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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

We are living in an age where, in a relatively short time, the role of media has transformed completely. This change has forced advertisers to evolve and re-evaluate their modus operandi of buying media. The purpose of this study is to understand advertisers' approaches to new media buying as it occurs ubiquitously inside the organization as well as in relation to relationships embedded at various levels of the network. More specifically, this study pursues to find clues for the variation that is apparent in different advertisers' media behavior and especially in new media buying. To gain insight to this variation in media buying, this thesis explores the process and structure of media buying as well as the nature of the buyer-service provider relationship and the information sources used to make media decisions.

The study was carried out as a case study of the Finnish beverage industry. Seven people out of the six biggest beverage houses, operating in Finland, were interviewed for this research. The topic and the approach were both novel, which contributed to the explorative nature of this study. The theoretical framework consisted mainly of organizational buying behavior constructs but in a network theory context. Thus, this study contributed to both of the research traditions. Abductive logic was the natural choice for analyzing the findings, in order to mix and match established theories with the new concepts discovered during the research process.

According to this research, contemporary media buying shares some similarities with general buying theories, but the unique aspects of media buying reflect its relative complexity. It is no longer possible to make informed media decisions without the assistance of some specialized actors. However, regardless of the quality or amount of media/audience information, uncertainty is in the nature of media buying. Media investing is, to a certain degree, always a gamble and this is acknowledged in advertising organisations. The tolerance for this uncertainty is a key to understand the variation in advertisers' media behavior.

The general trend among advertisers seem to be going to the direction of having a network of multiple skilled actors, who are able to provide up-to-date information of the different medias. However, it is certain that as the media and technology continues to develop, also the organizations depended on it need to evolve. Thus, stationary view is not a long-term strategy in media buying.

Key words	Organisational buying behavior; industrial network model; media planning; media agency; complex buying; media fragmentation; advertising
Further information	

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Tiivistelmä

Elämme ajassa, jossa median rooli on muuttunut nopeasti. Tämä muutos on pakottanut mainostajia sopeutumaan ja arvioimaan uudelleen median ostamisen organisointia. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on ymmärtää miten mainostajat lähestyvät uusien medioiden ostamista. Monesti, samankaltaisten yritysten mediavalinnat eroavat ja tämä ero on erityisen suuri uusien medioiden kohdalla. Tutkimus pyrkii selvittämään eroja medianostamisessa, samankaltaisten toimijoiden välillä, tarkastelemalla median ostamisen prosessia ja rakennetta, median ostamisen alihankintasuhteen luonnetta sekä tutkimalla niitä tiedon lähteitä, joita mainostajat käyttävät päätöksenteossaan.

Tutkimus toteutettiin tapaustutkimuksena haastattelemalla Suomen virvoitusjuoma-alan ammattilaisia. Kuudesta Suomen suurimmasta virvoitusjuoma-alan yrityksestä haastateltiin seitsemää henkilöä tutkimukseen. Koska tutkimusaihe ja tutkimuksen teoreettinen lähestymistapa olivat jokseenkin innovatiivisia, on tutkimus luonteeltaan eksploratiivinen. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostui pääosin organisatorisen ostamisen teorioista, mutta tarkasteltuna verkostokontekstista. Tämän tutkimukseen voidaan katsoa kontribuoivan molempiin suuntauksiin. Abduktiivinen logiikka oli luonnollinen valinta tämäntyylisen tutkimuksen tulosten analysoinnissa, jotta tuoreita löydöksiä pystyi vertailemaan vallitsevien teoreettisten mallien rinnalla.

Tutkimuksen mukaan nykyaikainen medioihin investointi noudattaa osaltaan yleisten ostoteorioiden piirteitä, mutta medianostamisen uniikit piirteet tuovat esiin sille ominaisen monimutkaisuuden. Nykyaikana ei ole enää mahdollista tehdä punnittuja mediapäätöksiä ilman erikoistuneita yhteistyökumppaneita. Epävarmuus on erottamaton osa medianostamista, huolimatta päätöksen perustana olevasta tiedosta tai laadusta. Mediainvestointi on aina, jossain määrin, uhkapeliä ja mainostajat tiedostavat sen hyvin. Organisatorinen epävarmuuden sietokyky on avainroolissa pohdittaessa eroja samankaltaisten mainostajien investoinneissa.

Vaikuttaisi siltä, että mainostajat liikkuvat enenevissä määrin kohti yhteistyömuotoja, joissa mediatietämys hankitaan osaavien yhteistyökumppaneiden verkostosta. Toisaalta mainostajat ovat yksimielisiä siitä, että medioiden ja teknologian kehitys jatkuu ja heidän pitää kehittyä niiden mukana.

Asiasanat	Organisatorinen ostaminen, teollinen verkostomalli; mediasuunnittelu; mediatoimisto; monimutkainen ostaminen; median murros; mainonta
Muita tietoja	

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ON THE FRONTIERS OF THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE – ORGANISATIONAL NEW MEDIA BUYING IN NETWORK CONTEXT

Case: Finnish beverage industry

Master´s Thesis
in Marketing

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05.11.2016
Helsinki

The writing of this thesis began as I was taking my first steps to the business world. It was mostly written during the time I was living in North-Spain (and not drenched up in the stormy and freezing waters of the Atlantic Ocean). Now, it is coming to a conclusion here, at home, in Helsinki.

What a trip. Thanks to all, along the way.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background for the study

Technological innovation is the inevitable result of the continuous technological progress of our times. It is the driving force behind the changes in the equilibrium of economic environments as well as in companies' pursuit of competitiveness. (Tang & Zanettos 1992, 135). The contemporary media industry is arguably one of the fastest developing industries globally. Consequently, it can be considered being among the technological front-runners in the age of digitalization. In the media environment, the technological innovation has manifested itself especially in the rise of various new smaller medias and media technologies. This rise of new medias and media technologies has, in turn, contributed to the fragmentation of the media environment, as well as -to the decline of some of the traditional mass media vehicles. The concept and existence of mainstream media that reaches all levels of the general public is fading quickly and this has implications for the prospects of transmitting information in general. On the whole, media has become much more complex entity compared to what it once was and this development continues to pose challenges for organisations on every level of the society.

This thesis focuses on gaining insight about how advertisers cope with- and respond to their customers changing media behaviour. Advertisers are in the core of this contemporary phenomenon as they have to consistently seek balance between investing into the traditional and/or to the new medias. This continuous balancing act requires diligent investigation and contemplation from the advertisers. On one hand, the increasingly diverse array of different media gives advertisers new ways of reaching more targeted audiences, but on the other hand, it adds complexity to the media selection process: which combined selection of media channels to invest in, in order to gain sufficient and relevant reach? In addition to the increased number of media alternatives, the technological development has also marked a shift in the balance of power between the advertiser and the consumer. This shift brings additional complexities for advertisers as they can no longer rely on 'push-only' advertising. Instead, advertisers need to 'pull' the customers attention to their communication and do it in an appropriate way. This fast change in the nature of the media environment and the media practice has contributed to the increasingly contrasted modus operandi between similar advertisers as they differ in the adoption phase and weight of investment to new media channels. Thus, some advertisers tend to be more innovative and risk tolerant in their media buying than others. This variation in the media buying behaviour of advertisers is essentially what this thesis is about.

Despite the major effect that the transformation of the media environment is causing in organisations today it is not the only variable producing increased complexity in the world of commerce. Indeed, the practice of media buying can be merely considered a good specimen of the general, higher-level, trend of increasing complexity of exchange between industries and markets (Brashear-Alejandro et al. 2010). This growing complexity can be observed from e.g. trading partners increasing degrees of specialization, knowledge- and service intensity as well as technological complexity (Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen 2013, 44; Flowers 2007, 318). In addition, suppliers and third parties tend to be in increasingly important roles and often shape the nature and mode of the service provision in contemporary business relationships (Flowers 2007, 319). Thus, the author expects that these characteristics of contemporary organisational buying will be observable in the results of the following enquiry about modern organisational media buying as well. Especially now that media buying has evolved into more complex craft. Indeed, even though media buying is its own unique field-of-business (and affected by the transformation of the media environment), it is still characterized by some of the qualities that all buying situations share. Namely, it should adhere, to some extent, to the conceptualizations of business-to-business marketing theories developed over the decades. It was in the interest of the author to reflect this organisational media buying with the rich amount of research carried out on organisational buying. This combination of the old and the new was considered providing an exciting opportunity to bring some clarity and structure to the currently ambiguous phenomenon of organisational media buying as well as possible new contributions to the contemporary business-to-business marketing. Business-to-business marketing has followed and reacted to the changes occurring in its environment (like any other field of scientific research) and provides a good backdrop as well as a reflection point for this study. A review by Johnston & Lewin (1996) presents an integrated model of the organisational buying behaviour (OBB) research findings from the 25-year time period preceding their article. This review is often referred to in this thesis. In their review, the authors gathered 165 articles discussing OBB and defined it as "often multiphase, multi-person, multi-departmental and multi-objective process". They also stated that the variation in this process is connected to the level of risk associated with the specific purchase situation (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 1, 8). As organisational buying behaviour theory has matured additional constructs and relationships have emerged as significant predictors of behaviour. According to Johnston & Lewin (1996) these additional constructs include: role-stress and decision rules on the intrafirm level and buyer-seller relationship as well as communication networks on the interfirm level. These additions reflect the discipline's changed interest from focal firm orientation, to dyadic relationships and networks. However, they are not derived from the 'European' markets-as-networks approach (IMP-approach) that emerged during the last phases of OBB development (see e.g. Håkansson & Snehota 1995). Instead they are from the inter-organisational viewpoints arising from the organisational buying behaviour approach. The traditionally 'North-American' OBB perspective has viewed organisational buying mostly as an intra-organisational process, whereas IMP-approach has made progress to the research by conceptualizing organisational buying as inseparable from selling (Barclay 1992, 50).

Even though it involves a great challenge, this thesis aspires to take into account these theoretical distinctions and integrate parts of theory that represent different points-of-view to buying and feel suitable in the media buying context. The integrative efforts in the article by Johnston & Lewin (1996) have been praised (see e.g. Tanner 1999) but, in general, integrating organisational buying behaviour theories with the currently dominant relationship-marketing paradigm (i.e. the IMP-approach) has been considered problematic. According to Makkonen & Johnston (2014, 326) this is due to the "leap rather than evolvement" in the theory development from focal firm interest to the relationship-and-network approach. Consequently, there is a lack of middle-of-the-range theories that would extend the existing theories of organisational buying behaviour and integrate them to the relationship-and-network approach. However, it is seen that the 'individual focused' -organisational buying behaviour theories could be helpful in developing the relationship-and-network approach further (Tanner 1999). This is due to the opposite merits and weaknesses of the approaches. Whereas organisational buying behaviour research has been labelled as too 'one sided', The IMP-approach has been criticized for producing loose and unspecific theory that is weakly connected to similar research on other fields of science as well as neglecting the individual-level actions (Makkonen & Johnston 2014, 326). Connecting organisational buying behaviour to industrial network model essentially relates the intrafirm level to the wider network context and this way helps to better understand holistically the phenomenon of interest (Makkonen & Johnston 2014, 329). "Organisational buying" has been used as the term that covers both the organisational buying behaviour- and IMP-approach (see e.g. Barclay 1992, 50). Therefore, this thesis speaks about organisational media buying that hence operates both on the intra- and inter-organisational theoretical levels.

1.2 Research questions

This thesis sets to contribute to the research in media buying as well as in complex organizational buying by exploring how theories originally developed in the context of industrial purchasing can be utilized to gain a more holistic understanding of advertisers' media buying behavior. The criteria for choosing a specific media has been observed from both the media specialists' and advertisers' side before (See e.g. King & Reid 1997, 55; Cheong, De Gregorio & Kim 2010, 403). However, the process leading up to the media decision in the context of changed media environment has remained unresearched. In addition, the changed nature of media planning from a downstream logistical activity to becoming an inseparable part of the overall marketing process has led to a situation where the relevance of very generalized and limited number of media selection criteria can be questioned. Instead of focusing on some static set of variables that affect an organisation's media investing, it could be argued that the organisational and network characteristics regarding the adoption of new media is more relevant topic of study in the contemporary media environment. Indeed, a more holistic view of the media selection process seems to be in place. This thesis attempts to shed light to this dim area of research.

The purpose of this thesis is to understand advertisers' approaches to new media buying as it occurs ubiquitously inside the organization as well as in relation to relationships embedded at various levels of the network. Based on the purpose of the research a following research question is proposed: Taking into consideration the ubiquitous nature of organizational buying, what leads to the variation in advertisers' media buying? The main research question can be broken down into the following sub-questions:

- What are the process and the structure in media buying?
- What is the nature of the buyer-service provider relationship in media buying?
- What are the information sources used to make media decisions?

The methodological choice follows the aspiration to holistically understand the investigated subject. Different levels of analysis collectively complement each other and can be argued necessary when trying to see the whole picture of the researched topic (Wilke & Ritter, 53).

1.3 Structure of the study

This thesis begins with an introduction to the contemporary media environment in the beginning of chapter two. It is important that the reader becomes familiar with the basic concepts of media buying as well as of the dynamics of the development of media environment, to be sufficiently equipped to understand the empirical part of this thesis. The rest of chapter two focusses on clarifying the application, positions and definitions of the selected theoretical concepts of this study as well as integrating the organisational buying behaviour constructs with the network approach. The hybrid approach followed by this study embeds organisational buying behaviour concepts to network theory context and forms the theoretical framework presented at the end of the chapter. This hybrid approach was chosen in order to include relevant theoretical constructs to the individual level analysis of the topic of interest, from the organisational buying behaviour tradition, while still using the ARA-model as the research context.

In the third chapter the research design is presented. The chapter begins with the case description. Then attention is turned to the research approach of this study. The abductive logic of this thesis is presented in its own section after the research approach section. Following are the sections depicting data collection and data analysis which depict, in essence, how this study was carried out. The last part of the methodology chapter contemplates the authenticity and trustworthiness of this qualitative research.

In the fourth chapter the theoretical framework is applied to the research findings while still leaving room for new pieces of theory and reflection, as per the abductive logic approach of this thesis. Thus, in addition to the ARA-framework and the integrated components embedded in to it, the empirical part also describe the sources of uncertainty in the media buying process, how the media buying process progresses as well as what are the main challenges in investing to new medias.

The discussion and conclusions of this thesis are presented in chapter five. The chapter begins with reflection about whether new media buying can be depicted as complex buying. Following this reflective section, the main findings of this study are presented. The rest of the chapter is dedicated to discussion about managerial implications, limitations and future research implications. In the sixth and seventh chapters the research is summarized and the references are presented.

2 ORGANISATIONAL BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN NETWORK CONTEXT

The focus of this chapter will be on casting a light on contemporary media buying and to organisational buying behaviour as well as to the relationship perspective of buying. These three topics are the basic building blocks of this thesis: contemporary media buying is the object of interest in this study, OBB provides the theoretical constructs to analyse it and the theoretical context of this analysis comes from the relationship and network perspective. This chapter will begin by presenting the basic principles of the media planning process and reviewing swiftly the main developments in the media landscape. Then the focus will move to into the findings of the OBB and the IMP-approaches. Also, the relationship between the OBB and IMP-approaches will be clarified in order to underline the fact that even though this thesis approaches the topic from the OBB-perspective, it doesn't imply that the actors' relationships and networks are considered unimportant. Instead, the aspiration of this thesis is to harness the power of the IMP-approach to the extent that it is possible within the confines of the chosen models. The analytical framework presented at the end of this chapter combines these constructs to present one unified model that will help to answer the research questions of this study.

2.1 Introduction to contemporary media buying

Media buying is the object of interest in this study. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss media buying and the state of the contemporary media landscape, that form the topic of this study, before proceeding to the theoretical approaches. Indeed, the interest in organisational media buying seems to be increasing all the time. Under the last two years industry magazines such as Advertising Age and Ad Week have published articles where they have interviewed advertisers about their decisions to be the first adopters of new media channels (see e.g. Peterson 2014; Johnson 2015). The explanations to these early-adopter-decisions have often remained vague. However, it seems that many brands consider early adoption of new media as increasingly important activity. Interestingly beverage companies are often among the first adopters of new media, which is, fittingly, the case-industry of the empirical part of this thesis.

Media buying is basically a synonym for media planning, but in the research literature 'media planning' is typically used instead of 'media buying' as a term to describe the media selection process. The central idea in the 'media planning process' is matching the media audiences with the target market members. Thus, the idea is to choose media that consist of the target market members. Ideally, this would be done directly by assessing the media vehicles in terms of relative concentration of target market members per media audience. (Cannon 1984, 4). However, often the reality sets some constraints to this direct matching approach. This is because it is not possible to know everything about customers and their media behaviour. Especially in the past, but still continuing today, user behaviour data has been often insufficient to a degree that interferes with the direct matching approach on a large scale. The lack of complete database of user behaviour forces media planners to use indirect matching in the media selection process. Like selecting some mediating variables to represent the target market and then choosing the best fitting media-set in terms of the mediating variables. (Cannon 1984, 4). Typically, companies have conducted some type of research to identify their customers and this data is often used to choose the mediating variables. On the media agency side, the most appropriate media set is often selected by assessing data from syndicated media research. (Cannon 1984, 4). Target market membership is typically defined by some type of assessment of the customers' demographic variables.

At the core of media selection process is the trade-off between the concepts of reach and frequency. Advertising reach describes the number or percent of different target market individuals that have received the communication message at least once. Advertising frequency, on the other hand, describes the number of times an individual has received the message (Kamin 1978, 21). Due to the finite nature of companies' media budgets, the target audience is usually reached with emphasis either on a reach strategy or a frequency-of-exposure strategy. Thus, either focusing on low repetition of the advertising message for large audience or high repetition for a smaller audience. The reach strategy focuses on reaching large proportion of the target audience sufficiently. In contrast, the frequency-of-exposure strategy focuses on reaching a small proportion of the target audience extensively (Romaniuk, Beals & Uncles 2013, 222). Obviously, there are variations of these approaches as well.

The concepts of reach and frequency have also been subjects of a classic industry debate regarding which one of the two approaches is better. This debate has inspired more abstract concepts such as effective reach and effective frequency. Effective frequency enquires the number of frequency needed for an ad to become effective. Effective reach, on the other hand, asks the number of people reached at that effective frequency level. (Cheong, De Gregorio & Kim 2010, 404). In the media planning discourse, effective frequency planning (EFP) has been for a long time the dominant media planning paradigm as well as the representative of the process through which media planners put effective reach and exposure into practice. However according to Cannon (2001, 29) the EFP has some serious conceptual shortcomings. These shortcomings include crude rules of thumb such as 3+ exposures are effective and naive theory that advertising is subject to threshold effect reflected in an S-shaped advertising response curve (Cheong, De Gregorio & Kim 2010, 404). According to Cannon & Riordan

(1994, 26) there is virtually no scientific evidence available to support the effective reach and –frequency concepts in the literature nor for the universal principle of the threshold frequency. In fact, media experts agree that effective frequency planning – the standard media planning doctrine, is based on faulty premises and leads to millions of dollars in wasted advertising annually (Cannon, Leckenby & Abernethy 2002, 34). This industry discourse just highlights the fact that media investing has been, especially traditionally, more of an art than science since there has been no fool proof methods to measure its results. However, there are lots of mathematical models for media investing. For example, the conceptual problems in the EFP are addressed and countered in the even more abstract concepts of optimal frequency planning (OFP) and frequency value planning (FVP) (see e.g. Cannon, Leckenby & Abernethy 2002, Cannon & Riordan 1994). However, even these more sophisticated mathematical models do not solve the problem of inattention or apathy towards advertising.

Like mentioned in the introduction chapter, the recent fundamental change in the media landscape is the force behind the increasing variation in advertisers' new media buying. However, evolution of the media environment is not a new phenomenon. Over the years, the advertising industry has been challenged several times by the emergence of new innovative medias which have brought new dimensions to the capabilities of media. The emergence of television is a good example of this occurrence. Television differed largely from the existing set of media and therefore created new possibilities for advertisers but also a media valuation problem: e.g. how can television's effective frequency number be compared with that of the radio? These types of developments have forced industry people as well as researchers to evaluate and re-evaluate the cost/value equations of different medias. However, the current evolutional leap in the media landscape is special. It is special because of its profoundness. This time the media landscape has not only become more complex, instead it has become more complex and its rules have changed at the same time.

According to Romaniuk & Gugel (2010) there are four factors that make up the new foundations for the contemporary media environment. First of all, media planning can no longer be considered as a solely downstream logistical activity to push a product to the consumers. Instead, media planning can even be the source of innovation in advertising. (see e.g. Rubinson 2010). Thus, media planning cannot be distinguished as a truly separate structure from the overall marketing process anymore. Secondly, the advancement in information technology has brought new advertising media types beyond the traditional paid-for, push-only advertising. These new advertising media types are called owned- and earned medias (Harrison 2013, 181; Romaniuk & Gugel 2010, 334). These three media types now form the typology for online and offline media. In this typology traditional advertising is called paid media and it refers to the media activity that the company generates by itself or with the help of an agent. Owned media refers to the media activity that is generated directly by the company or an agent in media channels that the company owns e.g. the company website. Earned media, on the contrary, refers to media activity that the company doesn't directly generate and occurs in extraneous channels e.g. mentions in user generated content in social media or press mentions in the traditional media. (Stephen & Galak 2012, 624). Accordingly, people are no longer only passive spectators of advertising messages, instead they interact with brands and search for information in the media that helps them in the purchase process. According to Romaniuk & Gugel (2010) the third factor is the fact that there is no single starting point in the consumer purchase decision process anymore, that could be generalized to consider everyone. These new media types have weakened companies control of the media considerably. Fourthly, the speed of the media evolution has escalated (Adobe 2015, Romaniuk & Gugel 2010, 334). According to the media researchers there is no static model for media and marketing anymore due to the blistering pace of development. Accordingly, media environment should be treated as an ”always-in-motion” ecosystem that perpetually changes in complexity and dynamics following the (almost daily) releases of new technologies (Romaniuk & Gugel 2010, 334).

2.2 Organisational buying in the network context

This section begins by building up the groundwork for the later theoretical sections (2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) by observing organisational buying from a process point-of-view, which is the traditional approach to buying. Then the attention is turned into organisational buying from the exchange relationship perspective, which is the current depiction of buying. In the last part of this section these topics are converged in the form of the action-structure paradox.

2.2.1 Organisational buying as a process

Organisational buying is managed through a process (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 2). There are several models that describe the different stages of this general buying process (see e.g. Munukka & Järvi 2007, 254) but according to Johnston & Lewin (1996, 2) they can be summarized through the following eight steps: (1) recognition of need and a general solution, (2) determination of characteristics and quantity, (3) description of characteristics and quantity, (4) search for potential sources, (5) acquire and analyse proposals, (6) evaluate proposals and select suppliers, (7) select an order routine, and (8) performance feedback and evaluation.

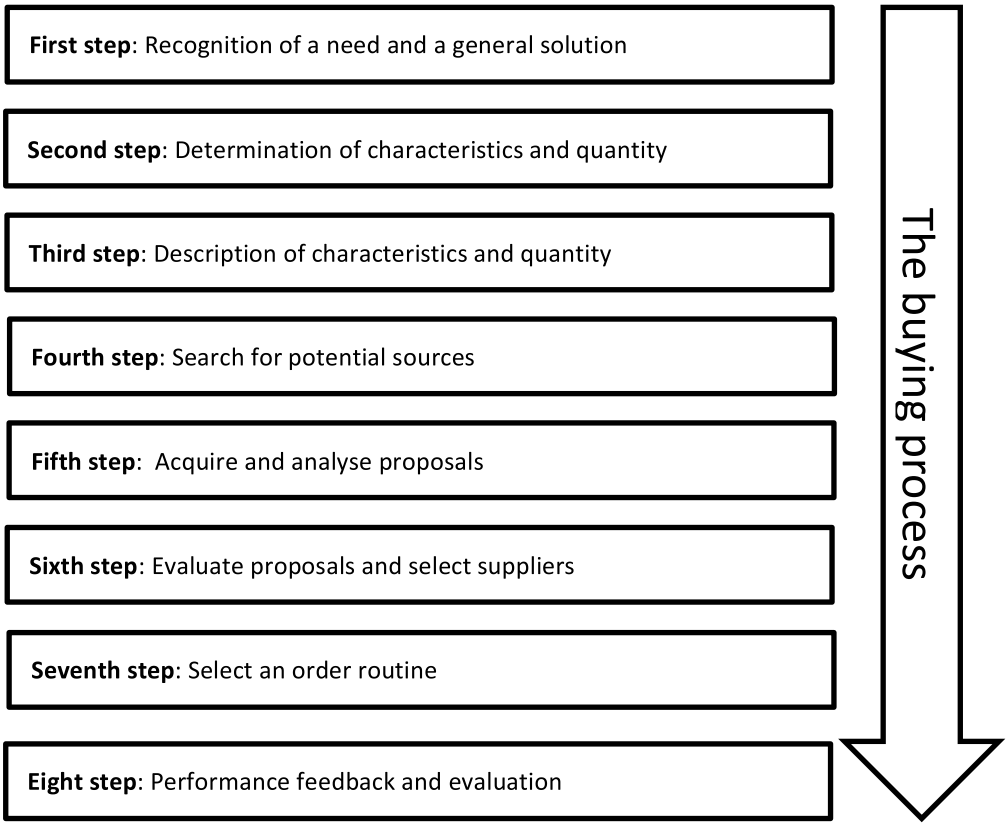

Figure 1 Organisational buying as a process (modified from Johnston & Lewin, 1996)

In addition to the buying process, the specific buying situation is important in explaining the buying behaviour of the company as well (Bellizzi & Mcvey 1983, 57). Robinson et al. (1967) created the buy-class variable for the analysis of a buying situation. The buy-class model portrays a continuum that ranges from completely new products to products the company routinely purchases. In the model there are three different classes. These classes are: new task, modified rebuy and straight rebuy. (Bellizzi & Mcvey 83, 57). According to Munukka & Järvi (2007, 256) the classification provides an efficient method to differentiate buying situations based on the risk and uncertainty that they include. Naturally, the risk and uncertainty is highest in new task purchase situations and lowest in straight rebuys.

In addition to the notions that organisational buying behaviour is a process and is affected by the specific buying situations, there are several other important variables in the OBB literature that are considered having a direct or indirect effect on it as well. Like mentioned in the introduction, the OBB models have been extended over the decades as the OBB-approach has matured and become more sophisticated. This is obviously due to the continuous effort of the OBB-researchers to find new behaviour explaining variables. According to Johnston & Lewin (1996) there are ten constructs that have been identified and considered affecting organisational buying behaviour on the intra-organisational level. These constructs include: 1) environmental characteristics, 2) organisational characteristics, 3) group characteristics, 4) purchase characteristics, 5) seller characteristics, 6) conflict/negotiation, 7) informational characteristics 8) participant characteristics, 9) decision rules and 10) role stress. (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 3).

OBB research has also recognized that organisational buying occurs often dyadically and requires notable interaction between organisations. Therefore, in addition to the intra-organisational constructs, also the buyer-seller relationship is considered affecting organisational buying behaviour (and vice versa). The most often used dyadic variables include 1) power/dependence, 2) behaviour/performance monitoring, 3) cooperation/trust and 4) commitment. In their review, Johnston & Lewin (1996), recognized also that communication networks, existing both on the intra-organisational and inter-organisational levels, affects buyer-seller relationships and organisational buying behaviour as well. Thus, it is seen that the buying firm actors communicate with other organisations' actors in and out of their respective buying as well as selling centres and this communication affects the buying behaviour of organisations. This realization of the importance of relationships outside the organisation turned ultimately the whole research discipline's attention to business relationships and lead eventually to the current demise of the OBB-approach (Makkonen & Johnston 2014, 326).

2.2.2 Exchange relationships in organizational buying

The connection between the IMP-approach and the OBB-approach lies on the interfirm and the network levels. The IMP-approach can be considered extending the OBB-perspective from intra-organisational focus, to the focus of networks of dependencies among the buyer and the seller as well as their other counterparts. Indeed, the network approach can be depicted as an aggregation of exchange relationships between multiple entities (Möller 1994, 362). This expansion of focus to include wider range of variables also requires in essence a 'new view of reality' (see e.g. Axelsson & Easton 1992). Relationships are the basic building blocks in this 'new reality' and they consist of actors, resources and activities (Easton 1992). More specifically, in the IMP-approach, actors are involved in the economic activity of converting resources in to finished goods and services (Axelson & Easton 1992, 14). Thus, according to Möller & Wilson (1995, 589) actors control resources and hold discrete knowledge of them. The resources become active when they are activated from their passive form and activation is the merging of resources. (Möller & Wilson 1995, 589). To add a little bit of complexity to already complex subject: actors, resources, activities and relationships exist in several organizational levels. E.g. Actors can be groups of firms, firms, parts of firms, groups of individuals and individuals. In addition, actors can be connected to other actors in different levels of the network (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28). The industrial network model applied in this study is called the 'ARA-model' which is widely applied model in studies regarding industrial networks (see e.g Jaakkola & Hakanen 2013; Ford & Mouzas 2010). The acronym is made up from the first letters of 'actors, resources and activities'.

2.2.3 Relationship between the process and the actors in organizational buying

Essentially, the weakness of the OBB-approach has to do with the fact that it focuses on the micro level. In contrast, the IMP-approach focuses on the macro level. The fact that this study analyses both intra-organisational and inter-organisational variables simultaneously, as explanatory determinants to organisational media buying, brings forth the action-structure paradox. Analysis of social systems tend to focus on certain parts of the system by isolating certain levels such as e.g. the micro level and the macro level. However, in reality these levels do not exist in isolation. (Wilke & Ritter, 46). Social system empirical research usually examines individual behaviour whereas social theory accounts for the functioning of social system behaviour. Thus, there exists a gap between social system theory and research (Coleman 1990, 1). This gap is referred to as the action- structure paradox (See e.g. Van de ven & Poole 1988) and its essence is the circular causality that follows when trying to introduce the causal arrows to both directions, from micro to macro and from macro to micro (Wilke & Ritter, 46). According to Coleman (1990, 1) an old joke says "that economists explain why people make certain choices; sociologists explain why they don't have any to make". This old joke captures well the problem of capturing the both causalities. In this study the action-structure paradox appears in the gap between observing the interfirm level dynamics between the advertiser and the media agency and the intrafirm activities of the actors in the advertisers' organisations.

This problem of capturing the causalities doesn't however restrict applying several different levels of analysis in research. On the contrary, the different levels of analysis collectively complement each other and can be argued necessary when trying to see the whole picture of the researched topic (Wilke & Ritter, 53). Essential theme in the level of analysis and observation discourse is the matter of how higher levels of phenomena could/should be explained by theories or observations of the lower levels. E.g. the macro level, by the individual level. Due to the action-structure paradox, understanding the higher levels can be improved by observing the lower levels that affect the higher levels. Thus, direct observation of higher levels or lower levels is not the only way to achieve understanding of the higher levels or lower levels. (Wilke & Ritter, 53).

Like mentioned in the introduction chapter, this thesis seeks to connect the organisational buying behaviour models, such as the buying center, decision rules and information sources into the network context. In addition, the buyer-service provider relationship model which, according to its author, is “underpinned by the IMP-group’s interaction approach” (Selviaridis et al. 2013, 1399) is applied and considered as a representative of inter-organisational dimension of the OBB research. It is hypothesized that using this hybrid approach a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon of organisational media buying can be reached. The action-structure paradox remains but its significance can be considered lessened due to the explorative nature of this research.

2.3 The actors who affect the decision making process

This section aims to shed light to the theory behind the actors that participate in to a buying process as well as integrate the IMP-approach with the OBB construct of the buying centre. This integration is manifested chiefly by using the term: “actor” instead of the terms: “member” or “individual” in the buying centre theory part of this thesis. This way more power and nuance can be brought from the IMP-theory to the OBB constructs. It is hoped that after reading this chapter the reader will recognize and understand buying as a ubiquitous process, that it surely is. This section begins by presenting the chosen theories that are related to the actors that participate in to the buying process. Firstly, the “actor” concept is introduced as it is defined in the IMP-approach. Following, the buying centre construct is elaborated as well.

According to Möller & Wilson (1995, 589) the most convenient way of describing how industries function is to identify the main actors and then determine the resources they control, the activities they mostly perform and the relationships formed between the actors. Different actors are active in constant interaction that is affected by past and current experiences as well as the interdependence of other actors (Håkansson & Snehota 1989, 190). According to Håkansson & Johanson (1992, 28) all actors, regardless of the organisational level, contain five common characteristics:

- Actors perform and control activities.
- Actors develop relationships with each other through exchange processes.
- Actors’ activities are based on their control of resources.
- Actors are goal oriented.
- The knowledge about other actors’ activities and resources differs between different actors.

Actors decide independently or cooperatively which activities are performed, how are these activities performed and which resources are used to perform these activities (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28). The goal of actors is to transform and transfer resources for the purpose of growing or maintaining the more aggregated actor (e.g. the organisation) (Lenney & Easton 2009, 553). Actors can also have access to other actors' resources through relationships in their respective networks. These relationships may differ in strength, and as a consequence the access to other actors' resources varies. This access to other actors' resources is called indirect control of resources and it entails certain level of dependence to the focal actor. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28). The direct or indirect control over resources is highly valued. This causes actors to pursue increase of control over their network as their general goal (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28-29). The control over network is not evenly distributed among the actors. Instead, the increased control of one actor decreases another actors control over the network. However, actors may have common interests and as a result one actors increased control may lead to increase in other actors control over the network as well. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28-29).

The prevailing viewpoint in organisational buying behaviour theory is that a buying centre dominates the individual purchasing actor in most purchasing decisions (Patton, Puto & King 1986, 130). Buying centre is a complex, multi-person group within the buying organization (Johnston & Bonoma 1981, 145). It consists of all the actors of an organization who become involved in a purchase, over a specified time frame (Bristor & Ryan 1987, 256). The primary objective of a buying centre is the acquisition, importation and processing of relevant purchasing related information (Spekman & Stern 1979, 56). The composition of the buying centre differs among firms and may change during and in between buying situations (Lilien & Wong 1984, 2). Actors of a buying centre have the roles of user, influencer, decider, buyer and gatekeeper. The primary motivation for the actors of the group arises from a complex interaction of individual and organizational goals. (Webster & Wind 1972, 14). According to Bonoma & Johnston (1981, 144) there is little consensus on the dynamics and power relationships between the buying centre actors. It is even more difficult to define buying roles for the purchase of services compared to the purchase of products (Mattson 1988, 210). However, consensus on who the actors are is usually high (Bonoma & Johnston 1981, 144).

Variation in organisational buying behaviour, and consequently in the buying centre, is mostly associated with the level of risk present in a given purchase situation (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 8). According to Johnston & Lewin (1996, 8) the level of purchase risk, in most cases, can be sourced to 1) the importance of a certain purchase, 2) the complexity of the purchase, 3) the uncertainty of the purchase outcome and 4) to the need to make the decision without delay. These and other variables can contribute to the overall risk in any number or combination. However, according to Johnston & Lewin

(1996, 8) the majority of these variables fall inside the frames of environmental, organisational or purchase characteristics. Environmental characteristics concern whether the level of environmental uncertainty is high or low. Organisational characteristics refer to the size and technical competence of the buyer firm. Purchase characteristics mean whether the product type is e.g. capital equipment or supplies as well as whether the purchase is novel or conventional. (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 8).

This study is also interested in organisational characteristics that include the characteristics related to the individual actors. These characteristics-of-interest include the number of actors in the buying center, organisational decision rules as well as the actors' individual characteristics such as level of education, status inside the organisation and personal experience.

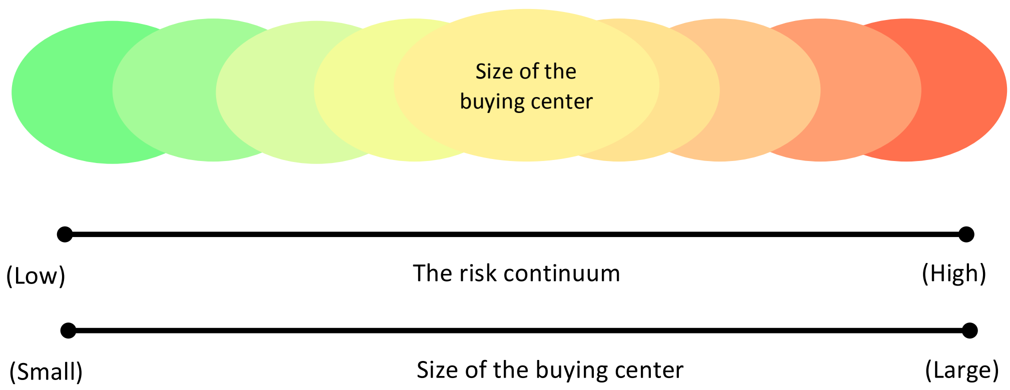

Figure 2 The buying center in relation to the risk present (modified from Johnston & Lewin 1996; Johnston & Bonoma 1981)

The risk associated with the purchase affects positively the extensity, lateral involvement and vertical involvement dimensions of the buying centre (Johnston & Bonoma 1981, 153). Thus, growing risks, that can be sourced from the "importance, complexity, uncertainty or urgency" (see e.g. Patton, Puto & King 1986) of the buying situation, seem to increase the number of actors participating in to the buying centre. According to Crow and Lindquist (1985, 57) the number of actors in the buying centre relates also to the size of the firm and to the decision culture of the firm. Larger firms tend to have more actors participating in the buying centre and companies that have lower number of actors in one type of purchase decision tend to have lower number of actors in other purchase types as well. (Crow and Lindquist 1985, 57). Larger firms tend to have higher percentage of joint decision-making and lower percentage of individual decision-making in comparison to smaller firms (Patton, Puto & King 1986, 129). Participation in the buying centre can also be function of power, politics and influence as well as seen increasing in numbers when the actor feels having something at stake in the decision (Johnston & Bonoma 1981, 144).

Most firms have some formalized rules and procedures regarding purchase decisions i.e. ‘decision rules’ (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 4). In some firms these rules and procedures are more informal and derived from the buyers’ experience and rules of thumb (Vyas & Woodside 1984, 33). These rules are intended to be compatible with the decision makers simplified mental models of the operating environment and the rules driving favourable outcomes are repeated when facing similar situations again (Gary & Wood 582, 2010; Simon 125, 1991). Decision rules are inherently firm specific and commonly used especially in recurring purchase situations (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 9). However, in new task purchase decisions that are characterized by high uncertainty and complexity, buying centre participants often use heuristics and decide-as-they-go approach to make a decision (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 9; Gary & Wood 2010, 570).

There is evidence that the education level of a buying centre participant affects the size of the buying centre in a modified rebuy situation (Crow & Lindquist 1985, 52). Crow and Lindquist (1985, 53) hypothesized that lower educated buyers lack confidence or expertise in purchase decisions and therefore tend to welcome more external influences whereas highly educated buyers accept external influence due to the realization of the need for multiple inputs for the purchase decision. The age, gender and number of years in the purchasing role have no useful explanatory role on the buying centre structure. (Crow & Lindquist 1985, 54).

In a study by Berkowitz (1986, 36) the prime motivation to consider new solutions came from the dissatisfaction to existing solutions or by becoming aware of new solutions. Berkowitz (1986, 36) noted also that the presence of product innovators or gadgeteers in the buying centre affected the willingness of the buying centre to consider new product adoption. The buying centre actors’ positions, in the management hierarchy of the firm, also affects the buying centres capability of carrying out purchases. Increase in top management’s interest in the purchase decreases the influence of the buying centre in all phases of the purchase process, except in the process of dealing with the suppliers. Complexity and the dollar value of the purchase are considered being the main variables that determine to what extent the buying centre composition and protocols are affected by top management involvement. (Mattson 1988, 209-210).

Patton, Puto & King (1986, 131) argue that it is problematic to simplify the complex industrial buying process by constructs such as e.g. buy phases because there are so many other mediating variables that affect the observed function. Therefore, one must be careful with generalizations. In the next section the interfirm-level or the buyer-service provider relationship and the related roles are set forth.

2.4 The main activities of the decision making process

Similarly, to the previous section (2.3), this section aims to integrate an OBB construct with the IMP-approach. This time the OBB construct in question is the information search behaviour. This integration occurs by defining this behaviour as an "activity" along the lines of the IMP-approach.

According to the IMP-approach an activity occurs when one or several actors combine, develop, exchange, or create resources by utilizing other resources (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 30). According to (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 30) activities can be categorized in to two main types of activities. These activity types are transfer activities and transformation activities. Transfer activities transfer the direct control over a resource from one actor to another. A sole actor never controls the transfer activities. Instead, they affect and are affected by the relationship between the involved actors. The resources are altered through transformation activities. One actor always directly controls transformation activities, whereas transfer activities transfer the control of one resource to another actor. Transfer and transformation activities are connected in the sense that transfer activities link transformation activities of other actors together. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 30).

Single activities are connected in various ways and constitute parts of "activity cycles". Activity cycles contain a number of interdependent activities that are repeated in the cycle. Activities form activity cycles and activity cycles, constituting a logical whole, create entities called "transaction chains". These transaction chains require a sequence of closely coupled activity cycles. The degree of closeness between activity cycles as well as their periodicity differs. Some activity cycles are loosely coupled and others are more closely coupled. Likewise, some activity cycles are more regularly repeated than others. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 30).

A basic stability in a system is achieved as a result of the experiential learning of the actors. Actors learn to execute the actions in a manner that reflects the nature of the activity cycles and transaction chains. This learning creates routines and informal rules which gives the activities a certain institutionalized form. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 31).

Media buying can be considered consisting of transaction chains and activity cycles where actors from the advertising firm combine, develop and exchange resources with the media service provider firm, or some other actor. In addition, it could be considered that media buying consists mainly of transformation activities because the main resource that is transferred, from one actor to another, is up-to-date information. Thus, the control of the resources, that are in the centre of this relationship, are transferred to the advertiser, but at that point new, up-to-date, information is already taking shape at the information providing actor. The routines and informal rules that are learned experimentally are essentially the interest of this thesis, since they could help to explain variation in the advertisers' media behaviour.

Indeed, information about the target audience's media behaviour as well as the related information search activities are in critical roles when it comes to media buying. The role of the information search activity has become even more fundamental, in contemporary buying, following the recent technological development. According to Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2010, 17) development in information technologies has transformed the dynamics of information search. Buying decision facilitating information is increasingly broad and rich, but at the same time demands more from the search and coordination effort. Indeed, the contemporary organisational information search activity is an ongoing process and "a path of continual learning often not linked to specific purchase objectives" (Borghini, Golfetto & Rinallo 2006, 1158). It is claimed by Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2010, 18) that understanding of companies buying behaviour requires the identification of buyers' information sources and the factors affecting the search effort. Therefore, we will now look at the various information sources and methods, discovered in industrial marketing literature, that organisations use in general to facilitate their buying decisions.

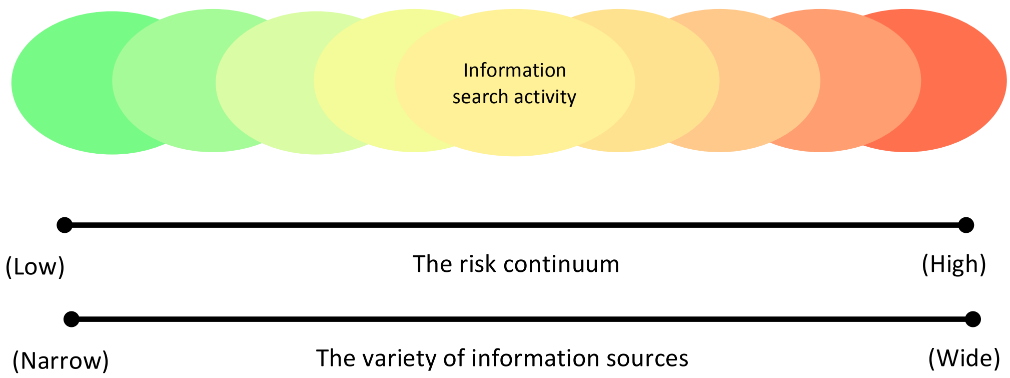

Figure 3 Information search in relation to the risk present (modified from Johnston & Lewin 1996, 8)

There are numerous types of information sources and channels that members of organisations can use (Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen 2014, 346). Information mix is the combination or set of individual sources that are used in a purchase situation. Individual information sources and their combinations are used to various degrees as a function of differences in purchase situations (Bunn & Clopton 1993, 458). Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2010, 17) categorizes information sources into four main categories: personal, commercial, media and experimental sources. In the begin of the buying process, buying center members rely more on commercial sources but as the decision process progresses non-commercial sources become more important. (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 8)

Buyers use personal sources as a way to mitigate risk. Friends, colleagues and past users are considered being more reliable and less biased than e.g. commercial sources, especially in the most important, complex, group purchase situations. (Dawes, Dowling & Patterson 1991, 187; Bunn & Clopton 1993, 474). However, research shows that the relative importance of an information source and how the source is used depends on the situation i.e. the stage of the buying process, product type, buy class and the perceived risk in the purchase (Bunn & Clopton 1993, 459, 474). In their study of the use of information sources in industrial purchase situations, Bunn and Clopton (1993, 459) suggest that involvement, complexity and multiple influence are the three underlying purchase dimensions that specifically influence and structure the industrial customer's choice of information source mixes. Bunn and Clopton (1993, 472) also created taxonomy of industrial buyers' information sources used across multiple buying situations. It contains five different types of information source mixes:

- The salesperson-centered mix.
- Internally-limited mix.
- Specification seekers mix.
- Balanced searchers mix.
- Agressive searchers mix.

The salesperson-centred information source mix occurs in repeat, routine purchases stretched among various sellers. In this situation buyers rely most on the sellers' salesperson and the purchase history with the known supplier. (Bunn and Clopton 1993, 472). Purchase situations that are low in importance and uncertainty and involve low amount of multiple influence is the starting point for the internally-limited information source mix. This mix is characterized by the situation being low in importance and involve little multiple influence. Internally-limited buyers rely primarily on internal sources of information, rely less on competitive bidding and are more likely to buy from a single supplier. Bunn and Clopton (1993, 472). The specification seekers mix occurs in purchase situations portrayed by high uncertainty, low importance, low negotiation as well as low multiple influence. The specification seekers seem to look for the most convenient solution from promotional literature and contact the supplier to make the purchase. (Bunn and Clopton 1993, 472). Purchase situations that are characterized by multiple influence, involvement of top management and high importance of purchase as well as high reliance on others inside the firm and high level of negotiation surrounding the purchase require balanced searchers mix. In addition, the mix is characterized by definition of specific customer needs and technical assistance on performance criteria and product specifications. (Bunn and Clopton 1993, 472). The aggressive search behaviour occurs in purchase situations with high level of uncertainty as well as multiple influence, long lasting decision process, extensive negotiation and important purchase. (Bunn and Clopton 1993, 472).

Similarly, to the characteristics of the buying centre, risk affects also organisational information search activity. Indeed, according to Johnston & Lewin (1996, 8) the risk in the purchase activates information search, and a wider variety of sources will be used. Firms differ in their information search processes'. Some firms prefer standardized ways of buying and place emphasis on the initiation stage of the buying process in terms of specifications for the suppliers (Lindberg & Nordin 2008, 293). In complex services and solutions buying, however, the buyer and the supplier need both participate actively and through-out the buying process in order to gain optimal value (Jaakkola & Aarikka Stenroos 2012, 19-20). Perceived risk and uncertainty is shown to be higher in service purchase as compared to products.

2.5 The nature of media service buying process

Like the previous sections (2.3 and 2.4), this section presents an organisational buying theory construct that will be applied in this thesis. However, like mentioned in the section 2.2.3, this time the organisational buying theory construct is not really underpinned by the OBB approach, but rather by the IMP-group's 'interaction approach' (Selviaridis et al. 2013, 1399). However, this interaction approach can be considered as a representative of the inter-organisational dimension of the OBB-framework.

In organisational buying, the quality of buying is largely shaped by the quality of cooperation between the buyer and the seller in the exchange relationship. This cooperation can be problematic in media buying because as the media landscape develops to increasingly complex direction, it is increasingly challenging for the advertiser to keep up with the capabilities and knowledge required for making good media decisions. In the long term this type of development can create great information asymmetry between the counterparts. The downside of this type of development is that if there is a significant information asymmetry between the trading partners and the service provider is included in the service specification, the supplier opportunism risk increases (Ellram, Tate & Billington 2007, 51; Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1407; Ring & Van de Ven 1992, 494). This is because it is in the interest of a service provider to make an effort to influence and shape its clients' needs in order to sell extended services and develop longer customer relationships (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1399). However, regardless of the looming risk of opportunism, in complex industrial buying, buyers may not be able to define their exact requirements, precisely due to their limited knowhow or capability to forecast such requirements under high environmental uncertainty (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1407). Thus, the service providers often participate in the service specification despite the increasing risk of opportunism.

As the risk of over-dependency on service providers increases, firms can seek a balance between closeness and dependency by internalizing complex services or by emphasizing relationship continuity and sharing of knowledge (Zollo & Winter 2002, 344; Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1401). These different strategic directions represent two different approaches to service definition: the transaction cost economic- and interactive approaches. Transaction cost economics posits that buyers and sellers need to have perfect understanding of everything prior their interaction to avoid supplier opportunism caused by information asymmetries. (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1401). Thus, transaction economics underplay the impact of interactional mechanisms on reducing opportunism. In reality, there are often gaps between the trading partners' capabilities and this may lead to internalization of the service or not. The interactive view on service definition seeks to balance the gaps in capabilities by investing in trust. Mutual trust and relationship continuity results from executing the product or service-, information-, financial and social exchange episodes successfully (Håkansson 1984, 24). As the relationship progresses the reutilization of exchange episodes become institutionalized and lead to explicit roles and responsibilities between the parties (Håkansson 1982, 25). The exchange episodes gradually build up inter-organizational contact patterns and role-relationships that help also in finding more efficient ways to the organisation of the collaboration process between the supplier and the buyer (Håkansson 1982, 25).

Media buying is typically carried out in collaboration with a service provider, i.e. media agency. Typically, this type of collaboration between a buyer and a service provider is shaped largely by the extent of the buyer perceived uncertainty and the provider's buyer specific experience (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1399). These two variables determine how the service specification is approached by deciding the choice of service definition method and the provider's involvement and role in the service definition as well as how the capabilities of the trading partners are matched (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1400). The framework developed by Selviariadis et al. (2013) provides a useful view on how services take shape in accordance to the two variables. The framework suggests that four different provider roles can be deduced from the variables of buyer perceived uncertainty and the provider's buyer specific experience. These four provider roles are the translating role, the re-engineering role, the developing role and the fine-tuning role.

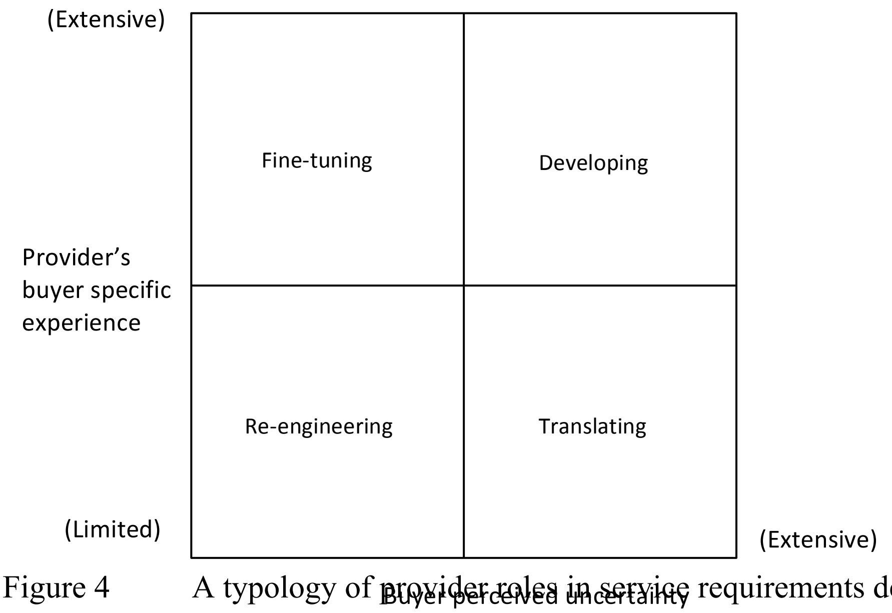

Figure 4 A typology of provider roles in service requirements definition (modified from Selviaridis et al. 2013)

According to Selviariadis et al. (2013, 1405) high buyer perceived uncertainty combined with non-existing buyer specific experience results in the translating role of the service provider. This is due to the high novelty and complexity of the sourcing situation and/or decision-making context. In addition, the limited understanding and knowledge of buyer requirements and broader business needs creates uncertainty as no previous buyer specific experience exists. Buyers rely on out-put based definition and have constrained capabilities in specification, design and cost-measurement of the service definition. Translating role requires the provider to assume responsibility in translating buyer functional requirements into specific activities, processes, systems and resources. (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405).

Limited buyer perceived uncertainty combined with the provider's limited buyer specific experience results in the re-engineering role of the service provider (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405). This results from the sourcing task being either the same or modified as well as due to the low level of complexity of the service. In addition, service providers focus on benchmarking costs and re-engineering the existing operation with the aim of creating operational synergies and cost savings for the buyer. Buyers have already experience of buying the service and are knowledgeable of the details and their requirements regarding the activities, processes and operating procedures involved in the service. The buyers might have gained their experience from another service provider but decided then to switch to another service provider. (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405).

High buyer perceived uncertainty combined with extensive provider's buyer specific experience results in the developing role of the service provider (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405). There is a significant information asymmetry in favour of the provider. In addition, the provider has profound knowledge of the buyer's technical and operational requirements due to history of partnership between the counterparts. The buyer merely defines the functional demands based on which the service provider develops specifications for the required activities, resources and processes. The buyer is borderline dependent on the supplier, but can mitigate the associated risks by referencing knowledge sharing routines, past collaboration achievements and by building trust. (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405).

Limited buyer specific uncertainty combined with extensive provider's buyer specific experience results in the fine tuning role of the service provider (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405). The service provider has extensive buyer specific knowledge but even so it's role is restricted to the fine tuning of the service's costs and price. Providers are largely at the mercy of the buyers and strive to ensure fairness in the bidding processes by pointing out inconsistencies assignment specifications and the operational reality. The buying enterprises have robust sourcing capabilities and possess wealth of information regarding the service requirements and costs. In addition, the buying firm leads the way in the service definition in terms of its activities, processes and required supplier capabilities. (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405).

One of the central interests of this thesis is the relationship between the advertiser and the media service provider. Therefore, even though the presented model is focused on the service provider roles, it can be considered also indirectly defining the buyer role due to the inseparable relation between the opposing numbers in the dyad. Every media investment includes risk to some extent due to e.g. the ever changing nature of the media environment as well as the approximate nature of advertising targeting in general. The uncertainty axis in the model refers to this risk inherent in media buying. The familiarity of the service provider axis refers to the extent of familiarity with the interfirm collaboration partner. The partner is usually a media agency but advertisers can also collaborate with media representatives directly.

2.6 An analytical framework for studying advertisers' new media buying

Following the examined theory, an analytical framework is presented in this section that aims to explain the main components of advertisers' new media buying and integrate them in to one concise model. This framework is the starting point for the empirical part of this thesis and will help in the analysis of the acquired research data.

The model's elements as well as the selection of theory behind the elements is largely deduced from the author's judgement of what appears to be the most significant topics explaining the difference in advertisers' media investing process. However, the contemporary business to business marketing literature (see e.g. Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen 2014; Brashear-Alejandro et al. 2010; Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013) had significant impact on to what the author considered being relevant point of views and consequently the rationale behind the inclusion of search for information embedded in networks and the inter-organisational level of analysis to the examination of the beverage advertisers' new media buying process. The inclusion of the buying center reflects the renaissance of industrial buying research that is characterized by reviving some of the intra-level theoretical constructs of the past with the purpose of developing the IMP approach further (See e.g. Makkonen 2009; Johnston & Lewin 1996; Tanner 1999).

Regardless of the inclusion of individual level structures such as the buying centre, the ARA-model of the IMP-approach is used to construct the context in to which this thesis is planted. Thus, the substance of the relationships: actors, resources and activities are the parameters used in this study. In other words, this study considers that the actors in different levels of the advertisers' media buying process are connected to various resources through interaction and relationships in the broader network. The resources are then utilized by the actors through activities. (See e.g. Håkansson & Snehota 1995). Following the theoretical underpinnings of this study, emphasis has been placed to e.g. identification of the different actors affecting the media buying process, over organisational boundaries. The model conceptualizing the advertisers' media buying and new media buying is presented in figure 5.

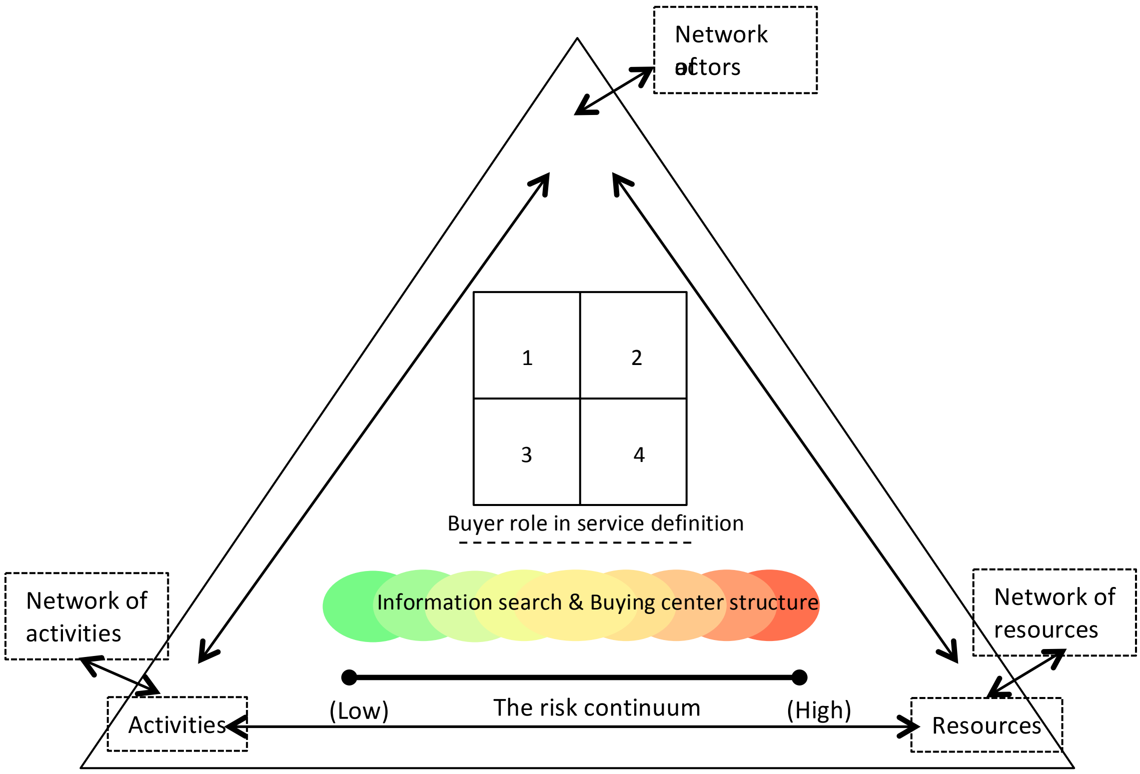

Figure 5 Analytical framework for the analysis of advertisers' media buying (modified from Håkansson & Johansson 1992, 29; Johnston & Lewin 1996, 9 and Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1398)

The analytical framework functions inside the IMP-network approach, but includes also the risk continuum that affects the formation of actors, resources and activities inside the theoretical construct called: "the buying-centre" as well as in the activity of "information search" and "provider role in the service definition". According to Johnston & Lewin (1996, 8) the risk continuum ranging from low to high explains much of the variation in the information search i.e. network level view as well as in the buying center characteristics i.e. individual level view of the organisation. Buyer perceived uncertainty is also present in the model conceptualizing the service provider roles in buyer - service provider relationship by Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo (2013). Thus, all the theoretical constructs inside the ARA-framework are presented in relation to risk or uncertainty.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Case description

This thesis is a case study of Finnish beverage industry companies' media buying behaviour. The focus of enquiry is directed especially to the non-alcoholic product segment of the beverage market. Beverage companies form a notable part of the Finnish food industry. Including the sales of the alcoholic drink product segment, the sum total of the case companies' revenues was close to 800M euros in 2014. In addition to its economic significance, beverage industry is also a significant employer. It employs directly 2300- and indirectly 30 000 people in Finland (Panimoliitto 2011; Foodforlife 2015). According to a study by Elintarviketeollisuusliitto (2010) the four biggest players in the Finnish beverage industry are Oy Hartwall Ab, Nokian Panimo Oy, Olvi Oyj and Oy Sinebrychoff Ab. In addition, there are many smaller companies in Finland producing beverages as well (Elintarviketeollisuusliitto, 2010). In turn of the millennium two of the biggest Finnish beverage companies, Oy Sinebrychoff Ab and Oy Hartwall Ab became parts of Carlsberg and Heineken, respectively. Thus, the majority of Finnish beverage industry is under the control of global beverage companies. The two largest beverage companies in the world, Coca-Cola Company and Pepsico, are produced, distributed and sold by the two biggest beverage companies in Finland. Hartwall is Pepsico's partner- and Sinebrychoff is Coca-Cola Company's partner in Finland.

According to Marketline (2015) the global beverage industry is driven almost equally by all of the five forces of the "five force model" (see e.g. Porter 2008). In addition to "end users", also the retailers affect the overall "buyer power" in the beverage markets. Thus, big retailers can have an effect on the marketing of a beverage company. However, strong "end user" demand can weaken the buying power of the retailers and consequently retailers have to respond to the demand of the beverage companies' most popular products. (Marketline 2015, 15). The production of beverages requires raw materials, but according to Marketline (2015) the supplier power can be considered moderate. This is due to the diverse range of suppliers that provide natural and synthetic flavourings and sweeteners that are required for the production of soft drinks. In addition, the required raw materials are typically highly undifferentiated which also reduces the suppliers' power. (Marketline 2015, 16). According to Marketline (2015, 17) customers' brand loyalty is significant factor in the beverage markets. This can be considered being a factor that raises the entry barriers of the industry. In addition, typically a significant amount of capital is required in order to reach the sufficient scale of operation in the markets. Thus, on large scale, entry to the beverage industry can be considered difficult. However, there are opportunities for smaller scale entrants who produce organic or e.g.

artisanal products. (Marketline 2015, 17). The main substitutes to beverages are other drinks such as e.g. coffee and water. Switching costs are very low on this industry, but consumers tend to form emotional bonds with their favourite brands. It is common that soft drink producers begin to create substitute products such as e.g. coffee themselves. This way the threat of substitutes can be contained. (Marketline 2015, 18). According to Marketline (2015, 18) the level of rivalry is moderate among beverage brands. In global scale, Coca-Cola and Pepsico are the dominant players on the soft drink markets. Large companies like them often have high levels of customer loyalty on their brands, which is a rivalry decreasing characteristic. However, large range of brands, low switching costs and high number of industry players increase the rivalry force on the industry. Marketline (2015, 19).

Six beverage companies were interviewed to this study and together they make up the large majority of the Finnish beverage industry. The participant companies wished to remain anonymous in this study and therefore they will remain unidentified. However, the interview excerpts were coded in a manner that allows the reader to separate the informants form each other. Thus, instead of identification, the companies are labeled with alphabetical characters e.g.: “Advertiser A” or “Advertiser B” and so on. This will make the analysis of the research more fruitful since, the reader can see the connections between the answers.

3.2 Research approach

The purpose of this study is to produce a holistic description of the case-industry’s media practices as well as of its actors’ ways of thinking about new media buying. It is believed that the findings of this research can help to understand other similar FMCG-companies’ contemporary media behaviour as well. Media function has always been a fundamental part of any company’s marketing communications process, but due to the fragmentation of the media landscape, it has been moving away from its traditional backroom role to an increasingly prominent one. This thesis sets to increase understanding of the academically uncharted and complex phenomenon of new media buying, in relation to general media buying and in the context of Finnish beverage industry. It is believed by the author that the best way to achieve the aims set for this study is through case study research design and qualitative research approach.

According to Yin (2003, 13) case study can be defined as an ”empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. However, even though Yin’s (2003, 13) definition has been the mainstream description of the case study method, it has been criticized for depicting case study as a linear and positivist approach (Dubois & Gadde 2014, 1277). Systematic combining approach is the modern alternative for the mainstream definition of a Case study. Systemic combining will be elaborated more, later in this chapter, when the abductive logic of this thesis is presented. Case study is one of the most common research designs and it is especially suitable when investigating cases that can be clearly defined as a bounded system. The boundaries in this research are related to location, time and industry. Case study research design has specific capability of capturing the complexity of a phenomenon including its intricacies and context. (Daymon & Holloway 2011, 108). According to Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2001, 58) case study is applied when the research problem is comprehensive or far extending. Case study research design can be visualized like an umbrella under which other methodological approaches and theories can be included. In this study the other methodological choices include abductive case study research with exploratory research study.

Qualitative research's value lies in its ability to engage with- and reveal in depth the human dimensions and communicative interactions. It is concerned with the processes related to the intentional co-construction of meaning through communicative relationships. This is achieved by qualitative research's commitment to an interpretative understanding of human, organisational and societal communication and experience (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 106). The goal of qualitative research is to collect a large amount of data from a small sample and describe or explain the characteristics of the research objects in an understandable way (Koskinen, Alasuutari & Peltonen 2005, 43). Typical research materials for qualitative methods include field observation, open interviews, and different types of documents that cannot be numerically coded (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 131-133). The essence of qualitative methodology lies in its celebration of nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity rather than seeing them as inconveniencies (Mason 2002, 1).

The type of research study chiefly depends on the purpose of the research. According to (Wilson 2014, 117-118) there are three main types of research studies: exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research. The aim of exploratory research is to develop a better understanding into a specific topic that leads to a set of hypothesis. Exploratory research is an inductive approach and is typically conducted to a topic that has lack of published research and knowledge as well as little previous work to refer to. Descriptive research, on the other hand, aims to describe a past or present phenomena using observation. It's usually carried either as a qualitative or quantitative research. Descriptive research can be e.g. a research that sets out to understand the buying behaviour of a certain consumer group by analysing the consumer group's buying habits. It typically generates accurate information and aid to form the basis of simple decision-making. Causal research aims to learn the answer to the question of: 'why?'. It may set forth to determine e.g. if an increase in advertising spend leads to an increase in sales.

Thus, observing cause-effect relationships. This research is set out to explore the minimally researched topic of beverage advertisers' new media buying from a network of relationship paradigm and is inspired by the contemporary buyer-service provider literature. Therefore, this research follows the exploratory research study, but seeks to also recognize some characteristics that are in common with the emerging complex buying paradigm. (Wilson 2014, 117-118).

3.3 Abductive logic of this thesis

Typically, there are considered being two general categories of reasoning when carrying out a qualitative research: deductive and inductive. In deduction, the starting point is a set of general premises from where the analysis proceeds to a specific conclusion, with the firm condition that the conclusion needs to follow analytically from the premises. Inductive reasoning works the other way around: it begins from particulars and ends up with generalizations in a logically coherent way (Ketokivi & Mantere 2010, 316). Thus, the deductive researcher is interested in developing hypothesis from existing theory and put them into a testable form in the real world. On the other hand, the inductive researcher pursues to systematically generate theory from the data. Qualitative research usually follows inductive approach to the research data (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 107). However, the problem with these two approaches is that they are static compared to what actually occurs in many research processes. Indeed, it is argued that writing a research includes many 'tacit' processes that are tacit because of the rather strict requirements regarding the form and the structure that e.g. journal or a graduate thesis code requires (Van Maanen, Sorensen & Mitchell 2007, 1149). This is especially the case, with the "case study" method. In reality a research process is "often messy, idiosyncratic, and difficult to articulate" (Van Maanen, Sorensen & Mitchell 2007, 1149).

This thesis follows the non-linear, non-positivist approach called "abductive case study" or systemic combining. In abductive case study, there is continuous interaction between theory and empirical observation (Dubois & Gadde 2002, 559). The approach resembles more inductive approach than deductive approach, however it forms its own distinctive perspective to research. Abduction suggests that something may be, whereas induction shows that something actually is and deduction shows that something must be (Locke, Golden-Biddle & Feldman 2008, 913). According to Gadde & Dubois (2002, 559) abductive research especially fitting in cases where the researcher is aspiring to discover new things, variables and relationships. However, the focus in abductive research is more on refining existing theories than inventing new ones. The difference to deductive and inductive approaches is displayed especially in the role of the analytic framework in the research. In abductive research the analytic framework is not static, but continuously evolving as a result of the unanticipated empirical findings- as well as the theoretical insights discovered during the research process. Accordingly, this approach is good for “cross fertilization” in the sense that new theoretical combinations can be developed by mixing established theoretical models and new concepts discovered from the confrontation with the empirical reality. (Gadde & Dubois 2002, 559). This continuous confrontation between theory and empirical reality is called ‘matching’ and it is one of the keystones of the approach. Indeed, the ultimate objective of the approach is to match theory and reality objectively. (Gadde & Dubois 2014, 1279). In contrast to grounded theory’s “loose and emerging” framework, abductive approach relies on “tight and emerging framework” (Gadde & Dubois 2014, 1279). Thus, concepts and theory are used in “sensible way to create a reference and to function as a guideline when entering the empirical world” (Gadde & Dubois 2002, 558). In this sense, the theory is used and viewed more as a starting point than anything else when beginning the fieldwork. Therefore, in case study, it is typical that the researcher finds out that his/her prior assumptions and hypotheses regarding the case are wrong (Flyvberg 2006, 235). As a consequence, and in the spirit of abductive approach, these assumptions and hypotheses are then altered and the theory developed further.

3.4 Data collection

The primary data collection tool for this thesis was the interview. Interview is a splendid technique to explore informant’s perspectives and perceptions (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 220). The key value of interview technique is related to its flexibility. If something interesting comes up during an interview, the researcher has the freedom to abandon the pre-planned structure and enquire about it. Thus, compared to the quantitative questionaire method, the qualitative interview isn’t as restricted to rigid structures. This flexibility also places the interviewees’ ideas in a priority position and creates more room for the interviewees to explore their thoughts. The interviewees can express themselves spontaneously or take their time in articulating their thoughts in the evolving conversation. (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 221)

Another aspect in favour of using the interview data collection tool is that the interview data is located in its own social context. The interviewees’ responses are subjective and the evidence collected is based on the contributors’ interpretations of their experiences. In addition, the data is expressed in their own style of speaking, using jargon or other stylistic choices that are meaningful for them. (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 221)

When designing this thesis, the aspiration was to conduct the interviews in the face-to-face format. The most important advantages of this type of interview is based on the physical presence dimension of the occurrence. Both the interviewer and the participant are able to engage in verbal and non-verbal communication, providing interesting flair to the participants' feedback. The event can also be recorded providing accuracy to the collected data. In addition, the completion of an interview is immediate and relatively straightforward. (Wilson 2014, 153-154). However, according to Wilson (2014, 153-154) there are also some drawbacks to this approach. The organizing and completing of the interviews can be sometimes difficult. Not every person-of-interest has time to participate into a research not to mention to a graduate thesis study. Also, some of the questions may be perceived too sensitive and the interviewee may avoid giving straight answers to them.

In this study, it was anticipated that the most challenging obstacle would prove to be getting the participants. The researcher had only one distant contact on the beverage industry. In fact, it was the same person who originally gave the spark of inspiration for this study. It happened on one gloomy autumn afternoon, in work related lunch meeting. The topic of conversation had hovered around the pain points of the advertiser's advertising production processes, when it was mentioned that it is actually the media environment that is the acute source of difficulty in the current advertising communication process. Some months after this meeting, writing a thesis became up-to-date and the researcher began to formulate this problem according to the thesis protocol. Since the first contact of the researcher was working on the beverage industry, it was decided that in ideal case all of the interviews would be restricted to the beverage industry. This would provide a compelling research setting because firstly, the study could be carried out inside a bounded system of the Finnish beverage industry and secondly, it would be a more cohesive unit of research providing a better possibility for useful findings from both the researcher's and the participants' points-of-view. In addition, it is in the nature of beverage business to be the frontrunner in advertising and media selections. Brands such as Coca-Cola, Red Bull, Pepsi and many other beverage brands can be justly called legends of advertising due to their unparalleled track record in creating innovative advertising. This innovativeness is not restricted only to the international markets, it also appears in native beverage markets. It could be argued that, in fact, there is no better fitting industry for the context of this topic. Some of the interviewed brands were owned by international beverage houses. Nevertheless, all of the brands had their own marketing function.

Apparently, the thesis protocol formulation proved to be somewhat accurate since most of the aspired advertisers agreed to participate to this study despite their busy schedules. Eventually, six interviews were conducted in total, out of which four where conducted face-to-face and two via telephone. All of the interviews were carried out in the summer of 2015:

Date of interview	Company	The method of interview
16.08.2015	Advertiser A	Face-to-face interview
30.07.2015	Advertiser B	Face-to-face interview
03.08.2015	Advertiser C	Face-to-face interview
13.07.2015	Advertiser D	Telephone interview
04.08.2015	Advertiser E	Telephone interview
16.07.2015	Advertiser F	Face-to-face interview

Table 1 List of interviewees

Telephone interview is a viable alternative to face-to-face interview. Unlike face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews are relatively swift and don't require traveling. It proved to be the only way to interview two of the participants. Typically, the informants had really busy schedules. In fact, one interview was actually conducted while the respondent was driving to his summer cottage. The disadvantages of telephone interview are related to their association with hard-selling. When someone is contacted via telephone and asked to participate into a research, there might be a conditioned response to say no. In fact, all but one of the interviews was initiated by cold calling to the marketing manager. In each of these cases, the author followed a strict procedure to present his case. First, he identified himself as a graduate thesis writer, then he proceeded to the topic and purpose of the study and after that it was quickly mentioned that there were other participant companies from the beverage industry already participating as well. Then it was asked if the respondent was interested to participate too. It was clear to the author that, from the participants point-of-view, the value of this research would come from relevant topic and -critical mass of participants. Instantly after the call, an email was sent that had covering letter, introduction to the study and the initial interview questions. If there wasn't a response for a couple of days, the researcher would call the person-of-interest again. Thus, there was no quiet laboratory where the researcher could just wait that the data was brought to him, on the contrary it was never certain if there was going to be any data at all. However, this is probably the main commonality between most thesis projects.

In contrast to the recommendations of Wilson (2014, 158) the call preceded the email. This was due to the personal experience of the researcher, that meetings are easier to get when contacting the person-of-interest straight up. Since, people get so much email nowadays that they don't have time to answer to each one even if they would like to. So, a slight risk was taken with the approach, because according to Wilson (2014, 158) cold calls can be considered rude. The chosen approach proved to be an effective strategy to get respondents. According to Wilson (2014, 157) telephone interview is not the best format when trying to explain complex questions. But it did not prove to be a problem in this case. Obviously, some of the advantages of face-to-face interviews were lacking when interviewing via telephone, but otherwise the gathered research data was equally insightful.

The interview process was pre-planned to the extent that the questions were defined beforehand and derived from the theoretical framework of the study. However, the questionnaire was not constricted by a rigid structure or -being chained to a certain order of questions. Instead, when something surprising or interesting surfaced in the interview, the researcher tried to enquire more about it. Thus, the type of interview in this thesis was semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview questions are contained in an interview guide with the focus on the issues and theme areas as well as the lines of enquiry being followed. The structure in semi-structured interview is related to the interview guide that ensures that similar types of data are collected from each participant. (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 225). The advantage of semi-structured interview is its flexibility that allows the researcher to introduce certain additional questions depending on the informant's answers. This is why semi-structured interviews tend to be the favourite interview method for many research designs. It was believed that semi-structured study would be the best interview method in this study because it allowed the author to explore the somewhat unknown topic while still being connected to the research framework. Obviously the skills as well as the confidence of the researcher grew during the process. This, was observable e.g. by the extent that the strengths of the semi-structured interview method were exploited. As the researcher got more experience conducting the interviews, the interviews got better.

The interviews included many types of questions. According to Spradley (1979) there are two core types of enquiry: grand tour questions and mini tour questions. Grand tour questions are broad and require the informant to reconstruct routines, procedures, activities, events or cycles of activities. The informant is put on the role of tour guide describing the steps taken and thoughts and feelings aroused by these steps. Mini tour questions are more specific. The research questions did not really contain grand tour questions but couple of mini tour questions such as: ”describe how the media buying process progresses in your company?” and ”describe how the change in the media environment has affected your job?”. According to Patton (2002) interview questions can be identified based on experience and behaviour, opinions and values, feelings, knowledge, senses and to lesser amount background and demographics. There were several experience and knowledge related questions in the study e.g. ”what challenges you encounter when you consider investing into a new media?” or ”what types of information sources do you use while considering a media investment?”. One of the interview questions enquired the advertisers opinion whether they consider their ”media agency as more conservative or progressive when it comes to media buying”. There were also few feeling questions such as ”how do you experience the media environment currently?” or ”how do you experience the comparison of new and traditional medias?”. Knowledge questions were lacking from this research since the research had more of an explorative rather than descriptive approach to the focal point of interest. Neither was there any sensory related questions since the focal topic exist more as an abstract, organisational behaviour sense rather than as something tangible. Some background and demographic questions were asked such as ”what is your education background?” or ”how long experience you have of this job?”. The selected questions reflected the integration of organisational buying behaviour constructs integrated into the theoretical framework.

The conversation that sometimes ensued after asking certain question included also idealization questions (Schatzman & Strauss 1973) that aspired to find out what would be the ideal case in contrast to the status quo. There was also contrast questions (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 229) related to for example situations where the advertiser had decided to separate from the media agency’s recommendations. In some cases, it seemed that the informant did not want to give straight answer and this reluctance was respected. According to Wilson (2014, 154) the informant should not be put under pressure to answer.

3.5 Data analysis

Analysing qualitative data starts on the instant that the first interview is completed. This is due to the flexible nature of the qualitative study combined with the explorative- and semi-structured interview approaches of this thesis. (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 302). When the data collection has been completed the data analysis begins by imposing some form of order to the data. It is important that there is a systematic approach to consistently sort and order the data (Mason 2002, 147-148). Reason for this is practical but it also necessary to have a system in order to be able to make good interpretive sense of the data. (Mason 2002, 148). According to Glaser (1992) qualitative analysis: ”produces findings or concepts and hypotheses, as in grounded theory, that are not achieved by statistical methods”. However, there are no specific steps or distinct rules to analyse qualitative data (Wilson 2014, 280).

In this research the data analysis was approached using a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a process where the qualitative data is coded and the codes are arranged into a list of themes (Hartman & Conklin 2012, 7). The data material was first transcribed and then scrutinized carefully in order to find common themes, patterns and categories. Then the findings were compared and contrasted to the analytical framework. In some cases, the researcher had to return back to research literature in order to get better grip of the surfaced findings. However, the themes, patterns and categories discovered from the data, followed largely the constructs integrated in the analytical framework of the research.

The research question as well as the sub-questions of this thesis were essentially about answering to a question of ‘how something works?’. Qualitative research is distinctly good at supporting mechanical arguments that focus on how social phenomena and processes operate and are composed. This follows the rich and contextual and multi-dimensional nature of most qualitative research (Mason 2002, 175). This thesis’ use of qualitative research- as well as industrial network theory approaches provided excellent basis of argument to describe the constitution of beverage firms’ media behaviour through their network contexts’ main actors, resources and activities. According to Mason (2002, 317) true analysis involves giving the research data wider significance by positioning the findings within the body of knowledge that has been developed before. The researcher tried to follow this maxim by the interplay of several theoretical constructs with the research data.

3.6 Authenticity and trustworthiness of the research

It is essential that the quality of the research can be tested. Traditionally, in a credible research, there has been an effort to address the issues of validity and reliability. (Mason 2002, 129). Validity refers to the accuracy of measurement. It is the “degree to which an instrument measures that which is supposed to be measured” (Sproull 2002, 74). Its purpose is to decide to what extent the measure is accurate for the particular purpose (Sproull 2002, 74). Reliability on the other hand refers to the consistency of measurement. It is ”the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same conditions with the same subjects” (Sproull 2002, 74). Reliability’s purpose is to evaluate an instruments’ capability to measure in the same way in each use to the matching reliability sample (Sproull 2002, 74). Reliability and validity need to be combined in order for the test to be considered credible (Wilson 2014, 129). These two dimensions of quality have been used to evaluate the quality of both quantitative and qualitative research. However, there is a lack of consensus of how to define the concept of quality in research because different academic disciplines take differing positions regarding to its attributes.

According to Daymone & Holloway (2011 77-78) there are two other perspectives to quality in addition to validity and reliability. These two views are called ‘the alternative’ and ‘the radical’ perspectives. According to ‘the alternative’ view, validity and reliability should be replaced with alternative terms such as ‘authenticity’ and ‘trustworthiness’ because they are more appropriate to qualitative research. ‘The radical’ view, on the other hand, argues that every research project should be a separate study and judged against what is most appropriate ”intrinsically, intuitively or within the research community” in which it is located. Thus, according to this view research should not be judged against the criteria of others.

This research will adopt the authenticity and trustworthiness criteria as the measures of quality due to their preferred position in the field of qualitative research and case study (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 84; Dubois & Gadde 2014, 1281). Authenticity is displayed in research when the strategies that were used are appropriate in reporting of the participants' ideas. In addition, the study should be fair and help the participants and similar groups to understand their world and make it better. The participants' ideas where obviously on the centre stage of this research. It was made sure during the interview process, that the participants know what this research is about and that they are able to speak their minds. All of the interviewees were asked in the end of the interview, whether they have something to add or if there was something important missing in the conversation. Also, the interest displayed by the informants and their comments regarding the ”goodness” of the topic of this thesis, could also be taken as indicators of the authenticity of this research.

Trustworthiness of a research consists of four components: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. There is credibility in the research if its readers recognize in the findings, the significance that the research has for them in their social context (Daymone & Holloway 2011, 85). Transferability results from the research's external validity, or theory-based generalizability. The research should help the reader to transfer the gained knowledge to other settings and situations as well. Daymone & Holloway 2011, 85). The narrative of this thesis pursued to help the readers to make their own judgements about how the story can be linked with their experiences. In addition, the complex buying chapter at the end of the study can be considered as a method transferring this thesis' findings to a wider context. Dependability refers to the stable and consistent manner in which the study is carried out. The researcher kept a 'diary' or maybe more accurately a memo of this thesis' events and progress. It included thoughts and ideas that incepted during certain parts or findings of the study, arguments and even pictures why something should be done in a certain way rather than other way, as well as random notes about all things related to utilisation of theory, interviews and potential interviews. Thus, there is a rich audit trail consisting of text and power point files that can be easily accessed if necessary. However, the purpose of the memo was solely to be a tool that would help the researchers thought processes rather than some sort of detailed proof of dependability. Thus, it's probably as user friendly as any personal scribbles. Confirmability is the last component of research trustworthiness. It signifies the separateness of the results of the study and the results of the researcher's prior assumptions and preconceptions. Thus, it must be clear that the data in the study is linked to its source, so that the reader can be sure that the conclusions and the interpretations arise from it. All of the conclusions of this study were linked from the precise quotations of the interviewees. However, the researcher transcribed all of the data from Finnish to English. So, it is possible that this had some influence to the interpretation of the data. Also, it wasn't practical to mention every notion in the interviews, so the researcher took the liberty to choose the most interesting and relevant points from the research data. This could also be seen affecting the confirmability as well as the credibility of the research. However, it can be argued that the authenticity and trustworthiness of this research are on a satisfying level. At least, that is the honest opinion of the researcher.

4 NEW MEDIA BUYING IN FINNISH BEVERAGE COMPANIES

4.1 Sources of uncertainty in media planning today

Uncertainty in the buying situation is an essential theme in this study. This theme made an appearance many times during the interviews and it seems that it is increasingly present in contemporary media buying in the beverage industry. This theme together with ”perceived risk” form the backbone of most of the theoretical constructs applied in this research. Therefore, the analysis of the interviewees answers was interested in the expressed uncertainty. The first discussion point of the interview regarded how the informants experience the media landscape currently. The question was deliberately left open because the researcher wanted to get a broad view into the context of the focal point of the study while minimizing the interviewers influence to the opinions and approaches of the interviewees in this specific question.

The interviewed advertisers had, to some degree, similar characterizations and meditations of the current media environment. From the answers it became evident that the media environment is considered being in the middle of constant change and increasing complexity. In addition, the perceived uncertainty varies and has many sources. These are important observations because increased uncertainty forces the advertisers to adapt and this adaptation affects how the media planning is carried out in the organisations. For example: will a media service be bought or internalized? (see chapter 4.3.3). It appears that the informants consider the current media landscape as fast changing and difficult to keep up with. However, in contrast to other interviewees, one interviewee didn’t consider the range of media options extensive. In addition to these findings, the “changed rules” of content creation and communication were mentioned:

> *In my opinion the media environment is and has been the most difficult part of our job, because it changes so fast and it contains so much details that are impossible for a layman to understand.*
>
> *- Advertiser B: Marketing manager*

> *In my eyes, it is changing continuously. There is something new coming all the time. On the other hand, there has been a lot of talk about the mobile explosion, when will Facebook come crashing down and be replaced by some big new thing, but there hasn’t been such dramatic changes.*
>
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

As media planning today has to take into account also other factors, instead of just choosing the optimal media vehicle, the sources of uncertainty can be also found from other parts of the media planning process. According to Ashill & Jobber (2014, 269) uncertainty can be divided in to three separate types. These three types are: state uncertainty, effect uncertainty and response uncertainty. State uncertainty is experienced when the actor doesn't feel confident in understanding how the components of the environment might be changing or feel incapable of assigning probabilities to the likelihood that those future events will occur (Milliken 1987, 136). Effect uncertainty refers to the actors' limited understanding about how the future changes in the environment will affect the organisation (Ashill & Jobber 2014, 269). Response uncertainty has to do with the effort to comprehend the available response options and their respective advantages. This type of uncertainty appears when there is a need to act as a consequence of a perceived event or change that presents a unique opportunity or a threat (Milliken 1987, 137). All of these types of uncertainty could be sensed from the interviewees' responses in the later discussion points as well:

The most concrete change has been that, when some media representative calls me and says that he would like to come and tell me about the new media, I say to him that: 'I'm sorry I can't no longer manage these things and you should go meet our media agency. They can then say if it fits our brief or not'. So, I don't meet medias at all nowadays.

- Advertiser D: Category manager

I believe that in two years our organizational model will once again look completely different because the world keeps on changing and we will start doing more stuff in-house.

-Advertiser C: Category manager

In new media, for example in Facebook, the change is very fast. I had a six-month break, where I didn't do digital or social media advertising, during that time Facebook advertising had already changed quite a lot. Thus, you really need to follow closely to stay in the wagon.

-Advertiser C: Community manager

There is probably some truth in the notion that the digital side enables new options, but the possibility to do mistakes is also dramatically higher than for example in the television (...) thus in contrast to the traditional media, the possibility of "having to repeat the grade" is very possible in the digital media.

-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

In addition to these types of uncertainties, the informants mentioned other specific uncertainty increasing factors during the discussion as well. These factors included e.g. the difficulty to understand young peoples' media consumption, the necessity to act fast, perceived lack of skills required to utilize new medias optimally and lack of firm resources.

When it comes to new media, it seems that the distinct issue causing uncertainty relates to the difficulty of comparing the effectiveness of medias. This media comparison problem has existed before, but due to the massive increase in media channels it has contributed to the overall media landscape complexity heavily. Increasingly, the metrics used to determine the impact of media investments are significantly different from each other and hard to compare. The most typical point made in this part of the interview was that the wealth of data, that new medias are able to provide, compared to the older medias, gives advantage to newer media. However, according to the interviewees the two streams of data are often very hard to compare and this puts pressure on advertisers as they can't really tell how well their different investments are doing compared to each other:

New and old meters can't be compared easily. I mean (...) the fact that we cannot compare these medias makes our lives really difficult. We need to base our judgement too much on how we feel about the medias. In my opinion TV and some newspapers provide really good meters but the meters in newer medias are also very good, however they are different. The comparison between these medias is nearly impossible but we have tried to create this system where we would have like a common currency to assess the medias. For example, the person who saw our TV ad has a factor of one and if someone sees our banner on the Ilta-Sanomat website the factor is 0,2. So when we review the amounts of money used we can somehow put the different medias on the same line. This is however really theoretical and just underlines how difficult situation we are in because we can't handle these medias by ourselves anymore.

-Advertiser D: Category manager

I think it is difficult. My assessment is that newer medias are born from their excellent measurability. Older medias on the other hand are lot harder to measure. They require some sort of investment into research and if the research is included in the media it is also included in the media prices. I think also that the research on advertising awareness and attitude are pretty subjective and not very reliable. At least the newer medias are easier to compare. They might not always measure the right things but at least you can compare them.

- Advertiser B: Marketing manager

Well, it is hard to some extent. For example, when I am at barbershop and reading some glamorous publication like Gentlemen's Quarterly Italian version, if I spot some magnificent ad, I might remember it for years, because I have time to look at it there. I can be like "goddamn, the production has been excellent in this ad and it has been shot probably somewhere on the Rocky Mountains". On the other hand, when I think about how many minutes I spend online and how many banners I remember seen, it is close to zero. I do not remember any banner at all that I have seen. So it is hard to compare. Marko Mäkinen said it well in Mainostaja: "it is more probable to die in an airplane accident than it is for someone to click your banner". I believe that there is truth in that point.

-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

What is good in new medias is that you can get amazingly good data from it. You can target it really well and the reach is actual reach. Not some theoretical number like in traditional media that is de facto unreliable. But I think that traditional media has still its place in advertising regardless of its limitations. Customer research can be used afterwards to measure its impact.

-Advertiser C: Community manager

It seems plausible that the weaknesses that have always existed in traditional medias have now been brought to limelight due to the high measurability of the new medias. According to the interviewees it is a lot easier to get data about the viewers' engagement to e.g. YouTube ad compared to outdoor print ad where the data is mostly contacts and frequency. However, new media isn't perfect either. Like one of the interviewees mentioned in the previous chapter, the possibilities of making a big mistake is higher when investing into new media. This notion rings true especially under the light of the recent industry discussion, in Finland, considering the losses that different ad blocking softwares' are causing for medias (see e.g. Jauhiainen 2015). The softwares that block all Internet advertising as well as tracking attempts are increasingly common among Internet users. The estimated loss of global revenue due to blocked ads was 21,8 billion dollars in year 2015. From the advertisers point of view, especially worrisome is the explosive growth of ad block user numbers. Europe lags US in ad block adoption, but nevertheless the number of ad block users in Europe grew by 35% to 77 million active users during the second quarter of 2015. (Pagefair & Adobe 2015). However, falling victim to the ad block technologies is just one of the ways advertisers can lose money in digital channels.

Summing up, it seems that increasing environmental variability and complexity in the media landscape contributes to the increasingly uncertainty in media planning today.

This change can be observed from the increasing number of new media channels to the changing rules of advertising where the consumers have taken the commanding role. This change in the media environment has also created new types of uncertainties to the media planning process. Effect uncertainty can be sensed from the advertisers' uncertainty regarding how the change will affect their organisation in the near future. Response uncertainty shows in advertisers' uncertainty in trusting their own capabilities to evaluate the new medias as well as in the fear of making mistakes in the media investments. The informants' inability to predict the changes in certain medias is a sign of state uncertainty. In addition to these factors and other mentioned in the chapter, new media brings its own challenges to the media planning process as well. These challenges are related to the comparability of the medias in the media sets as well as to the risks inherent in digital environments. According to the participants, new medias have somewhat better metrics but in some instances, digital media can be seen as less influential. Despite the increasing uncertainty in the media buying process, most of the interviewed people had a positive attitude to this development as it made the media environment more interesting in their view.

4.2 Media buying process and activities

4.2.1 The media buying process

Due to the lack of research, as well as the author's lack of precise knowledge of how advertisers' media buying process is organised, it was necessary to obtain a good description of the media buying process. Indeed, it seems that media planning is an under researched topic in the research field and the researcher had hard time finding any sort of description or conceptualisation of the media buying process from previous literature. Therefore, all of the interviewed marketing managers were asked to describe how exactly the media buying process in their companies' progresses. This was done also to gain a better understanding of the involved actors. The descriptions were somewhat similar and gave a crude outline of how media buying is actually carried out in Finnish beverage companies. In addition, the descriptions were, in general, congruent with the traditional organisational buying model (see chapter 2.2), to the extent that media buying is considered being purposeful organisational action to recognise a need, operationalising it into a suppliable form and buying the solution that best meets the need. However, there appears to be a significant difference between media buying and the general organisational buying model when it comes to comparing proposed alternatives from different suppliers. This difference follows the unique characteristic of media buying where the buying is done with a supplier rather than from a supplier. In traditional organisational buying, the buyer compares proposed alternatives and selects the most viable (Makkonen & Johnston 2014, 327; Johnston & Lewin 1996, 2) but generally this stage of the buying process doesn't exist in media buying. Thus, in contrast to the general organisational buying, in media buying the supplier has, in principle, a monopoly in providing different alternatives for the media-buying organisation. Advertiser and a media agency have a relationship that creates boundaries inside which most of the media buying is performed.

The interviewees described the process of media buying with somewhat different wordings, but it could be asserted that the media buying process contains some general characteristics. The following description of the media buying process was the most typical among the interviewees:

> *The process starts from meditating on the particular brand. We think about the goals of the brand, the target audience to whom we want to communicate and how we want to affect this audience's perception and opinions about the brand. After this we start to think how could we get this message through best and at the same time what the media and the media format should be. For example, we want to make a video and we want it to be on the television, web-television and social media channels. Then we sketch the big picture of the plan into a media agency brief. Following this, media agency delivers us their suggestion for the media plan based roughly on the brief. Thus, we allow pretty free rein for the media agency in figuring out the best possible solution for the media selection. We then, together with the media agency, ponder if this plan is indeed reasonable. However, we really trust our media agency's view on the media plan, especially these days when the media environment has become so complicated. After agreeing on the media plan with the media agency, we agree it also in-house with our executives. When the media plan is accepted internally and externally, the media agency starts to plan the media schedule in detail. E.g. this number of money and seconds in this media. Then before activating the media plan and schedule we still need to let the executive level in our company review it. Then we follow closely our key performance indicators such as contact prices and reach.*
>
> *-Advertiser D: Category manager*

It seems like the general media buying process could be summarized in six distinct steps that are repeated every time the "need" for media arises. First, the focus is on the brand strategy and on the performance of the previous media campaigns' results. Then, goals are set for the brands. These goals include the aspired target audience as well as the aspired effect on the audiences' perception of the brand. In the third phase, a media agency brief is created. This brief includes the goals for the brands and the general outline of the brand strategy. Then the media agency brief or proposal is accepted inside the media buying organisation. In the fifth phase, the media plan is executed by the media agency. Then the media agency and the buying organisation begin to examine the performance of the campaign through key performance indicators. In general, it seems that the slight differences among the buying processes reflect the different kinds of relationships that the advertisers have with their media and advertising agencies. These relationships differentiate among the interviewed firms in terms of the extent of the operational responsibility, respect, credibility and whether the emphasis on the marketing campaigns is on the creativity or media data. However, among the answers there were also two highly differentiating descriptions of the media buying process.

> *Well, in my organisation it goes like this: I first look at how much money we approximately have and then I approach the medias by myself. In the spring I approached 15-20 medias and then received proposals from each of the medias. In this way I pretty much invited tenders from the medias and then chose the best deal. My main criteria for the selection was that the media reaches our target audience, if this criteria was met then I looked at the quality of the environment and the contact price.*
> *-Advertiser B: Marketing manager*

> *We have two different media streams (that determine our media spending). One has to do with the campaign planning and the other with the constant presence in media. The campaign planning stream includes brand launching, activation, new visual appearance or e.g. a christmas campaign. Our principle is that we work together with our media agency and advertising agency as a team where everybody has an equal role. We first do a brief about the campaign and then the advertising agency starts to think about the creative idea and the media agency and the advertising agency spar and iterate the media plan. When they are ready, they present us with the media plan. Then we look it through together and decide what we'll do. After this the media agency creates the plan in more detail and then we accept it. Our constant presence stream works little differently. We have certain time period e.g. a month in which we have a crude plan on what we will do and we have a specific budget that we then allocate based on the plan. For example: we might have 20 units of money for Facebook and have decided that we will focus on this or that kind of stuff during this month. We have also prepared to react and then we decide, in the moment, whether this is big or smaller investment. These smaller and reactive components in the constant media stream are controlled somewhat independently by our product managers whereas the big picture and the annual plans are determined by the marketing executives.*

-Advertiser C: Category manager

The first highly differentiating description of the media buying process, presented above, differs largely due to the company's lack of media- or advertising agency partner. All of the other firms participating in this research had a media- and advertising agency partners that had important roles in the media decision making. This difference makes the media buying process seem more like a traditional buying process where the company is not dependent on intermediary actor and it can buy the service straight from the media representatives.

The second highly differentiating description, presented above, differs due to two characteristics. First, the interviewed company regards the media agency and advertising agency as equal partners in the campaign planning process. The emphasized equal collaboration between the three actors is a unique characteristic compared to the other interviewed firms. Secondly, the media planning separation to ”campaign” and ”constant presence” streams is also an unique characteristic among the studied subjects. This separation entails organisational structures that can handle the broader responsibility in the media planning that the control of the two streams require.

Media buying is little cumbersome to generalize in to a specific buy-class. That is because media buying, depending on the situation, can include all the buy classes and because it is done in relationship with a service provider. When buying again routinely utilized media, the buy class can be considered being a straight rebuy. When there are some modifications made to the media purchase compared to the ones before, the buy class can be considered being a modified re-buy. Finally, when the media is new for the advertiser, the buy class can be considered being a new task. Thus, the risk and uncertainty can be considered being highest in new media buying and lowest in routinely bought media. In addition, media buying is, in general, carried out with a service provider firm such as media agency that facilitates the buying process. Therefore, it can be argued that the levels of risk and uncertainty inherent in the different buy-classes are made less severe. However, it is always the responsibility of the advertiser to make the final decision on the optimal media.

4.2.2 Information search activity

Like implied in the previous chapters, information is possibly the most important resource in media decision-making. It could even be argued that the main activity in the media buying process is the search for information. From the network perspective, actors in the media buying organisation combine, develop, exchange and create resources in order to gain better judgement to make media decisions. Like expected the most important source of information for the interviewees was the media agency. All the advertisers who use the services of a media agency consider it to be by far the most influential source of information. According to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2014, 345) the main sub-activity of buying is the information search and the processing of information. However, in the case of media buying it seems that the information search and its processing is actually outsourced to the media agency to a large degree. Thus, the main responsibility of meeting the need for media with the media solutions available, seems to be falling largely on the media agencies' shoulders. This can be observed from the following quotes:

> *For me the most important thing is what the media agency says. I don't even meet media representatives. I trust that our media agency converses with them and I trust them. Then I'll also have the HQ behind me if I have some doubt whether this is ok or not.*
> *-Advertiser F: Brand manager*

> *Media agency has a core role in this. They have to have the best knowledge or the best possible knowledge what is happening on the media field.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

Even though media agencies seem to have integral role in the information search effort of the advertisers, media agencies were not the sole sources of media information for any of the interviewed advertisers. It seems like all of the advertisers like to have more diversified information sources. According to Bunn (1993) and Brashear-Alejandro (2010) the buyers' information strategy is determined by the situational characteristics, buyer's previous experience and perceptions of the information sources' trustworthiness. Even though the nuances of the interviewed advertisers' information search processes varied, they had somewhat similar sources of information mixes regarding their media investments. Many of the interviewees couple the research conducted by the media agency with their own research on their customers or -campaigns. Furthermore, none of the interviewees had the media agency as a sole source of information for media information. The following quotes illustrate the wide variety of sources that the interviewed advertisers use:

> *We also investigate all campaigns, actually we don't have that small campaign that we wouldn't investigate. We do this because we want to get better for the future. We see it like if you put 100k and more, then it is smart to reserve few thousands to research to see if the investment made sense.*
> *-Advertiser A: Marketing manager*

We also do consumer research in which we measure the state of our brand and how we perform in different target groups. Then we compare the target audience information to the media information and determine in which media we should make noise in order to reach this target group.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

I have straight connection to Facebook and Google and they always let me know if something new comes up. Then I also read blogs from all over the world and from Finland also. In addition, if some research agencies have good new data I try to keep up with it and take the step forward without having someone else telling me to.
-Advertiser C: Community manager

I tend to rely pretty much to my colleagues and ex-colleagues experience on the topic and I feel very fortunate of having large network of people of whom I can ask experiences. Of course then there is the information that can be found for free e.g. what medias are used at the moment, which are rising and which are diminishing, this information I try to apply.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

The advertisers tend to meet media people, look into the medias themselves and use research statistics in order to gain insight into the medias. In one case the colleague networks of an individual actor played a strong role in the particular company's media buying process.

These alternative information sources may imply, on one hand, that the advertisers have a need to keep some distance from the media agency to avoid a complete dependency. On the other hand, large part of media decision making is based on the particular products' customer knowledge and the best source for this knowledge is the company itself and its research endeavours as well as the experience gained from previous years. This notion becomes especially evident in situations where the advertiser changes its media agency:

When we've had a longer relationship with the media agency, the process has been pretty much automatic. In the sense that we just do the regular yearly plans and know the backgrounds of each brand as well as the target audiences.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

Thus, to gain optimal value, the media buyer and the media supplier need to cooperate actively throughout the buying process. The media agency providing the media information and the advertiser providing the target audience information. This active co-operation is very typical in other complex buying situations as well (Jaakkola & Aarikka Stenroos 2012, 19-20).

Also, even though the media information is mostly outsourced, an integral part of the marketing managers' job is to know what is going on in the media environment. It is especially important in the new medias where "owned media" is maybe the only advertising option and the advertiser might be able to only invest in content creation instead of buying the media in the traditional sense. This knowledge regarding the content creation aspect might demand a whole new set of competencies alongside with the traditional set of media and creative competencies. One of these competencies, according to the interviewees, is the ability to understand the user culture of the specific media. Since, especially in the new media, where the users often create the culture of the media, the advertiser needs to be aware of it and adapt to it in order to approach the target audience in a proper way:

> *If we forty-year-beverage-veterans, start to think about the content to the new medias it will be boring really fast. It is like text from grandfather to teenager and it doesn't really work.*
> *-Advertiser E: Commercial director*

Utilizing new types of service providers or vertical integration seem to be solutions for this media information problem among the interviewees:

> *In the case of brand X we have also used our digital agency to help us to create the right kind of content because we believe that they live more strongly in the target audiences' world than our media agency.*
> *-Advertiser E: Commercial director*

> *We hired a person that uses half of his time with brand Y and the other half managing the digital communities of several brands.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

In the above mentioned vertical integration example, the newly hired brand/community manager uses a large part of his time exploring the digital world and figuring out where the company could and should go next in terms of media presence. Thus, strengthening the new media competencies of the advertiser and working as a new media information source for the company. The development of new advertising technologies appears to be helping the vertical integration of the information search. This development creates tools for advertisers that enable completely new ways of getting insight in to their target audiences media behaviour. It seems plausible that this development could increasingly affect the information mix balance in the future. The following quotes illustrate the use of new technologies in the interviewed companies and also forecast the future of applying these technologies:

We also use this tracking service, where we can track what is happening on the message boards. For example, we can figure which type of special beers are now of interest among the enthusiast. So this way we can take the consumer to the product design process when we design e.g. next summer's products before it exists.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

I would think that many firms are going to grow their social media and digital departments. So, that all the basic stuff will be done in-house. When there is enough stuff to do, it makes sense to hire someone from the outside and outsource only the very specialized tasks.
-Advertiser C: Community manager

In addition, the development of new modes of operating in the media environment, arguably, affects not only the dynamics of the information search (Brashear-Alejandro et al. 2010, 17) but also the whole business logic of outsourcing advertising services from service providers. Since the current organisation of e.g. an advertising agency may not be able to meet the all the informational or operational needs of the advertiser in a cost effective way, the advertiser might begin to seek some other, better working form of organising the advertising process.

Perhaps the most interesting and somewhat hard-to-believe fact that surfaced in the interviews is the role that some of the marketing managers' children and young people in general play in their organisations' information search processes:

I also tend to observe young people, like what are they into right now. I also follow closely what other brands do, what outdoor ads I see when coming to work on morning and how I see kids using their phones in the tram.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

The medias that I wouldn't normally use, I have become familiar through my teenage kids.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

I don't play online, but I sometimes watch my son playing Grand Theft Auto so I know something about that and I've also been following this phenomenon where young men watch how other young men play online.
-Advertiser D: Category manager

Theoretically, this information source could be categorized as a personal source in the information source categorization by Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2010, 17). However, it might not be far-fetched to assert that the media buying industry is very unique in the sense that the children of the media buying professionals or unknown youngsters in trams can be used as an information source in the buying process. However, this just underlines the complexity of the challenge that the advertising managers are facing and the vastness of the contemporary media environment. The current omnipresent nature of media seems to make everything more observable but at the same time overwhelming to truly keep up with.

In sum, it seems indeed that information search in media buying is often an ongoing process and separate from specific purchase objectives (Borghini, Golfetto & Rinallo 2006, 1158). In media buying information search is somewhat cyclical depending on the time of the year but also of the timing of strategic investments on advertising. The information sources used fall to personal, commercial, media and experimental sources. Thus, all the information source categories are present in media buying decision-making. It seems that the media agency clearly has the most importance as an information source in general but even the media agency can sometimes have problems in understanding the user cultures of certain medias. In the latter case e.g. a digital agency can be used to provide the media information. Depending on the buying situation different information source mixes are used. The balanced searchers mix (Bunn & Clopton 1993, 427) best illustrates the information source mix of the strategic media buying, whereas the salesperson centred mix (Bunn & Clopton 1993, 427) could be used to describe low importance, routine purchase of media. Due to the vast spectrum of different media solutions, all of the information mix types seem plausible in some situations, except the specification seekers mix, since media is not sold in the manner that would make this type of information search possible. The notion about the linear development of the source importance presented by Johnston and Lewin (1996, 8) where commercial sources are considered more important in the beginning of the process but replaced by informal sources as the decision process progresses didn't seem to resonate with the collected research data. The development of technology can also provide opportunities for the advertisers to gain new ways of getting information, however this might require new competencies in-house.

4.2.3 Decision rules in the buying process

Media buying is a recurring purchase situation but the outcomes of this purchase process are often different with different actors especially when it comes to adopting new medias. Therefore, it was interesting to examine if decision rules could explain differences in media buying. Decision rules are considered being one of the general categories affecting industrial buying behaviour. They are influenced by environmental, organizational, purchase and seller characteristics. These rules are either formal rules that are followed e.g. in the selection of suppliers or informal rules of thumb gained from experience. (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 4).

The interviewees were asked whether they follow decision rules when making media investment decisions. The definition of decision rules were left for the interviewee to decide, in the sense that they could decide themselves if they recognized some rule like mechanisms in their media investing behaviour. Most of the interviewees didn't appear to have rules for media purchasing. However, in some of the case-companies there were some rule-like guidelines in their media practices as the following quotes illustrate:

We don't have any rules. We look at the previous years and if something has gone wrong, we won't make the same mistakes again and the development ideas are reviewed. Like what we thought would be better next year.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

We are part of an international corporation and there exists certain basic manuals. Media buying and the cooperation with the media agency are to some extent predetermined in specific contracts. There are the target audiences that we try to pursue and then we give the campaign specific budgets to the media agency, or like yearly budget that is then sliced into different campaigns.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

We have so many brands that we have to start from the target audience, goals, positioning and how experimenting we want to be.
-Advertiser C: Category manager

We want to be a certain amount of time in television per year. It is still seen globally as a way to reach great amounts of people and as a way preserve brand quality and top-of-mind. The pre-determinedness also depends on the formats or the goals, like which spot we are running.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

It seems that in general, the antecedent for media buying is the target audience rather than decision rules. This approach is emphasized by the fact that typically the media agency makes the decisions for the specific medias in the media set. Thus, as media buying is usually, in essence outsourced, specific decision rules could be found in media agencies rather than in the advertisers' buying centres. However, even the one interviewed organization that didn't use media agency did not have decision rules either. This might suggest that decision rules aren't as easily adaptable to media buying as they are adaptable to other types of industrial buying. The company's media buying operations may also be so recent that they haven't developed any decision rules:

The buying has been so ad-hoc until now that we haven't really developed any rules. I think rules can make the process stiffer, the most important thing is that the process is working well.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

Although strict decision rules do not appear to play an integral role in the media buying process, media buying pursues to reflect exactly the target audiences and other aspects rooted in the general marketing strategy. Consequently, media buying strives to operate within the framework set in the marketing strategy as well as in the media plan. Thus, it could be said that the marketing strategy and the media strategy have roles akin to decision rules in the sense that they determine indirectly what the media choices will largely be.

Like chapter 4.1 articulated, due to the high level of uncertainty and complexity, media buying is a very speculative sphere of marketing. This feature of media buying leads to a curious setting between the media agency/service provider and the advertiser, in terms of decision rules. It was discovered that to keep up with the constant change in the media environment some of the interviewees give the media agency a mandate to take certain amount of risks in the media selection. This mandate is given by expressing a willingness to experiment or by setting forth a guideline that divides the media budget to trusted media and risky media. The following quotes illustrate a situation where the advertisers give the media agency certain guidelines for risk taking:

> *The thought framework is like 20-30 % of experimentation and 70-80% certain stuff, but this is just directional that gives a justification for the media agency to try things. This is not measured or followed in exact way. What is directional for our media investing is our goal of being innovative beverage company and it has to show in everything we do.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

We think it like so that we invest 50% in to a media we know really well for example television. Then we put 30% into something which is new and of which we know at least something about. The remaining 20% we put into something out of which we don't know anything about and which is only experimentation. Well, the percentage aren't these exactly, but the thought framework is that part of the budget is divided to certain and uncertain medias.
-Advertiser D: Category manager

Obviously, there are other ways to experiment and express willingness to experiment to the media agency as well. According to one of the interviewees the suggestion to experiment tend to come from the media agency or straight from the medias, and they have just decided to be open minded in these situations. According to other interviewee this decision or principle to be open and willing to experiment can also push the media aspirations beyond the skillsets of the media agency. In the sense that if the advertiser gets excited about some new innovative solution, they can decide to invest in this new medium even if the media agency has no experience about this medium. These views are articulated in the following quotes:

In the media agency level and new media channel level, we have strived to be open to experimentation. Often when there are innovations inside a traditional channel, our media agency will contact us directly. But also specific medias may sometimes approach and present their new channels for our use. In these cases' we have tried to be open. We haven't determined officially that we have 80 % of traditional and 20 % of social media, or anything like that. We act depending on the situation.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

I am not afraid of trying new things, but at the same time I don't think new things should be tried only for newness sake. Also, if media agency can't sell us something new, it is not an obstacle for us to try new things. Many things can also be done without really investing into a specific media, for example we have utilized Tinder in marketing communications.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

In sum, it seems that media buying is not subject to decision rules as they are typically defined in the organisational buying behaviour literature. This is mostly due to the strong role of the media agency in the media buying process. Thus, because media buying seems to be essentially outsourced to the media agency, there is really no place for the decision rules in the media buying process, on behalf of the advertiser. However, there appears to be some guidelines administering the risk taking in media investing that the advertiser communicates to the media agency. Also, it could be argued that these differences in the decision guidelines can be considered explaining a lot of the variation in new media investments. This is due to the fact that some advertisers instruct their media agency to take clearly more risk than other advertisers. Two out of the six beverage companies interviewed, encourage their media agencies to take risks by recommending that the media agency would invest a certain share from the advertiser's media budget to media that seem very risky. A little bit more moderate method to encourage risk taking was displayed in the answers of two other interviewed companies. In these companies a decision had been made to be open minded when a media agency suggest something out of the ordinary or when an opportunity was presented directly from the media. This principle-level-decision can hardly be called a decision rule, but nevertheless it is a decision that affects media decision-making. These findings regarding the lack of media decision rules is interesting in the light of the previous research on media selection. King, Reid & Macias (2004) conducted a survey in order to shed light on the selection criteria used to evaluate media for US advertising programs. The 2004 survey was an extension to their previous study on the importance of media selection criteria of large-agency media specialists. Accordingly, the interest of the study was in comparing the variance between the two parties' criteria of importance. The premise behind the survey was that there exist specific selection criteria such as e.g. "reach a specific audience efficiently", "increase sales/market share" and "CPM of target effectively reached" that advertising managers use to evaluate different media and the suggestions from the media agency. The results of the study suggested that there is "a great deal of similarity how the practitioner groups think about media for national advertising" (King, Reid & Macias 2004, 65). The most important factors for selecting a media among the advertising managers in the study were the criteria mentioned above.

However, according to the interviews in this research, it seems that the responsibility for evaluating media is moving increasingly to the direction of the media agencies but, at the same time, media selection can be done without "investing" into a media thanks to new media formats. The lack of specific decision rules among the advertisers in selecting media may suggests, for one, that the weight of advertising managers' criteria for analysing media effectiveness may not be a significant factor anymore. Instead, it seems that the media service provider has the responsibility for bringing results. In addition, it appears that advertisers are willing to use significant parts of the media budget to experimentation with the advertising agency especially when it comes to new media buying and aren't afraid to plunge into new media formats without the media agency either. The uncertainty of meeting specific selection criteria is not necessarily an obstacle when it comes to new media adoption, on the contrary, the few rules or guidelines that were mentioned in the media selection process had more to do with risk tolerance rather than the optimality of the media decision.

4.3 Actors and network structure in media buying

4.3.1 Actors in the buying process

Actors can be defined existing on several organisational levels. The term can be used to refer to groups of firms, firms, groups of individuals and individuals. In addition, actors can be connected to other actors in different levels. In this study, the term actor will be applied referring to individuals and firms. Actors perform and control activities, develop relationships with each other via exchange processes, are goal oriented and base their activities on their control of resources. Also, the knowledge about other actors' activities and resources differ between different actors. (Håkansson & Johanson 1992, 28).

As indicated in the previous chapter (4.2), media investing is a collaborative process between two or more companies as well as between the individuals inside the companies. Only one company among the interviewed firms didn't use strategic service providers in their media buying process. However, in this particular firm, the aspired future vision for the media operations included having strategic service providers. Thus, it appears that the ideal media investing process includes the utilization of the firms' resources as well as the resources of the service providers. In general, the most important actor outside the firm in the media investment process seems to be the media agency, but there were exceptions to this generalization among the interviewed participants. This seems to be largely due to the nature of contemporary marketing communication environment where functions of different types of service providers aren't entirely clear cut and instead often overlapping. Thus, in some firms and some instances advertising agency or a digital agency can also contribute to the decisions that might be more naturally considered fitting the job role of the media agency.

In this chapter the structure of the media investment process is inspected in more detail. The goal is to identify the main actors in the media investment process. Actors in this research are the people involved in the business relationship between the advertiser and the service provider firms in the media buying process. This constellation of actors is called the network context of media buying. Network context is the part of the network within the network horizon that the actor considers relevant (Anderson, Håkansson, Johanson 1994, 4). The network context of different actors varies slightly, but it seems that the general relationship structure of the different firms' media buying processes (referred to as the buying-center in organisational buying behaviour literature) share similar characteristics.

The business environment is so complex in nature that it by far exceeds the cognitive capacity of any individual actor (Håkansson & Snehota 1995, 200). Thus, the following illustrations of the relationship structures of the media buying process are simplifications of the main actors, as recognized by the interviewed actors, participating in the media buying process. The most typical relationship structure formed from the following network context:

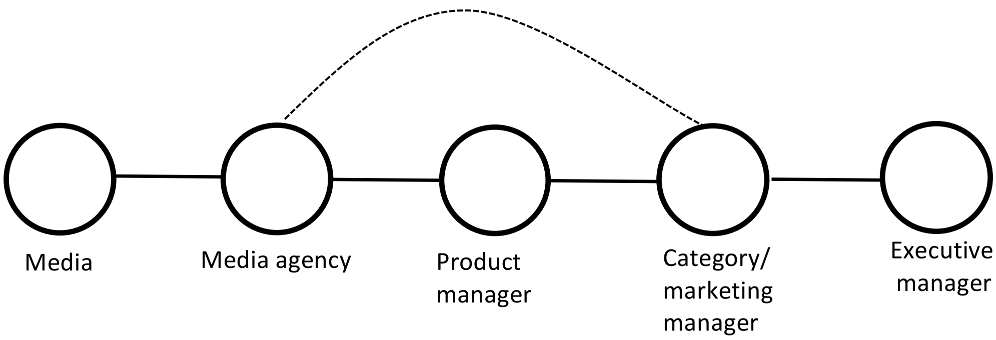

Figure 6 Relationship structure consisting of one strategic partner

In this model the media agency has the most strategic role in the media purchasing operation. In the model the most active cooperation is between the media agency and the product manager. A product manager has an ownership over a certain brand and as a consequence a responsibility for its performance. The media agency's role is to ensure that the medias selected reflect, in a best possible way, the goals driving the media plan. This co-operation results in a media plan for a specific brand. The other participants come into picture before and after the birth of the media plan. The framework for the cooperation between the product manager and the media agency is set by the supervisor of the product manager in the marketing strategy and enabled by the budget determined by the executive manager. The supervisor of the product manager oversees the media planning process and is in the end responsible for the decision to invest in the media plan. Thus, all of the actors have an important role in reaching the outcome. The executive manager's influence is mainly implicit since it participates in to the media investment process mainly indirectly through observing the rate of return on marketing investments. In the interviews the foreman of the product manager had the titles of category manager, marketing manager and area manager

In general, our work is done mostly in teams. The team has the marketing executive, product manager, couple of representatives from the media agency. The media agency representatives have say in the process but they are only heard, thus they don't make the decision.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

The second most common relationship structure was the following:

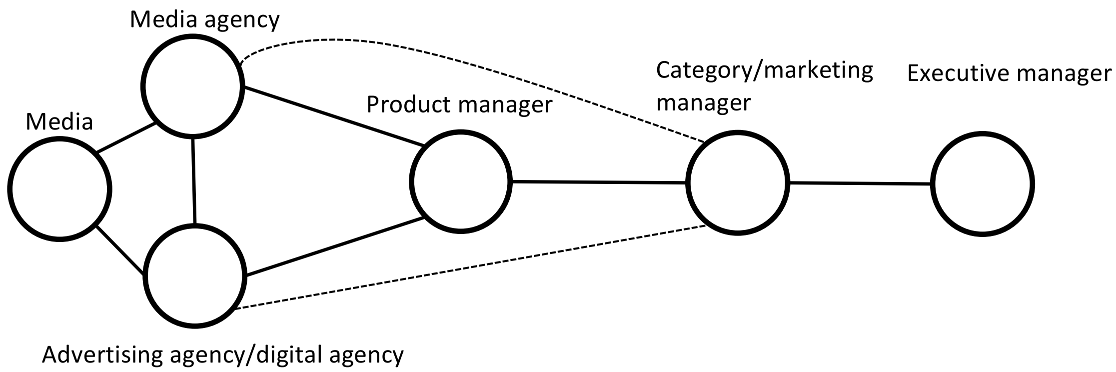

Figure 7 Relationship structure consisting of two strategic partners

The second model is very similar to the previous model. The main difference between the models lies in the somewhat overlapping roles between the media agency and the advertising or digital agency. Thus, the media decision and the creative concept are considered interrelated to a degree that the best marketing solution is believed to be found by not having only one strategic partner in the media planning. In this type of set up the roles of the service providers are not cast in stone and in fact evolve constantly.

If we have really strong advertising agency that has strong and capable creatives, then the media agency representative might find himself/herself in an underdog role where he/her needs to use a lot of effort to argue to get his/her view through. However, in the best case we have a team that respect and appreciate each-others expertise and work towards common goals. In this ideal case everybody's knowledge improves the campaign and sometimes this happens.
- Advertiser C: Category manager

In the organisation there are two brand representatives or officially product manager and category manager, and they do the plans with the people from the advertising and media agencies. Then we go through them together and then we do decisions and finally I am the one who decides that which campaign we will invest in and which campaign we begin to push forward, but from the basis of what we discussed and designed together. Of course when we are talking more broadly about media campaigns, we will have the recommendations and suggestion of the media agency as the basis on what we will discuss about. On some of our products we not only use media agency but also digital agency that we consider being even closer to the pulse of the target audience than our media agency.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

The third network context type looks like the following:

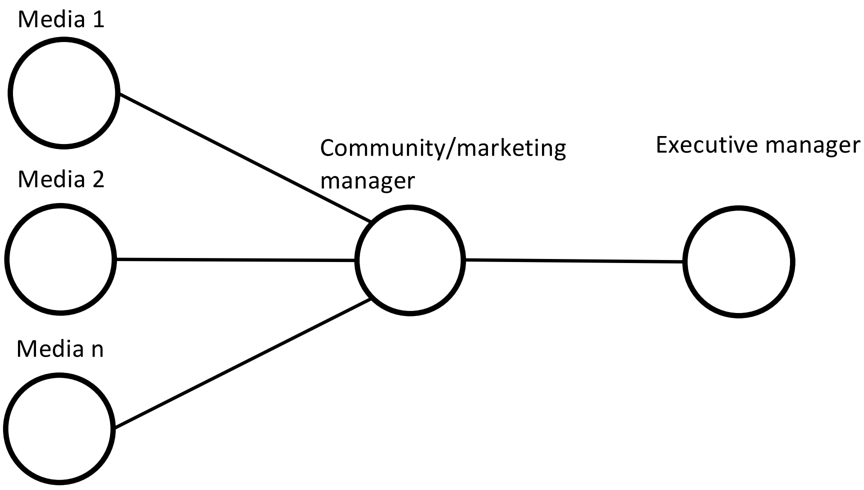

Figure 8 Media buying without service providers

In this third model there are no service providers included in the purchasing process except the media representatives. In the model the community manager or the marketing manager contacts specific medias and evaluates them by himself/herself. Then he/her chooses or recommends the best media combination to achieve the goals of the particular marketing campaign. Thus, compared to the previous models, the community manager or marketing manager has, more or less, the combined responsibility areas of media agency, product manager and category manager (if more than one brands). In organisational buying behaviour-theory this one person buying centre is called autonomous buying and there is not extensive research to this even though it is argued to be fairly common (Tanner 1999, 249). This autonomous form of operating appears to occur in situations where the resources of the company are limited or when the focus of the brands is solely in the digital media environment.

On the brands that I work with the media landscape includes only social media. Thus, I give suggestions and participate in the decision making of adopting specific online channels like should we be in 9gag or Kuvaton. But from traditional media I have no experience.
-Advertiser C: Community manager

I first look at how much money we approximately have and then I approach the medias by myself. In the spring, I approached 15-20 medias and then received proposals from each of the medias. In this way I pretty much invited tenders from the medias and then chose the best deal.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

Thus, there were roughly three different ways how the media buying is organized. They differ mainly by the number of suppliers participating into the process. Only one organisation bought all of their media form the medias. All of the others had one or more service providers involved in media buying. Obviously, the different actors are also affected by other actors, rather than just the ones that have close responsibility areas i.e. are in the models. These three models try to capture the variability in the media selection behaviour by stripping down the processes to a level where similarities can be found between the ways of operating.

4.3.2 The buying center actors' characteristics

The buying centre concept proved to be somewhat problematic to apply to media buying. This was because of the disparities between the antecedents of the buying centre concept and what the interviewees' characterizations of the media buying process proved to be. The main disparity had its source in the media agency's dominant role in the contemporary media buying decision making. In organisational buying behaviour theory, the buying centre consists of the members of the organisation, but according to the interviews it is the media agency that shoulders the main responsibility for the success of media investments in general. Thus, the actors in the buying are not restricted only to the advertiser's organisation, but in fact also include actors from external organisations. It was a surprise to the author how strongly the advertisers' and the media agencies are connected. However, like mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, suppliers and third parties tend to be in increasingly important roles in contemporary business relationships (Flowers 2007, 319). Thus, even if the strong relationship between the advertisers and the media agency was a surprise to the author, it is a characteristic that has been predicted and acknowledged existing between buyers and sellers in industrial marketing literature.

Interestingly, this idea of having clear boundaries that separate organisations from their environments has actually been the main source of critique for the implementation of organisational buying behaviour theories (see e.g. Anderson, Håkansson & Johansson 1994, 2; Astley 1984, 526). Most of the research done in organisational buying behaviour has focused on transactions, but when contemplating the interview data, it appears clear that media buying is not solely transactional and consequently the buying centre model does not really cover all the aspects of this activity. Indeed, it seems that the network approach is more accurate when it comes to describing how media buying is actually done. According to Tanner (1999, 254) the network approach locates the sources of creativity and production to the network of organisations that constructs the environment of the organisation and thus not solely inside the organisation. In this approach it is considered that business happens between companies, not within them and accordingly the boundary between an organisation and its environment can be considered dissolving. (Astley 1984, 533). Accepting this notion opens up a Pandora's box (from the researcher's point of view). Since if there are no more limits to who can or will participate to the buying centre, it causes a lot of complexities for using the buying centre concept. This is due to the fact that the spectrum of possible buying centre actors expands in the absence of boundaries and also because e.g. the inclusion of the inter-firm cooperation variable separates this type of research from the previous buying centre research. Also, the interview questions failed to take into account the motivations and behaviour strategies of the individuals that could have maybe been a road to overcome this difficulty according to Tanner (1999).

Another reason for the difficulty of applying the buying centre concept rose from the change in the nature of media buying. Media buying used to be considered solely as a downstream logistical activity but nowadays separation of media buying from the overall marketing process can be difficult. Therefore, identifying the separate media ”buying centre” from the overall marketing strategy ”centre” is little challenging. The media investments often follow the goals defined in the advertiser's brand strategy and are then operationalized as the functional demands (media agency brief) to the media agency. The selection of media follows the goals set in the brand's marketing strategy in all of the cases, but the involvement levels of external partners vary depending on the advertiser.

> *Some of our advertising agencies are strongly digital natives and they also give suggestions on the media. So sometimes the idea comes from the advertising agency and the media agency will check if its viable. So, sometimes the roles change a little bit.*
> *- Advertiser C: Category manager*

> *As an extreme example: brand Z. We know that its media investments lean heavily to social media. So we tell this to our media agency, but the media agency also suggests stuff for us. We tend to follow closely these suggestions by the media agency and make our own small decisions regarding e.g. the balance of investment between different media channels. We have maybe briefed that: ”this and this –type of approach” and then they will suggest to us that: ”you could divide that sum to these and these and that way get also that thing included and extend the campaign through this channel”. Often what they suggest are good ideas and we need to trust their expertise.*
> *-Advertiser E: Commercial director*

Well, we have the biggest influence (to media choices) since we pay everything but let's say that our influence is 51%, our media agency 39% and our advertising agency 10%.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

Somewhat contrary to the notion of expanded spectrum of buying centre members is the finding that all of the interviewed marketing managers considered themselves as having ultimately the responsibility for the media investments of their company. However, most of the interviewees acknowledged that it is hard to measure the effects of media investments because there are so many variables that affect e.g. to sales (that is in the end the most important meter in terms of return on media investment). Also, most of the interviewed marketing managers mentioned the joint-decision nature of media selection that automatically shares the responsibility. Especially in bigger beverage houses the mere number of brands makes it impossible to have only one responsible person.

I have 100% responsibility. Every euro that we use for our marketing I guarantee… with my life. Almost.
-Advertiser D: Category manager

I have the responsibility in the end. But in our industry it is little hard, because what makes the measuring of ROI hard is that we do not control the retailing channels. There are many factors that affect the sales of beverages, for example the weather. In the end we have quite little information about all of the market drivers.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

I have the responsibility but it is also shared. However, if things don't go as planned the finger points to the media agency since they are the ones we pay for consultation.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

I am responsible… like everyone else in marketing, we are responsible that all of the marketing investments we make are profitable. However, it is really hard to measure the impact because there are so many variables. We tend to look at the big pictures and not individual channels. Then we also look at the campaigns more closely afterwards with our media agency and the product manager if our decisions were correct. But we don't research like for example if brand X's Instagram activity was smart or not. We tend to look at it on the campaign level like: okay we had brand Y's Christmas campaign and we invested 300 money. How much did our market share rise? What happened sales wise? What variables affected the results? But this changes. Different level brands have different conventions.

-Advertiser C: Category manager

It was also interesting to notice that despite the fact that in principle the buying centre concept cannot be applied to media buying, many of the correlations found from the OBB research seem to be present in organisational media buying as well. For example, the findings about joint-decision making (see chapter 2.3) seem to be corresponding to the uncertainty in media buying as well as to the size of the firm. Thus, joint-decision making increase when the uncertainty as well as the size of the firm increases. In addition, it appears that the number of brands in the firm also increased the vertical and lateral involvement in the media decision making to some degree. Indeed, even though the contributions of the buying centre research cannot be directly applied to media buying, it seems that some of the correlations exist even when the buying centre is not restricted only within the organisation.

The organisational buying behaviour theory also posits that there are certain roles for the actors participating into the buying centre. According to the theory several individuals may occupy the same role as well as one individual can occupy several roles (Webster & Wind 1972, 17). This part of the theory might also be observable in research results. If applied only to the buying organisation i.e. the advertiser's organisation as well as to the media agency as a whole, it might be considered that in typical media buying process, the category managers have the role of buyers and deciders. Thus, they have the formal responsibility and authority for contracting with the suppliers, they have the authority to choose among alternative buying actions. The product manager, on the other hand, could be seen as the influencer as well as gatekeeper. Product managers influence the decision process by bringing in product related information and criteria as well as control the flow of product related information to some degree. The media agency quite clearly would hold the roles of influencer and gatekeeper. It is the media agency's responsibility to provide information and evaluating criteria to the buying centre. Also, the media agency decides what information it will give to the buying centre. However, assigning roles to all of the participating actors would require more in depth knowledge of the participants in the service provider organisations.

In accordance to the OBB approach of this research, the interviewees were also asked about their education levels and their personal new media usage. This was done because of the findings of organisational buying behaviour theory, according to which these characteristics are consequential in the organisational buying process. However, not much can be speculated about the effect of these variables because all of the interviewed managers were graduated as masters of science and business administration. In theory, the level of education might affect the buying centre in the manner that highly educated actors tend to accept external influence due to their realization that they need multiple inputs for the purchase decision. It seems that the media decision participants indeed use multiple sources of information when making a media investment decisions. However, like mentioned already it is hard to determine if this is the consequence of the high education level of the interviewees. The sample of observations included only highly educated actors and there are probably a lot more influencing actors in the process that were not interviewed. Despite these limitations to make any conclusions by reflecting the results of the research and OBB theory, it was interesting to note that nearly all of the interviewees didn't consider themselves being active participants in the newest media:

I use new medias, but not much. I tend to follow them for my work's sake, like to find out: "what is all the fuss about this new thing?", but I don't consider myself as an early adopter.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

No, I don't use them.
-Advertiser D: Category manager

Well, I use all the basic ones like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. I use all the medias I invest in… Twitter I don't use and Pinterest I don't use, but it is not important media for us anyway. I think you can invest in Snapchat nowadays, but we have not had the resources to learn it yet. But we have been discussing about it.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

I tend to.. Yes I use them.. some of these newest teenager medias that you hear about almost weekly… I try to look over my daughters back when she uses them.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

I have used Instagram. Snapchat no, but I actively observe how my kids use it. The ones that I use the most are YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. In Instagram I don't have own account, I use the brand X account. So I use it in work. But personally, I use Facebook and YouTube the most.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

It would be interesting to measure how big part of my day is spent on the digital world. It is surprisingly big. There is like a certain amount of social media, websites and blogs that I check daily and then if there's some event coming up it obviously grows. Or if I am considering traveling or fishing or making food then I browse blogs. So big part of my time is in the digital world. I don't know if it's a good thing and if I should spend less time there.

-Advertiser C: Community manager

Out of the participants only one was without a doubt a ”digital native”. This person was also responsible for the new media investments for some of the beverage company’s brands. Interestingly, this company could perhaps be considered more innovative in new media buying compared to the other companies and especially considering the brands that this ”media innovator” was handling. However, some of the relatively innovative policies that this specific company had taken regarding the adoption of new media, preceded this person’s hiring. The company had also used very innovative advertising agency before, that was now replaced with this in-house media specialist. So, in essence this person could be considered representing an internalization of a successful approach to new medias. According to the interviewee the risk of becoming more ”innovative media adopter” was first taken with an advertising agency and then continued with an in-house media specialist. This finding might suggest that there could be a connection between the innovativeness of the actor in the media buying centre and the buying centre’s willingness to invest in new media but only on a speculative level.

In sum, even though the buying centre constructs cannot be very easily applied to media buying, the findings such as increasing joint-decision making when there is a lot of uncertainty or when the firm size is larger, somewhat identifiable buying roles as well as the connection between innovators in the buying centre to the innovativeness of the firm, suggests that maybe the buying centre concept is not completely outdated. This notion might, however, need to include also the external organisations’ actors who have an effect on the advertisers’ media buying to actually draw any kinds of conclusions.

4.3.3 Buyer-supplier relationship resource

It has become evident at this point of the research that the relationship between the advertiser and the media agency is of vital importance in making successful media investments and perhaps the most valuable resource in the media buying process. This is, among other things, because the most important information in media investing results from this relationship. All of the interviewees backed this sentiment and asserted that media agency is the single most important source of information when it comes to media buying. The interviewees also mentioned that they could not reach their target audience, at least on the long term, as effectively without the help of their media agency. The following quotes illustrate the importance that the advertisers hold on their media agency:

No. At least not better than with their help. Not in today's world. We would need to have our own media department and that we don't have.
-Advertiser D: Category manager

Not possible today. We had 15-20 years ago so that we would buy medias straight from MTV3 or Nelonen and we thought that we would save by centralizing the buying this way. But today we have so many more channels that we wouldn't have any chance of doing this job without the media agency.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

Some of the interviewees weren't as definitive in their answers but still reflected the precious value that a media agency can provide for an advertiser:

Well, on short term yes. I could do all the plans for next year. Like discuss with the medias directly and negotiate the prices on every product, but on the longer term you need to have specialists that follow more closely what is going on. I can get all kinds of information from our headquarters, but they too use media agency. So it would be hard.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

I think we could reach them, but media agency sure helps. We wouldn't pay them all that money every year if it they wouldn't. So no we could not. Working with the media agency lets us focus on our core business.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

Even the one, already mentioned, advertiser that didn't use a media agency expressed a need for it. It could be argued that for some (but not all) of the advertisers, media buying is carried out more as a provider-dominated service than a joint-provider-and-user service. According to Swan, Bowers & Gover (2002, 90) this provider-dominated type of service is characterized by the relatively little information search effort on the specifications available or on information that is independent of the provider. This dominant role of the service provider may carry risks for the advertiser because high importance of an external partner can result in dependency. However, the upside of this type of dependency is that it places the responsibility of favourable outcomes more firmly on the external partner's shoulders (Swan, Bowers & Gover 2002, 99) and this way can remove pressure from the marketing manager.

Analysing the interview data, it became clear that the advertisers' roles seem to more or less yield to the expert role of the media agency. According to Swan, Bowers & Gover (2002, 102) the involvement of a buyer and service provider in the service specification is affected by the buyer's confidence and capability of evaluating the service specifications. This confidence and capability is achieved by the awareness of the service alternatives present, the ability to evaluate these alternatives and the access to information regarding them (Selviaridis, Spring & Araujo 2013, 1399). Perhaps the strength of these capabilities, on the advertisers' side, is on a downward trend because of the increasing complexity of the media environment. This development could be expected to raise some concerns on the advertisers' side if it continues.

However, the worry of being too depended on the media agency did not really appear on the interviews and even if it did, it was quickly renounced. In most of the cases the relationship with the media agency had been continuing for years and due to the longevity and continuity of the buyer-service provider relationship, it was seen that it would not make a lot of sense for the media agency to behave opportunistically as is expressed in the quote below:

> *Our media agency also owns a market research company and sometimes it makes me think if there is a conflict of interest in there, but I don't really believe so. Because I don't think it is in their interest to fabricate the research results since if the investment was lost, it is also in their interest to have things corrected next year.*
> *-Advertiser A: Marketing manager*

Even though the media investing process seems to be dominated, in most of the cases, by the media agency, the nature of media decision-making requires collaboration. Typically, the media agency provides in depth statistics to facilitate the choice of certain medias and the advertiser then decides to which degree these suggestions are followed. Therefore, it seems that if there is opportunism, its source lies most likely in the contracts that the media agency has with the different medias. In other words, there might be a bias towards certain medias if the media agency is being lobbied by the medias for better rates when choosing a certain media. This type of opportunism was identified in one of the interviews:

> *In my previous job I had a situation where our media agency contacts all represented different types of media. My first contact had a clear bias towards outdoor media and my second contact –towards print media. Their suggestions for the best media set reflected their favouritism accordingly. You could really sense that they had an incentive to include certain medias as much as possible.*
> *-Advertiser B: Marketing manager*

In addition, one of the interviewees mentioned post-interview that media agency personnel experience lots of lobbying from large media houses in Finland. Understanding the relationship between the media and media agencies could certainly help in getting more in-depth understanding of the advertisers' media buying as well. It would be definitely worth further research.

It seems that advertisers deal with this increasing risk of opportunism mostly by emphasizing relationship continuity and sharing of knowledge, thus following the interactive strategic direction of service definition (see chapter 2.1.6). This approach is reflected in the interviewee companies' long media agency relationships as well as in the almost institutionalized roles of the counterparts. When considering how the media buying service takes shape according to the framework provided by Selviaridis, Spring and Araujo (2013) it seems clear that the uncertainty that the buyers are facing is high but for the most part the provider's buyer specific experience is high as well. Most of the interviewed advertisers felt uncertain about their capability to keep up with the development of media environment and therefore had strong reliance on the media agency in general. However, most of the advertisers also had long relationships with their current media agencies. All but two companies had had their media agency for over four years. Longest relationship was about 15 years and the shortest relationship was only one year old. This 'longer' type of relationship between a buyer and a service provider creates a developing role for the service provider (Selviariadis et al. 2013, 1405). This relationship limits the advertisers' role to providing the media agency with functional demands whereas the provider "develops specifications in terms of activities, resources and processes" (Selviaridis, Spring and Araujo 2013, 1405). The media agency brief could be considered more or less as the functional demands of the advertiser. The media agency's research and collaboration with medias could be considered as the activities, resources and processes to develop the specifications.

The advertiser that had just changed their media agency highlighted that the discontentment on the service level and personal chemistry issues lead to the decision to change their media agency:

We just felt that the people in the media agency weren't active nor good enough… but we are content with our current situation.
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

In this case where the media agency is new, the buyer-service provider relationship is obviously little different and can't be fitted into the same role framework as the others. However, it is interesting how one of the interviewees mentioned that they need to "teach the media agency" on how to collaborate with their brands:

"Last autumn we changed our media agency and because of this we've needed to go through the target audiences of our every brand and sub-brand (…) it has been chal-

lenging because basically we have needed to teach the media agency how things are done"
-Advertiser E: Commercial director

This type of preliminary phase can be possibly categorized under the translating role in the figure. In this role the buyer is facing extensive uncertainty and the service provider needs to adapt as well, as no previous trading experience exist. The service provider tries to translate the buyer's functional demands into specific activities, processes, systems and resources. This perceived uncertainty in the relationship is reduced by close interaction and building up knowledge during the process (Selviaridis, Spring and Araujo 2013, 1405). It would be logical that this "translating" relationship role (see figure) develops later into a "developing" role (see figure) as time goes by and the trading partners invest into the relationship.

One of the interviewed firms had chosen the route of internalization on some of its smaller brands. Thereby following the transaction economics logic in addressing the gaps in the trading partners' capabilities. According to the interviewee this internalization was a necessary response to the challenges presented by the changing nature of the media environment:

Previously we have managed our social media through advertising agencies but using this external partner to communicate, we felt that we are not being truly close to our target audience. So one reason we decided to take things to our own hands was addressing the distance that we felt from our audience. Second reason was that we believe that we can be more cost effective when we produce our own content versus paying for some copywriter and advertising agency for producing the content. The third reason had to do with the development where the borders of different consumer interaction surfaces are disappearing. So, this way we try to make our communication processes with our customers more unified when we have same brand answering questions on every consumer interaction surface.
-Advertiser C: Category manager

The brand in question hired a seasoned social media analyst to develop this process further as well as to bring and teach new methods of measuring the impact of the digital media contributions to the company. In addition, the job-description includes observing the development of the digital media environment and its newest innovations. The wisdom of having this type of capability in-house is, according to the interviewee, to be able to seize unique opportunities in the media landscape and simultaneously strengthen the frontrunner aspirations of the brand in question. Strengthening these certain capabilities in house has led to a situation where certain brands, in the company, follows different processes compared to other brands. In these new processes', certain tasks that were previously performed by a service provider are now performed by a media specialist in house. This internalization has brought a lot more flexibility for the company's targeting as is highlighted in the following quote:

> *We choose medias based on our target audiences, so especially in digital environment, we can target exactly the people who like e.g. fishing, outdoors, recipes or cooking or whatever. And then we tailor the message to reflect the environment whether it is presented like vauva.fi, kaksplus, RedTube or whichever corner of the Internet.*
> *-Advertiser C: Community manager*

According to the interviewees of the brand under discussion, they have received lots of target audience engagement just by being present in some unexpected digital medias that other companies do not utilize in Finland. Thus, it seems like the internalization of some parts of the media services has led to more innovative media choices.

Summing up, it appears that media buying is to a large extent a media agency led process. In the sense that media agency largely determines the media set that fulfils the functional media demands of the advertiser and provides much of the information used to evaluate medias. This external partner led process could be considered problematic since it increases the buyer reliance on the service provider. However, advertisers' do not share this sentiment completely. In fact, most, of the advertisers keep on outsourcing the media services even though the gap between the trading partners perceived media capabilities seem to be widening. This outsourcing practice may increase the risk of service provider opportunism since the information asymmetry can be considered growing constantly due to media fragmentation. On the other hand, this practice of outsourcing also removes the responsibility for bad media decisions from the advertisers' managers and moves it to the media agency specialists. Thus, if the media decisions are considered being ineffective, it is easy to blame the media agency. This possible motivational factor would require further research. However, evaluating of the exact effectiveness of media decisions remains somewhat hard to evaluate despite the technological development. It seems that both sides of the exchange relationship benefit from strengthening the trust in the relationship and making the media decisions at least seem as good as possible. Advertisers can also internalize some media agency functions and this way reduce the risk of opportunism and maybe also free the media decision making from the need to appear good and trustworthy. However, the reasons mentioned for internalizing the service or using new technologies to gather information (see chapter

4.3.3) were related to functionality and cost savings. There was no mention about opportunism.

4.4 Challenges in investing to new medias

The last empirical chapter of this thesis turns the attention to the challenges that the advertisers face when they decide to invest specifically in to new media. Two discussion points were related to this topic directly and some excerpts can be taken from other discussion points that meditate this theme as well. As became clear from the previous chapters, the media agency relationship is essential when making media investments in general. Advertisers get most of their media information from media agencies (see chapter 4.2.2) and trust in media agencies' recommendations tend to be on a high level. It seems that trusting the data and recommendations provided by the media agency, does not only guarantee accurate media selections, but also protects the positions of the actors in the advertising organisation. If everything goes to plan everyone wins, but if the media choices will be proven miscalculated in retrospect, the media agency shoulders the main responsibility. When asked directly what challenges the interviewees face when investing specifically in new medias, some familiar topics were raised along with some new. These topics included the challenge to keep up with the fast change of the media environment, the challenge to calculate the effectiveness of the new media and the need to participate into the media that the target audience uses. Also some new sentiments arose including the challenge of overcoming preconceptions regarding new media inside the organisation and the challenge to benchmark what other brands are doing. These familiar and new views are presented in the quotes below:

> *The only challenge is to stay in the wagon. We need to be able to know if this is a must-have or a nice-to-have. This challenge keeps on growing due to the wide responsibility areas that we have. It is hard to be as well informed as you would like to be.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

> *If it is a totally new service or application, we think hard how many and what type of people it reaches and how it can be measured.*
> *-Advertiser C: Community manager*

> *The fact that our target audience is using the new application made us invest in it and as an investment it wasn't even that expensive.*
> *-Advertiser A: Marketing manager*

As a company, we still don't have that much experience of being a media buyer and this is why the threshold of investing to some media that isn't tried-and-true" increases. So there is this internal marketing need as well.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

Benchmarking is the challenge. How much it is done and what are other brands doing. When we are playing with small budgets and someone comes and asks us if we want to invest, we always first ask what kind of results and cases other brands have.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

Contemplating on the discussions that were conducted, it seems that the interviewed advertisers either recognize or don't recognize specific challenges related to new media buying. The same uncertainties that shroud media investing in general seem to be present in new media as well. In the cases where specific new media challenges were recognized, they appear to come in the form of intra-organisational-, information- and inter-organisational related issues. Indeed, media investments can take a significant share of the marketing budget and it is understandable that in smaller organisations some persuasion is required to make people feel confident that investing into new media is an effective way to spend resources. As an example of information related challenge regarding new media buying is the above-mentioned need for clear benchmarking of other advertisers' performance on these new media. Thus, for some advertisers, it appears that the new media needs to have something more to show, before the advertiser considers investing in it. However, somewhat unexpectedly in many cases it seems that new media and old media aren't considered really separate. Thus, the suggestion that the advertiser might have some kind of extra challenge when it comes to new media buying sounded foreign to some of the interviewees. The reason for this variation is somewhat hard to grasp. Perhaps, if the organisation has the tendency of not being among the first users of a new media, the specific challenges related to investing in new media aren't really recognized. If a company is not a media pioneer can it recognize the challenges in the media frontier? Or maybe it is the other way around. Perhaps new media buying is so common in the company that there is nothing special about it. On one hand, it would feel reasonable that not having clear references on the performance of a specific media would make the media calculation harder. It would seem problematic to place totally new media in the same risk-reward pool as the more traditional media. On the other hand, like the decision rule chapter revealed (see chapter 4.3.3), it might also be that some advertisers just don't really mind not having clear references or information about the new media. Thus, it seems that the possible losses are already accepted before the new media investment is done. Indeed, like chapter 4.3.3 illustrated, two out of the six interviewed beverage companies had rules of thumb that commit them to invest a certain percentage of the marketing budget to something that they knowingly know nothing about. So, if the new media investment can be included in to that 'know nothing about' -investment category, there is no need for considering new media as somehow separate from general media buying. The interviewees underlined that the mentioned rule of thumb is not binding but it exists to commit them to take more risk.

New media can also be seen as a stronger tool for brand building than traditional media. This characteristic of new media can be considered affecting the media buying equation as well. In fact, according to one interviewee just being on a new media is already valuable for some of their brands:

> *We can profile brands through that new media to certain target audiences. If we want to create an innovator brand, we can make choices that aren't profitable on the short-term because being in the right media is also brand building.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

The sources of variation in investing to new media are not only limited to factors arising from the focal firm. Also the relationship with the media agency affects to what is considered being challenges in new media investing. Some media agencies tend to be leaning more on new medias than others. This creates a situation where the media agency's ambition level regarding the utilization of new media can be higher or lower than the advertisers. Thus, there is an interesting tension between the buyer and the service provider in some of the interviewed companies in this regard. Reacting to this finding, the author decided to ask from some of the interviewees if they think that their advertising agency is more conservative in media selection than they are and why do they think it is so. This discussion point seemed to dig deeper on the new media topic and revealed some interesting insights:

> *Even though they have good digital and social media knowledge, they tend to shield themselves with the media mathematics. So they like to observe the media meters really keenly and think in terms of efficiency. In the end that is what we want but we also want to experiment even if we wouldn't get any data.*
> *-Advertiser C: Category manager*

> *The media agency that we currently use is more innovative than the ones before. There are differences among media agencies on this aspect and it depends on what they think are the roles of traditional and new medias. Our current media agency doesn't say that forget traditional media and focus only on new, but the emphasis is*

on the new but not by forcing it. The content, or concept or campaign needs to be good also (...) We tend to agree with them, but they never want to slow down. We got our digital enlightenment two-three years ago and they had it like ten years ago already and it shows. Even though they tend to be forward leaning, it can offer us better rates. Like some display ads in some new websites that we invest in as an early adopter through them (that can gather quite large crowds already) can be really inexpensive. At least compared to buying the same amount from someone like MTV3 or Ilta-Sanomat. So the innovativeness can sometimes decrease the financial risk.
-Advertiser A: Marketing manager

Basically, these two quotes represent the opposite ends on the same spectrum. For one of the interviewed advertisers the media agency can be seen as somewhat restricting factor for their new media adoption aspirations and for other interviewed advertiser the media agency can be seen as a factor that pressures new media adoption. This finding underscores the great amounts of factors and the complexity of the factors that affect the perceived challenges in new media investing. It might be that some of the challenges to invest in new media are not really well perceivable for the advertiser since he/she has only experience from his/her own environment and context. For example, if the advertiser has a highly innovative media agency perhaps he/she can argue better why e.g. lack of benchmarks is not a challenge in new media buying and then lack of benchmarks is not considered an obstacle in new media buying.

Interestingly, it was also mentioned that the risk in the new media is recognized in the media prices in favour of the advertiser. So, at least in some cases investing into new medias can be considered being a financial savvy decision. In the quotations above, new media was considered being more efficient way to reach a large number of people compared to some more traditional media. Interestingly this is somewhat against the traditional argument, on why an advertiser should keep investing into traditional media, but also highlights the fact that there is also a lot of variation in the characteristics of new media. Some new media are just better for some purposes than traditional media and the, risk reflecting, lower price can supercharge these qualities. It also seems that some advertisers appreciate the innovative qualities of a media agency more than other advertisers. In these cases' it seems that although the media agencies are being paid for efficiency they are also judged by their foresight.

Many new media formats have some unique constraints that can also pose challenges for the advertisers. These constraints were not mentioned as challenges to investing in to new media, but they can be considered being factors that affect the variation in the new media buying behaviour. One interviewee mentioned that the marketing materials that they have don't always fit all of the medias:

Creating good a good spot can cost like hell and often if you just have the spot and not all the banners and other digital stuff, the material that you have can also affect the media choices. For example, if your spot is 20 seconds long, you can't put it on Instagram. In ideal world it would work the other way around but for us it is like this.
-Advertiser F: Brand manager

Also, the reliance on retailers can affect new media investments:

When we present some new product to retailers, it matters what media we use to launch it. If we say to them that we'll bring this product to markets by only using the social media, our credibility is lower than if we said that we will create strong TV or print campaign with little bit of social media. They tend to have more traditional views on the retailer level and it helps to get products on the shelves if you use predominately traditional media.
-Advertiser B: Marketing manager

In sum, it seems that the challenges in investing into new medias range from the focal firm to the media agency as well as from the respective media's characteristics to the bargaining power of retailers. First of all, the new media needs to be attractive enough to make advertiser interested in investing in it. This attractiveness can be gained through multiple ways. Having proof of the viability of the media in the form of customer references is one way to appear more attractive. Also, if the numbers look promising and reliable some firms may decide to invest in them as a test. This willingness to test advertising in the media is bolstered by the media's brand and if the media can transfer meaning to the advertiser's brand in positive way. For example, make the advertiser's brand look 'hip and cool' for being present in that media channel. Having clearly cheaper prices, compared to traditional medias, to reach large number of people also affects positively the brands willingness to invest in new media. Secondly, the innovativeness of the advertiser's media agency makes it more likely for the advertiser to invest in new media. However, this can work the other way around too. The advertiser can also be more innovative than the media agency and willing to deviate from the recommendations to more risky direction. It was mentioned in chapter 4.1 that the media agencies may not have all the possibilities of the new medias yet in their set of capabilities, which may also be a factor curtailing the new media aspirations of the advertisers. Lastly, the media decision may be also guided just by the material that the advertiser has and where it can be shared or by the pressure from retailers to be conservative in media selection. However, this retailer pressure was mentioned in only one of the interviews.

5 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter discusses and presents the main findings of this study. The chapter starts with reflection on how media buying fits to the complex buying definition. Then the findings of this study are presented. These findings are then distilled into managerial implication in the following section. After the managerial implications, the limitations of this study are elaborated. Lastly, the future research implications are discussed in the chapter 5.5.

5.1 Media buying as complex buying

Like mentioned in the introduction, advertisers' media buying is not the only industry facing growing uncertainty and complexity. In fact, there is a growing trend of increasing complexity of exchange between industries and markets in general (Brashear-Alejandro et al. 2010). According to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2013, 44) this growing complexity results from the trading partners increasing degree of specialization, knowledge intensity, service intensity and technological complexity. Due to this development the suppliers and third parties are in increasingly important role and often shape the nature and mode of the service provision in the relationship (Flowers 2007, 319). Media buying is a good specimen of this development, where the current business environment demands its actors to have increasingly higher degrees of specialization, knowledge- and service intensity. The continuing fragmentation of the media environment has resulted in advertisers' increasing dependence on the service providers that provide them media information and consultation.

In chapter 2, it was mentioned that the focus of the business to business marketing research shifted first from focal firm orientation to analysis of relationships in network and under the last two decades or so, some of the classic constructs have surfaced again in attempts to integrate them to the multi-dyadic perspective of the research (see e.g. Johnston & Westley 1996; Tanner 1999 or Makkonen & Johnston 2014). Indeed, reflecting the growing complexity across industries and markets, it seems that the attention of researchers is once again shifting and a new concept is emerging. This new concept is called "complex buying". According to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2013) there are only few contributions to this new theory (see Lindberg and Nordin, 2008; Anderson and Wynstra, 2010; Brashear-Alejandro et al., 2010). Thus, the conceptualization is still incomplete. However, the consensus seems to be that complex buying occurs in service markets as well as product markets and includes some specific characteristics. This thesis will compare media buying, from three different viewpoints, to complex buying: from the origin of complexity, characteristics that separate non-complex buying from complex buying and complex buying as problem solving process.

According to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2013) “complexity” of buying originates from:

- Novelty of purchase
- Criticality and importance of task
- The uniqueness of the decision
- Information asymmetry between the buyer and the seller on pursued value
- Extent of choice
- Intricacy of the object of exchange

When comparing these characteristics to media buying, it can be argued that most of the complex buying characteristics can be found to some extent from media buying as well. Fundamentally, media buying is always novel. When advertiser buys contacts from some media it is never the same mass of people that is reached with equal intensity every time. This is especially the case when the media landscape is changing and people are dispersed increasingly to its different fragments, meaning smaller crowds distributed on a wider scope (see chapter 4.1). However, individual medias can guarantee some kinds of average numbers and characteristics of the people that the media likely reaches, making it therefore less of a gamble. On the other hand, compared to e.g. buying an integrated management system, which was the complex buying example in the research of Brashear-Alejandro et al. (2010), general media buying might be considered less novel. Then again, it can be argued that compared to integrated management systems, different media options are harder to compare with each other (see chapter 4.1). In contrast to management system buying, in media investments the solution for the need can be found from services that are sometimes impossible to compare with each other. This characteristic of media buying can be regarded as a novelty-increasing factor compared to e.g. buying integrated management systems.

Media buying is certainly a function of strategic importance in the firm since it is the firm’s way of contacting its target audience. Due to this critical nature of media buying it is done in close buyer-supplier interaction with the media agency (see chapter 4.3.3), which is a characteristic of complex service buying (see Lindberg & Nordin 2008, 96). The specifications in media buying are somewhat unique. Every brand has their own conception of what type of people belong to their target audience and therefore especially when the media agency relationship is still developing the two actors need to combine their resources extensively to find the best media sets (see chapter 4.3.4). When the relationship is more mature media buying is however almost ‘automatic’ but the choice set of medias remains extensive which is also an indicator of complexity in the purchase. Information asymmetry between the buyer and the seller on pursued value exist in media buying and according to this research it is continuously increasing (see chapter 4.3.4). As media buying is specialized, customized and intangible service it fits the last of the complex buying criteria quite well. Thus, it seems that contemporary media buying is getting more and more complex and share characteristics of with other types of complex buying. These characteristics are amplified when it comes to totally new medias, but often new media investments take lesser share of the company's media budget compared to the more established medias (see chapter 4.4).

The characteristics that separate complex buying from non-complex buying resonate with media buying as well, especially in the case of new media buying. According to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2013) and Makkonen, Olkkonen & Halinen (2011) the following characteristics separate complex buying from non-complex buying:

- Continuous search for information from wide range of sources
- Non-routine decision making
- Incremental advancement in the process in contrast to the traditional view of rationality in organizational buying.
- Buyer and seller co-operate in the need diagnosis and diagnosis specification

As chapter 4.2.2 indicates, marketing managers' information search is an ongoing process and it is not only restricted to office hours. In fact, many of the interviewees mentioned that part of their insight to consumers' media behaviour comes from observing media in their everyday lives. In addition, all the other types of information sources were utilized among the interviewees, with information from the media agency being the most significant source. Media buying can be a routine decision or it can also be a non-routine decision. This difference is determined to a large extent by the novelty of the media in question. TV-spot in e.g. Nelonen can be seen more of a routine decision than e.g. producing content in Snapchat. These two media decision require different skill-sets and are hard to compare with each other, illustrating the complexity that arises from the wide spectrum of different medias. According to the interviewees, traditional advertising campaigns follow the rationalist approach of setting objectives (brand goals), proceeding with comprehensive plans (media plan), implementation programs and objective evaluation at the end of the process (see chapter 4.2.1). The applicability of this rationalist approach suggests that media buying process does not take into account all of the limitations of so-called rational decision making, but on the other hand, media buying cannot be compared to e.g. the general organisational buying model either (Johnston & Lewin 1996, 2) because of the significant role that the media agency has in the process. The incrementality of the buying process could be argued coming from the media agency's analysis of the current state of media landscape and how should the continuous change be reacted to, at this exact moment in the media investments. Like mentioned before, these complexities are even higher when it comes to new media buying and as chapter 4.4 demonstrated new media decision are sometimes done without almost any knowledge whether the investment will be successful or not. Thus, in some cases the actors are highly aware of their incomplete knowledge in the variable and complex circumstances surrounding the investment into a new media. The last, differentiating characteristic mentioned, in the conceptualization of complex buying (through how it differs from non-complex buying), regards the collaborative nature of the need diagnosis and diagnosis specification. This is very much the case in contemporary media buying. Due to the increasing media knowledge gap between in the media buying relationship, media agency participates into the service specifications (see chapter 4.3.4).

Third view into the conceptualization of complex buying can be achieved, according to Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen (2013, 350), through depicting complex buying as a problem-solving process. This process has the following steps:

- Recognize the need
- Identify subsequent information needs and sources: whom to contact, where to find more information
- Define the required offering
- Limit the group of alternatives
- Evaluate the focal supplier
- Be convinced of the offering and the capabilities of the supplier
- Be proactively prepared for future problems of a similar kind

Weighing up these steps to media buying it becomes clear that from the problem solving process view, new media buying fits better to the complex buying theory than general media buying. Since in typical media buying, the media agency is responsible for taking these above steps, whereas in new media buying it can be the advertiser alone or in collaboration with the media agency that takes these steps. The need recognition in new media buying always starts from reflecting the target audience. Because the characteristics of the aspired target audience is used as the criteria when choosing the media candidates. Like in one informant's case the "need" was to connect with the large number of online gamers in the brand's target audience. In order to connect with them, the advertiser needed to identify the subsequent information needs e.g. which gaming platforms exist. Then the advertiser needed to know what kind of advertising is possible on the viable platforms and what type of approach would fit the brand in question. Then if there are numerous different alternatives/medias, the advertiser needs to limit the group of alternatives and choose the media set so that the need is satisfied in the best possible way. So, like the interviewee mentioned there had been extensive research on the online gaming topic in their company recently. This aggressive search for information is a variable that is lacking often in traditional media investing since in traditional media investing the problem solving is largely the media agency's responsibility. The proactive preparation for future problems of similar kind could be seen in the case of new media buying as hiring a new media specialist in-house. This was a strategy that one of the interviewees had already done.

Thus, after contemplating media buying with the three different takes on the complex buying concept it seems that media buying resembles complex buying to some extent. In the wide spectrum of media buying (from traditional media to new media), all of the complex buying characteristics can be found. Complex buying as a problem solving process, on the other hand, clearly resembles more new media buying than the other end of the spectrum (traditional media buying).

5.2 The main findings of this study

This thesis aspired to understand the variation in beverage advertisers' new media investment behaviour. The aspiration took into consideration the ubiquitous nature of organisational buying. Thus, it was clear from the beginning that new media buying is part of a wider system and in order to understand new media buying there would need to be a holistic view to the system of activities that forms the media buying process. The conclusions presented in this section are based on the research questions of this thesis and they are presented in the same order as in chapter 1.2.

The first sub-question regarded the process and the structure of media buying in beverage enterprises. According to the results of this research, there are three types of media buying processes that reflect the way that the media buying process is structured. The most common media buying process is carried out by following a six-step process presented in chapter 4.2.1. This process starts from the brand strategy and proceeds to setting the goals for the campaign, including the aspired target audience. The service provider or providers are then approached by the media brief that is first accepted at higher organisational level before it is delivered to the media service provider. Then the media plan is executed and the advertiser and its service providers begin to analyse the results. The two other media buying processes reflect the exceptional situations that the advertisers in question have in their organisations (see chapter 4.2). It was learned that the media buying process is differs from the general buying process (see chapter 2.2.1) process of organisational buying due to the strong role that the service providers have in this process. Thus, typically the advertiser does not evaluate proposals from different media, instead the media service provider largely determines the range of possible media channels to be utilized.

When it comes to the structure of media buying, there seems to be roughly three different ways. The first two depict media buying as a collaborative process between the advertiser and one or more service providers. The difference between these two ways lies in the number of service providers as well as what type of service provider is considered being the most important in this decision making process. Among the interviewees there were organisations that had several service providers, as well as organisations that used only the media agency in their media buying process. In addition, the dynamics of these single or multiple service provider structures varied. Indeed, some of the advertisers had a clear sentiment about which actor has the most important role in this structure and in one case the equality of the actors' roles was emphasized. According to Rubinson (2010) the traditional role of media planning has changed from a mere logistical activity to a source of innovation. This change can be observed in the interviewed beverage firms that use multiple service providers. It was found that there can be overlapping between the roles of the media agency and the advertising agency in this type of structure. Consequently, instead of having only the media agency participating in to the media buying process, the ideas for media buying can come from any of the actors' participating in this process. However, it was found that it is eventually the media agency's role in all of the cases to make sure that these ideas can be backed with data. It is believed by the author, that this notion that the media agency is in the end responsible for the investments is one of the most integral variables affecting the dynamics of the general media buying process.

The third way to structure media buying is by not using a service provider in the buying process. This was the media buying structure in two instances. In the first case the beverage company sought cost-effectiveness by doing all of the media purchasing inhouse. However, the future vision of this particular advertiser included service provider in the media buying process. In the second case the selection to internalize media buying was due to their strategy that sought better corporate as well as marketing communications by synchronizing all of the company's communication channels under the same customer service process. In addition, the actor hired to lead this process brought additional digital advertising capabilities to the firm that were put into use in the form of internalizing some other parts of the company's digital advertising as well.

The structure of media buying seems to be affecting how the media buying is done in the organisation and consequently the adoption of new media as well. In all media investing, including new media, the target audience is always the basis for decision-making. However, there are differences between the service providers in terms of their willingness to recommend new media to reach the target audience and this seems to have an influence on the media investment decisions made by the advertiser. Indeed, some media agencies are more progressive than others and it seems that some beverage advertisers appreciate this foresightedness more than others. It seems that in some cases media agencies are hired for cost-effectiveness but also judged by their innovativeness. The reasons for these attitudinal and orientational variations are worth further research.

Similarly, it was found that other service providers such as digital- or advertising agencies can affect the adoption of new media as well. In addition, the internalization of media service seems to affect media buying as well by giving more room for experimentation. If the new media suggestions come from a media specialist inside the organisation it is reasonable to expect that these suggestions are taken into consideration more seriously, especially if the organisation is also willing to take risk in investing to new medias. The most progressive advertiser of this research, based on the attitude and orientation displayed in the interview, had internalized digital media services on some of its brands. This advertiser seemed to experiment most with new media out of any of the beverage advertisers that were investigated in this research. According to the interviewee from this organisation, the innovativeness in media selection is necessary for their aspiration of being an innovative beverage advertiser. Thus, media decisions are not isolated from their overall marketing strategy, in fact they are very much related to it and new media is used also as a branding tool. Indeed, for some advertisers, new media such as Snapchat or Periscope seem to carry desirable meanings that can be transferred to their brands. Thus, attractive brand of the new media is also a factor affecting its adoption.

The second sub-question concerned the nature of the buyer-provider relationship in media buying. It was found that due to the increasing complexity of the media landscape, media service providers are in increasingly dominant role in the buyer-service provider relationship and this way determine the media investments to a notable extent. Typically, the advertisers' role in the relationship is characterized by somewhat high uncertainty but extensive provider specific experience. Thus, often the relationship with the media service provider had been continuing for several years. According to the framework by Selviaridis et al. (2013, 1405) this signifies that the buyer is borderline dependent on the supplier, but can mitigate the associated risks by referencing knowledge sharing routines, past collaboration achievements and by building trust. Thus, investing into the relationship continuity, which seemed to be indeed the case among the studied objects. None of the interviewees admitted feeling worried about this dependency in their current service provider relationships, but like already mentioned, one of the interviewees had chosen internalization of some aspects of the media services.

It seems to the researcher that at the core of this relationship configuration is the eternal inexactness of measuring return on most media investments. Thus, it might be argued that it is in the interest of all parties that the media decisions appear to be as good as possible. If the chemistry is good between the actors in this relationship, it is coherent to believe that this relationship will continue for a long time. This is because if the media investment can't never really be assessed completely and the 'benefit of doubt' may well be on the service providers' side if the relationship works well in other ways. It is possible that this might be one of the main arguments for the long buyer-service provider relationships that the interviewees reported having.

Like already mentioned, the service providers have a significant influence as well as responsibility for the beverage advertisers' media investments. Therefore, it is understandable that some of the participant companies have guidelines, like the decision rules presented in chapter 4.2.3, that in essence steer the media agency's recommendations to an aspired direction, in the sense that the risk taking is planned on before-hand. This way the media decisions, that can't be measured exactly anyways, are still within the confines of what was agreed upon. Indeed, it seems that the new media investments reflect the level of experimenting that is allowed in the companies' media decision-making. This level of experimentation is also affected by the culture of the firm. Thus, whether new medias are seen as something suspicious or as the way of the future. If the firm is open to media experimentation this also seems to be increasing the likelihood of adopting new media.

The third sub-question of this research dealt with the way advertisers acquire information for their media decisions. This sub-question deals with perhaps one of the most integral aspects of media buying. However, like the topics of the previous sub-questions, this sub-question is also highly interrelated to the other sub-questions. Beverage advertisers use a wide range of information sources for their media decisions. These sources include personal, commercial, media and experimental sources. However, the media agency is considered being the single most important source of information in general. Interestingly, the advertisers' tend to observe young peoples' media behaviour e.g. what applications their kids are using or the teenagers in the tram are using. Thus, the information search for making media decisions is continuous as it is wide-ranging. Needless to say, there is an ocean of media information all around us but the beverage advertisers tend to use the media agency as the curator of this data. This finding about the importance of the service providers as the most important source of information brings us back to the notion that media buying is highly affected by the media service providers that the advertiser happens be in relationship with.

The continuous media fragmentation demands persistent sensitivity from the advertiser. The media environment is slightly reshaped every passing day and therefore a stationary view regarding it, is not a long-term strategy for a successful advertiser. According to one of the informants, the biggest challenge related to new media is just staying in the wagon, in the sense that the actor can judge whether some media is a 'nice-to-have' or a 'must-have'. All of the interviewees agree that the better they understand the media environment, the better decisions they make. However, this understanding requires a lot of effort from them, especially nowadays when their responsibility areas include lot more than just the complex media domain. Thus, information plays a vital role in the adoption of both old and new medias, but the quality of the relationship with the service providers or the quality of the internalization of the media service can be the difference maker in successful media investments. Since, in the end, those are the primary functions through which the actors make sense of the media environment. The differently constructed and perceived realities, as well as the intuitions concerning these realities, are heavily dependent on the service provider relationship as well as on the network context of the actors. However, like mentioned in chapters 4.4 and 5.1, data is not always a prerequisite for investing to new media. If the advertiser believes that their target audience uses some new media and this media can provide good case studies of its use, the likelihood that it will be adopted increases.

5.3 Managerial implications

The findings of this research provides an opportunity for all advertisers to compare the structure and process of their media buying to that of the Finnish beverage industry companies' media buying. By reflecting the similarities and differences in the structure and process of organisational media buying, managers should be better equipped to make decisions on how they will organize this function in the future. There is no one right way to organize a company's media buying, but being aware of the variation in this regard, should help to reinforce or question the set of practices that the company is committed to currently.

In addition, several practices related to dealing with potentially dominant service provider were presented. The relationship between the advertiser and the service provider should be observed critically. It is in the nature of contemporary buyer-service relationship to develop in to a direction of dependence. Therefore, observing critically the service provider relationships of the company as well as comparing it to how other companies perceive it, should help the organisation to steer away from the dark currents leading to dependence. This research provides an opportunity for this.

The realization that the variation in the media investments is rooted to a large degree on the choice of media service provider, should underline the strategic nature of the media service provider decision. 'Is the media agency right for us?' and 'does the value of the relationship show in the results (compared to the competitors' results)?', should be the key questions that managers repeat in their minds. This way the focus will be kept on the prize (business goals) rather than on irrelevancy. Like mentioned by one of the interviewees the difference between "nice-to-have" and "must have" must be clearly contested in every media decision.

This thesis also brought to light the dilemma of how to orientate in a situation where risk taking is a necessity but in conflict with the expectations that a buyer-service provider relationship is built on. Thus, how to convince a business partner, that is paid for efficiency, to take more or less risk. Depending on the advertiser and the media service provider this seemed to be an issue. A novel solution was expressed to this dilemma in this research.

Organisations are made of people and people are creatures of habit. Sometimes we take granted the things that have always been done in the same way. However, the world keeps on changing and the foundations on to which our previous dogmas were laid may not keep up with the change. The author hopes that this thesis can help the actors of the “advertiser-service provider-media” tripartite, to make sense of the phenomenon of new media adoption and what it entails more broadly to the structure and process of organisational media buying.

5.4 Limitations

The limitations of this thesis have to do with the complexity of the topic as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches selected to conduct this study. It could be argued that essentially this thesis is interested about the organisational innovation adoption process, however there was no innovation adoption literature included in this thesis. Instead the topic of this study was approached from organisational buying perspective. This was due to the realization that, from theoretical perspective, organisational innovation adoption and organisational buying processes differ just barely in the underlying assumption of the end result of the process. Innovation adoption is defined as ”a decision process leading to a purchase of an industrial innovation” (Ozanne and Churchill 1971, 322) and organisational buying, on the other hand, is seen as a purposeful organisational action recognising a need, operationalizing it into an suppliable form, comparing proposed alternatives and buying the alternative that meets the need if there is such an alternative (Makkonen & Johnston 2014, 327; Johnston & Lewin 1996, 2). Thus, these two approaches could be characterized as two sides of the same coin. However, including adoption literature could have provided a stronger theoretical background for this research.

In addition, as one conducts a research about a topic that is not well known nor well researched, there will be many choices made in the beginning of the research process that might not be the ideal choices when assessed in retrospect. Indeed, this was a highly explorative study and some of the chosen theoretical models proved not to be best equipped for this topic. For example, the buying centre concept, proved to be problematic to apply due to the focal firm orientation of the model. Media buying is typically carried out as a collaborative process with the media service provider(s) and not solely as an intrafirm process. The strong role of the e.g. media agency in the current media buying processes came as a surprize for the author. In addition, combining IMP-approach with the OBB-approach might have created a situation where the analysis of this thesis was perhaps restricted, due to having ‘one foot on the boat, and one foot on the dock’. Clearer and simpler theoretical approach would have possibly helped to acquire clearer and simpler findings. However, the end result would perhaps not been as nuanced as in the integrated research approach that was selected.

The data collection method of this thesis was the qualitative theme interview. This type of methodology brings its own weaknesses to a research. The interviews were conducted by the author and consequently their analysis may not be completely objective. Indeed, the analysis of the research data might reflect the world view and attitudes of the author. In an optimal case, several media professionals would have been interviewed on beforehand and used as guides in how to approach this topic and what aspects should be inspected up-close. However, the author lacked this type of industry contacts who could have helped in this sense. Also, it could be argued that this thesis could have interviewed both, larger set of informants as well as smaller set of informants. Larger sample size could have helped to create greater saturation in the answers and made the generalizations of the study more reliable. On the other hand, smaller sample size could have helped in creating deeper understanding of what kinds of factors contribute to the variation in new media buying.

The case study setting of this research set the investigation of new media buying variation within the bounds of the beverage industry. Whether these research results can be applied outside this bounded system, remains unclear.

5.5 Future research implications

We are living in the age of media innovation (see e.g. Romaniuk 2012). Indeed, as advertisers are still learning about the effectiveness of the last wave of new media (e.g. Facebook & Instagram), the next wave of media (e.g. Snapchat & Pericope) is already upon them. There is no sign that this development should stop and therefore this topic of research will arguably continue to be relevant also in the future. There are several directions that researchers can take, based on this explorative study. Some of these directions are related to the theoretical approach of this study, others have to do with the topics that were discovered during the interviews and, lastly, there are some general methodological suggestions for further research.

The topic of this research was approached by applying theoretical constructs from the OBB approach (e.g. buying centre, decision rules, buy phases, buying roles & information search activity) as well as from the network and interaction approach (e.g. buyer-service provider relationship & information search activity). This hybrid approach was useful for the holistic perspective that this thesis aspired to achieve, but it also limited some aspects that this study could achieve. For example, the buying centre construct is restricted to the focal firm but it was found that the 'buying centre actors' in media buying are not restricted to the focal firm. Thus, the model's assumptions about the nature of buying did not hold in the reality of media buying. In order to understand media buying better, also the individuals that are not part of the advertiser organisation, but still participate into the buying process, should be identified and included in to the investigation. A network approach that would put greater emphasis to the network structure of media buying should be in place in order to gain more accurate understanding.

There were several intriguing findings related to specific aspects of media buying that might deserve further research. It was mentioned by one of the informants that the big media agencies lobby media agency professionals with the hopes of getting bigger share in the media budgets of an advertiser. Indeed, according to another informant there are sometimes clear biases in the media suggestions of media agency representatives. This underlines the richness of the variables that affect media buying, but also reveals something about the politics and psychology related to media buying. It would be interesting to investigate to what extent media agencies are affected by the pressure from the big media houses. For example, if there are some kinds of incentives from the media houses that affect the recommendations of the media agency representatives. Also, a more in depth look at the motivations and personal characteristics of the participating actors of the media buying process could be in place. Some of the informants seemed to be more appreciative of the 'foresightedness' (innovativeness) of the media agency than others. It would be interesting to investigate whether this risk aversion is arising from the personal characteristics of the actors in the process or from some other variable e.g. the brand strategy.

This research was carried out as a qualitative case study that applied semi-structured interview method. Obviously, this approach is only one of the many possible approaches that could be applied for the investigation of this topic. One interesting approach would be a more focused case study. Thus, instead of interviewing six different advertisers, the focus could be narrowed to only one advertiser and its network context. This would help to answer many of the interesting questions that arose during the interviews. On the other hand, conducting a quantitative research that would have larger sample of advertisers and not only from the beverage industry, could help in the evaluation of the trustworthiness and authenticity of this research. Beverage industry deals with a low-involvement, positive motivation product (Rossiter & Percy 1991), thus the study results probably reflect more this category's marketing behaviour than others. There might be also a possibility to take a macro perspective to this topic and statistically compare the new media activities of certain groups of advertisers. For example, does the current profit levels of an advertiser correlate with new media adoption- or e.g. with the frequency of new media postings of the organisation. This method could provide a real opportunity for the comparison of the advertisers' media behaviour.

The increased complexity of the media is not causing difficulties only on the private sector. Indeed, also the public sector is facing challenges dealing with this fragmentation of audiences. It is increasingly hard to have a common conversation between the people of the country and the government of the country. This lack of connection as well as the purposefully biased and misleading media may well be contributing to the increasingly polarized public discourse that exists in many countries currently. Thus, the research of new media adoption e.g. on the country or government level could provide insight that surpasses commercial value.

6 SUMMARY

This master's thesis took a different approach to the previous research regarding advertiser's media selection behaviour. Instead of focusing on specific criteria of choosing a certain media, this research chose to focus on the uncharted research domain of the process leading up to the media decision. The media environment is constantly expanding as new applications and medias are incepting in the digital realm. Therefore, instead of focusing on some static set of variables, that affect an organisation's media investing, the author argues that the organisational and network characteristics regarding the adoption of new media is more relevant topic of study in the continuously changing contemporary media environment. This approach was founded on the three research questions of this study:

- What is the process and structure in media buying?
- What is the nature of the buyer-service provider relationship in media buying?
- What are the information sources used to make media decisions?

An explorative qualitative research was carried out using the Organisational Buying Behaviour approach as the main theoretical framework of this study. It was assumed that the selected OBB constructs are part of a wider network consisting of actors, resources and activities. Indeed, the buyer-service provider model that was developed in to the network and interaction view of reality (see Håkansson 1982) formed the context of this research. Also, the information search activity can be viewed from both the OBB tradition (see Bunn & Clopton 1993) as well as from the relationship marketing paradigm (see Aarikka-Stenroos & Makkonen 2014). The chosen research approach reflected the spirit of the authors on the business-to-business research discipline that consider the OBB approach still relevant approach. The theoretical approach aimed to provide a rich and holistic view to the focal topic of the research.

In the analytical framework of this thesis, the researcher aimed to select the most fitting constructs from the business-to-business marketing tradition to be applied to the topic of this study. Three constructs were selected to represent the essential junctures of media decision-making. It was believed that the actors' characteristics and decision rules could have a role in the beverage advertisers' media decision making. Also the buyer-service provider relationship was estimated being another integral part of media buying since it is increasingly so in other knowledge intensive industries. The last integrated construct was related to the information search activity of the beverage advertisers'. The activity of searching information scattered around the business network is an increasingly important theme in contemporary business. These constructs were integrated to the ARA-framework in the sense that the actors in the advertisers' media buying process are connected to various resources through interactions and relationships. These interactions and relationships are seen being affected by the buying centre actors' characteristics and the resources are considered including the information scattered in the business network and in the actors' environments. The most important resource was according to this research the media agency. The essential activity in which resources are utilized is the information search process of the advertisers which occurs, on the other hand, largely within the confines of the buyer – service provider relationship.

The empirical part of this study consisted of semi-structured interviews and it was gathered by interviewing most of the main organisations on the Finnish beverage industry. The data was analysed using the thematic approach to the data and with the aspiration to reach appropriate levels of authenticity and trustworthiness.

The findings of this thesis suggests that the marketing and media processes' form a highly interrelated system where the ambition to separate parts from it, for inspection, can be little problematic. For example, examining e.g. the information search activity as a separate function of the media investing process from e.g. buyer-supplier relationship makes it appear as if these two matters are separate, even though they are not. Buyer-supplier relationship is the most important source of information for the beverage advertisers, even though the advertisers have other information sources as well.

Much of the difficulty that the beverage advertisers are facing is due to the fragmentation of the media landscape and the uncertainty as well as complexity that has followed this development. This can be observed e.g. in the advertisers' increased reliance on the media agency. Depending on the extent of this reliance or trust, the media decisions are reflected by this. Thus, one of the main factors affecting beverage advertisers' new media buying is the media agency's foresightedness. However, due to the inexactness of measuring media investments impact, some advertisers approve that some percentage of their budget can be invested to medias that carry bigger risk than others. This willingness to risk with e.g. new media appears to also be related to the organisational culture of the advertiser. In some beverage firms' new medias are seen as good branding tools and in others somewhat suspicious and probable way to lose money.

If the media landscape keeps on fragmenting at the current pace it is reasonable to predict that the organisational structures that are in place today will change. The increasing complexity and uncertainty need to be contained in the sense that the actors responsible for these sometimes large media investments do not feel clueless when they make these decisions. Something resembling to adaptation is already in place in the beverage industry as one organisation has recently internalized parts of its digital media processes. According to the informant from this organisation, they expect this internalization to increase in the beverage industry and it the light of this research it seems to be a reasonable prediction.

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