
Overført resultat	5	-385.263
Egenkapital		**164.737**
Leverandører af varer og tjenesteydelser		40.540
Anden gæld, herunder skyldige skatter og skyldige bidrag til social sikring		459.627
Gæld til virksomhedsdeltagere og ledelse		4.835
Kortfristede gældsforpligtelser		**505.002**
Gældsforpligtelser		**505.002**
Passiver		**669.739**
Eventualforpligtelser	6	
Sikkerhedsstillelser og pantsætninger	7	

DesignIT

Designit Denmark A/S
Årsrapport 2016/17
Annual report 2016/17

Årsregnskab 1. april 2016 - 31. marts 2017
Financial statements for the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017

Resultatopgørelse
Income statement

Note Note	DKK'000	2016/17 12 mdr. (months)	2015/16 15 mdr. (months)
	Bruttofortjeneste Gross margin	60.119	69.794
2	Personaleomkostninger Staff costs	-101.552	-86.405
	Af- og nedskrivninger af immaterielle og materielle anlægsaktiver Amortisation/depreciation and impairment of intangible assets and property, plant and equipment	-1.921	-1.984
	Resultat før finansielle poster Profit/loss before net financials	-43.354	-18.595
3	Finansielle indtægter Financial income	524	2.351
4	Finansielle omkostninger Financial expenses	-55	-954
	Resultat før skat Profit/loss before tax	-42.885	-17.198
5	Skat af årets resultat Tax for the year	4.640	2.729
	Årets resultat Profit/loss for the year	-38.245	-14.469

Årsregnskab 1. april 2016 - 31. marts 2017
Financial statements for the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017

Balance
Balance sheet

Note Note	DKK'000	2016/17	2015/16
	AKTIVER ASSETS		
	Anlægsaktiver Fixed assets		
6	Materielle anlægsaktiver Property, plant and equipment		
	Andre anlæg, driftsmateriel og inventar Other fixtures and fittings, tools and equipment	2.248	2.368
	Indretning af lejede lokaler Leasehold improvements	209	791
		2.457	3.159
7	Finansielle anlægsaktiver Investments		
	Andre tilgodehavender Other receivables	1.958	1.440
		1.958	1.440
	Anlægsaktiver i alt Total fixed assets	4.415	4.599
	Omsætningsaktiver Non-fixed assets		
	Tilgodehavender Receivables		
	Tilgodehavender fra salg og tjenesteydelser Trade receivables	9.722	14.543
8	Igangværende arbejder for fremmed regning Work in progress for third parties	3.534	2.290
	Tilgodehavender hos tilknyttede virksomheder Receivables from group entities	21.128	4.527
9	Udskudte skatteaktiver Deferred tax assets	8.128	3.200
	Tilgodehavende selskabsskat Income taxes receivable	41	0
	Andre tilgodehavender Other receivables	51	755
10	Periodeafgrænsningsposter Deferred income	84	701
		42.688	26.016
	Likvide beholdninger Cash	2.311	3.879
	Omsætningsaktiver i alt Total non-fixed assets	44.999	29.895
	AKTIVER I ALT TOTAL ASSETS	49.414	34.494

EY

Designit Denmark A/S
Årsrapport 2016/17
Annual report 2016/17

Årsregnskab 1. april 2016 - 31. marts 2017
Financial statements for the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017

Balance
Balance sheet

Note Note	DKK'000	2016/17	2015/16
	PASSIVER		
	EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
	Egenkapital		
	Equity		
11	Selskabskapital	1.206	1.206
	Share capital		
	Overført resultat	943	11.885
	Retained earnings		
	Egenkapital i alt	2.149	13.091
	Total equity		
	Gældsforpligtelser		
	Liabilities		
	Kortfristede gældsforpligtelser		
	Current liabilities		
	Gæld til banker	909	32
	Bank debt		
8	Igangværende arbejder for fremmed regning	2.403	2.375
	Work in progress for third parties		
	Leverandører af varer og tjenesteydelser	5.483	2.621
	Trade payables		
	Gæld til tilknyttede virksomheder	18.766	1.444
	Payables to group entities		
	Anden gæld	19.664	14.931
	Other payables		
	Periodeafgrænsningsposter	40	0
	Deferred income		
		47.265	21.403
	Gældsforpligtelser i alt	47.265	21.403
	Total liabilities other than provisions		
	PASSIVER I ALT	49.414	34.494
	TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		

1	Anvendt regnskabspraksis	
	Accounting policies	
12	Kontraktlige forpligtelser og eventualposter m.v.	
	Contractual obligations and contingencies, etc.	
13	Nærtstående parter	
	Related parties	

Hello Monday

Hello Monday ApS

Resultatopgørelse
Income statement

Note		2016 DKK	2015 DKK
	Bruttofortjeneste Gross profit	**13.950.299**	**13.383.509**
1	Personaleomkostninger Staff costs	-11.586.487	-12.120.153
	Resultat før af- og nedskrivninger Profit/loss before depreciation, amortization, write-downs and impairment losses	**2.363.812**	**1.263.356**
	Af- og nedskrivninger af materielle anlægsaktiver Depreciation, amortisation, impairment losses and write-downs of property, plant and equipment	-257.697	-322.416
	Resultat før finansielle poster Profit/loss before net financials	**2.106.115**	**940.940**
	Indtægter af kapitalandele i tilknyttede virksomheder Income from equity investments in group enterprises	869.192	200.130
	Andre finansielle indtægter Financial income	13.633	292.573
2	Andre finansielle omkostninger Financial expenses	-277.944	-153.419
	Resultat før skat Profit/loss before tax	**2.710.996**	**1.280.224**
	Skat af årets resultat Tax on profit or loss for the year	-409.776	-262.997
	Årets resultat Profit/loss for the year	**2.301.220**	**1.017.227**

AKTIVER
ASSETS

Note		31.12.16 DKK	31.12.15 DKK
	Indretning af lejede lokaler Leasehold improvements	249.396	339.708
	Andre anlæg, driftsmateriel og inventar Other fixtures and fittings, tools and equipment	125.522	275.633
	Materielle anlægsaktiver i alt **Total property, plant and equipment**	**374.918**	**615.341**
	Kapitalandele i tilknyttede virksomheder Equity investments in group enterprises	2.312.457	1.397.236
	Deposita Deposits	321.192	183.005
	Finansielle anlægsaktiver i alt **Total investments**	**2.633.649**	**1.580.241**
	Anlægsaktiver i alt **Total non-current assets**	**3.008.567**	**2.195.582**
	Igangværende arbejder for fremmed regning Work in progress for third parties	191.745	16.000
	Tilgodehavender fra salg og tjenesteydelser Trade receivables	4.377.253	5.522.493
	Tilgodehavender hos tilknyttede virksomheder Receivables from group enterprises	401.908	0
	Tilgodehavender hos associerede virksomheder Receivables from associates	270.998	457.365
	Udskudt skatteaktiv Deferred tax asset	84.520	77.132
	Andre tilgodehavender Other receivables	157.074	143.598
	Periodeafgrænsningsposter Prepayments	124.733	101.275
	Tilgodehavender i alt **Total receivables**	**5.608.231**	**6.317.863**
	Likvide beholdninger **Cash**	**2.339.118**	**2.298.426**
	Omsætningsaktiver i alt **Total current assets**	**7.947.349**	**8.616.289**
	Aktiver i alt **Total assets**	**10.955.916**	**10.811.871**

Hello Monday ApS

Balance
Balance sheet

PASSIVER
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES

	31.12.16 DKK	31.12.15 DKK
Selskabskapital Share capital	210.000	210.000
Reserve for nettoopskrivning efter indre værdis metode Reserve for net revaluation according to the equity method	2.311.937	1.396.716
Overført resultat Retained earnings	3.014.945	2.582.917
Forslag til udbytte for regnskabsåret Proposed dividend for the financial year	1.000.000	0
Egenkapital i alt **Total equity**	**6.536.882**	**4.189.633**
Gæld til øvrige kreditinstitutter Payables to other credit institutions	25.745	31.480
Modtagne forudbetalinger fra kunder Prepayments received from customers	171.765	396.803
Leverandører af varer og tjenesteydelser Trade payables	195.303	291.799
Gæld til tilknyttede virksomheder Payables to group enterprises	2.334.831	4.454.573
Selskabsskat Income taxes	417.164	279.110
Anden gæld Other payables	1.274.226	1.168.473
Kortfristede gældsforpligtelser i alt **Total short-term payables**	**4.419.034**	**6.622.238**
Gældsforpligtelser i alt **Total payables**	**4.419.034**	**6.622.238**
Passiver i alt **Total equity and liabilities**	**10.955.916**	**10.811.871**

3 Eventualforpligtelser
Contingent liabilities

7: Thesis Proposals

Overview (1st year) – *Theory:* Network Theory

- How has Granyon utilized their network to create value in their first year of business?
- Look into key events (signing of new clients, hiring of new key employees, marketing efforts)
- Look into key figures (growth, balance statement, income statement)

Overview (current) – *Theory:* Network theory, Culture theory, Network strategy

- Give an overview over the current network structure in Granyon.
- Give an overview of the current network strategies in Granyon
- How are the network strategies utilized?
- Deeper look into the Granyon brand and culture.

Overview (future) – *Theory:* Network strategy; Brand theory, Culture theory

- How can Granyon maximize their future value by focusing on their network strategy?
- What will be an effective network strategy?
- Discussion: How does the value of network strategies compare to traditional marketing?

What will I require:

- Key figures: Balance statements and income statements
- Overview of key events – What has happened the first year of business?
  - o Signing of new clients
  - o Hiring of new employees
  - o Marketing efforts (campaigns, ads, etc.)
  - o Strategy overview for first year
  - o Strategy overview for the future
- Possibility to interview 1-2 employees
- Possibility to send out surveys to all employees (if possible)

8: Email Correspondence

Initiation:

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til hello

Godaften.

Jeg skal til at skrive mit speciale, og er meget interesseret i et samarbejde Granyon. Jeg er ikke stålsat på et emne og er derfor åben for forslag, men jeg er meget interesseret i både network theory og digital marketing. Jeg har vedhæftet et dokument med lidt flere tanker omkring specialet og information om mig selv.

Jeg håber at i har tid til at kigge det igennem og vurdere om det ville være af interesse for jer.

På forhånd mange tak for hjælpen

Mikkel Noe Westh <mnw@granyon.com>
til Jesper, mig

Hej Anders
Spændende at skulle igang med den store opgave ;-)

Det bedste er nok at stikke hovederne sammen og finde ud af, hvad der kunne være interessant for dig og se om vi kan finde et emne?

Bedste hilsner

Mikkel Noe Westh

First proposed thesis disposition after initial meeting

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>   30. jun.
til Mikkel

Hej Mikkel,

Tusinde tak for vores produktive møde i tirsdags.
Jeg har arbejdet på højtryk siden da, og siden vi begge var enige om at netværksteori er interessant i jeres branche, tror jeg at jeg har fundet en interessant vej for os begge.

Dette inkluderer en beskrivelse af hvordan netværk har skabt værdi i jeres første år, et overblik over jeres nuværende netværksstruktur, brand og kultur, et forslag til en fremtidig netværksstrategi samt til sidst en diskussion af værdien af at netværke versus traditionel marketing. Jeg har prøvet at give et overblik i det vedhæftede dokument.

Det kunne stadig være en stor hjælp, hvis du vil forsøge at få de medarbejdere der allerede er taget på ferie til at besvare et spørgeskema (som jeg vil have færdigt senest i midten af næste uge), og hvis du selv, samt din kollega i England, kunne stå til rådighed til et interview, enten på skype eller i København.

Hvordan ser det ud for dig?

Hav en god weekend.

Mikkel Noe Westh <mnw@granyon.com>
til mig

Hej Anders
Jeg kommer ikke til at sende spørgsmål til der er gået på ferie, men jeg og Jens kan godt give et interview i næste uge. Jens er det over Skype. Han er en travl mand men jeg skal forsøge at få ham til at give et tidspunkt i næste uge. Men det vil være rigtig fint, hvis du har nogle spørgsmål han kan forberede sig på.

Bedste hilsner

Mikkel Noe Westh

Email stating that Granyon does not wish to include their clients in the paper:

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

Hej Mikkel,
Hurtigt spørgsmål: Tror du der er mulighed for at jeg kan få en hurtig snak med en(eller flere) af jeres kunder? Det ville være godt ift. at få dækket begge sider af jeres netværk.

Tak, og hav en god dag.

Mvh

...

Mikkel Noe Westh <mnw@granyon.com>
til mig

Så skal jeg vide lidt mere om, hvad du skal vide og hvilke spørgsmål du har i tankerne. Jeg vil dog sige at mange af dem også er på ferie i denne periode.

Bedste hilsner

Mikkel Noe Westh

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

Yes, det er fordi vi jo snakkede om at kigge på hvordan netværk har haft og kan få betydning for Granyons værdi, som virksomhed. Så efter lidt mere brainstorming er jeg kommet frem til at kigge lidt væk fra individuel netværksteori og kigge mere på netværking for virksomheder. En stor del af det er selvfølgelig jeres forhold med virksomhederne i jeres netværk, hvordan jeres forhold startede, en historie om en episode der var godt håndteret, og en der kunne være blevet håndteret bedre, osv.

Det er også for at give lidt mere validitet til min research, at få data fra begge sider.

...

Mikkel Noe Westh <mnw@granyon.com>
til mig

Det kan jeg godt svare på i forhold til de kunder vi har haft. Jeg ved hvordan vi har fået dem. Jeg vil helst ikke blande kunderne ind i det.

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

Ok, det er selvfølgelig fair hvis du helst ikke vil blande kunderne ind i det. Det var mere hvis i havde et ekstraordinært godt forhold til nogen, hvor det ikke ville være et problem.

Men jeg inkluderer et par spørgsmål i jeres interviews, så det er helt fint.

Hej Mikkel,
Så er interviewguiden ved at være på plads.

Der kommer til at være 3 overordnede kategorier med spørgsmål: Kultur, Brand og Netværk.

For at vedholde dataens integritet, kan jeg ikke afsløre alle spørgsmålene på forhånd, men jeg kan komme med et par eksempler:

Hvorfor skal nye klienter vælge jer over konkurrenterne?
Hvordan bruger virksomheden netværking?
Hvad er den langsigtede strategi for virksomheden, og hvad gør i for at den lykkedes?

Der er ca. 30 spørgsmål, det burde kunne klares på 1-1½ time.

Interviewene vil blive optaget så jeg kan transskribere, og vil selvfølgelig være anonyme hvis i ønsker det.

For at gøre transskription lettere ville det være super hvis i begge er okay med at det foregår på engelsk.

Hvordan lyder det?

Med venlig hilsen,

Anders

Example of communication issues/Granyon stating that they do not have time and resources

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>

til Mikkel

Kan vi også klare det på Skype? Eller skal jeg komme ind på kontoret?
Ved 10 tiden?

[...]

...

[Meddelelsen blev klippet] Vis hele meddelelsen

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>

til Mikkel

Hej Mikkel,
Tror du at du har tid idag eller senest i starten af næste uge?

Mvh
Anders

[...]

...

[Meddelelsen blev klippet] Vis hele meddelelsen

Mikkel Noe Westh <mnw@granyon.com>

til mig

Jeg har kun i dag. Jeg tager til USA imorgen.
Kl 13?

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>   16. jul.
til Mikkel

Hej Mikkel,
Mange tak for interviewet i Fredags.
Jeg håber du er kommet godt afsted til USA.

Jeg ville lige høre om du har mulighed for at sende de dokumenter jeg snakkede om i sidste uge?
Det drejer sig om:

[...]

...

[Meddelelsen blev klippet] Vis hele meddelelsen

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>   16. jul.
til Mikkel

Hov, emailen blev klippet.
Men ja det drejer sig om:

Key figures: Balance statements and income statements

Overview of key events – What has happened the first year of business?

o Signing of new clients

o Hiring of new employees

o Marketing efforts (campaigns, ads, etc.)

o Strategy overview for first year

o Strategy overview for the future

Er det muligt at få noget på skrift?

Hav en fortsat god ferie

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

9. aug.

Hej Mikkel,
Jeg håber du har en god ferie i USA.

Jeg ville lige høre om du har mulighed for at sende de dokumenter jeg snakkede om sidste gang vi snakkede?
Det drejer sig om:

Key figures: Balance statements and income statements

Overview of key events – What has happened the first year of business?

o Signing of new clients

o Hiring of new employees

o Marketing efforts (campaigns, ads, etc.)

o Strategy overview for first year

o Strategy overview for the future

Er det muligt at få noget på skrift?

Og er det muligt at sende spørgeskemaer ud her meget snart?

...

[Meddelelsen blev klippet] Vis hele meddelelsen

Mikkel Noe Westh
til mig

9. aug.

Hej Anders.
Det var da lidt en del du gerne vil have. Det får jeg ikke tid til i den nærmeste tid, hvor vi nu har travlt med at holde kundemøder efter ferien og også har deadline for Velux.

Bedste hilsner

Mikkel Noe Westh

Skype: @mikkelnoewesth
mail: mnw@granyon.com

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

10. aug.

Hej Mikkel.
Helt iorden. Er der noget af det du allerede har liggende og kan sende? Det ville hjælpe meget.
Hvad med spørgeskemaerne, kan jeg sende dem ud i virksomheden?
Det skulle ikke tage mere end 10 minutter at udfylde.

På forhånd tak

Med venlig hilsen
Anders

...

[Meddelelsen blev klippet]

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

21. aug.

Hej Mikkel,
Undskyld for at jeg forstyrrer igen, men jeg prøver lige igen.
Er der nogen mulighed for at du kan sende mig nogle af de nævnte dokumenter? Og at jeg kan få emails på dine ansatte, så jeg kan sende spørgeskema ud. Det ville hjælpe meget, nu jeg nærmer mig afslutningen og min afleveringsdato d. 15/9.

Jeg håber at det ikke er til for meget besvær.

Anders Ringströmm Nielsen <andersringstromm@gmail.com>
til Mikkel

30. aug. (for 12 dage siden)

Hej Mikkel,

En sidste email, inden jeg afleverer her om to uger.
Mit speciale er ikke akademisk troværdigt hvis jeg ikke får noget mere data at arbejde med. Jeg har hentet en del online, gennem jeres hjemmeside, andre sider og en branche analyse med jeres nøgletal også.
Det ville være en kæmpe hjælp hvis jeg kan få lov til at sende spørgeskemaer ud til dine medarbejdere, eller hvis du vil sende det videre.

Tusinde tak for samarbejdet, jeg tror stadig det bliver et rigtig godt projekt, jeg mangler bare lige den sidste data.

Jeg håber at høre tilbage fra dig.

Hav en god dag.

Mvh