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Building a thought leader position by corporate communication

Case Oceanic Awakening and SEA20 enabled by Wärtsilä

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ABSTRACT:

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää, miten ajatusjohtajuutta voidaan rakentaa kansainvälisen B2B-yrityksen ulkoisessa viestinnässä ja lehdistösuhteissa. Aihetta lähestyttiin Wärtsilän Oceanic Awakening -hankkeen viestintää esimerkkinä käyttäen. Tutkimuksen aineistona toimi kolme otetta yrityksen omasta viestintämateriaalista sekä neljä ammattilehdistön tuottamaa artikkelia. Tavoitteeseen päästiin selvittämällä, millaisia kielellisiä ja sisällöllisiä kokonaisuuksia voidaan havainnoida tavasta, jolla aineiston kirjoittajat kuvaavat maailmaa lingvistisesti. Tämän jälkeen selvitettiin, miten kielelliset ja sisällölliset kokonaisuudet rakentavat ajatusjohtajuutta. Lopuksi yrityksen omaa materiaalia vertailtiin lehdistön materiaaliin, jotta voitiin selvittää, missä määrin pyrkimykset rakentaa ajatusjohtajuutta näkyvät ammattilehdistön artikkeleissa.

Tutkimusmenetelmänä toimi aineistolähtöinen analyysi, joka sisälsi elementtejä sisällönanalyysista ja diskurssianalyysista. Aineistosta eriteltiin erityyppisiä verbiprosesseja käyttämällä systeemisfunktionaaliseen kielioppiin perustuvaa transitiivisuusjärjestelmää ja ajatusta osallistujarooleista. Näin voitiin tutkia kirjoittajan uskomuksia, kokemuksia sekä arvomaailmaa, joka heijastuu käytetystä kielestä. Prosessien pohjalta muodostettuja havaintoja yhdistettiin sisällöllisiin havaintoihin, minkä jälkeen niiden muodostamia kokonaisuuksia peilattiin yleisesti käytettyihin toimintatapoihin, joita viestinnän ammattilaiset käyttävät työssään julkisuuden parissa.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi, että Wärtsilän rakentama ajatusjohtajuus nojautuu liittoutumien rakentamiseen ja niin kutsutun kansan äänen hyödyntämiseen. Myös muita julkisuuden valloittamisen keinoja käytettiin, mutta ei niiden täydessä potentiaalissa. Yritys olisi voinut rakentaa ajatusjohtajuutta vahvemmin neutralisoimalla omaa viestintäänsä ja esittämällä lähteitä väitteidensä perusteeksi, jolloin sisältö olisi profiloitunut vahvemmin journalismin tai tieteen kaltaiseksi. Ajatusjohtajuutta ei myöskään rakennettu yrityksen edustajien kautta, vaikka edustajat pääsivätkin ääneen artikkeleissa. Tosin asiakeskeinen ammattilehdistökään ei antanut henkilöille painoarvoa artikkeleissaan. Vertailemalla yrityksen omaa viestintää lehdistön artikkeleihin saatiin selville, että molempien kirjoittajien tapa nähdä maailma on tekstin tasolla hyvin samanlainen. Osasyy tähän lienee se, että ammattimedia antaa paljon tilaa yrityksen edustajien sitaateille. Sitaattien kautta yritykset pystyvätkin hyödyntämään mediaa integroidun viestinnän suunnittelussa. Tapa, jolla yritys näyttäytyy mediassa, on kuitenkin loppujen lopuksi kiinni journalistisen tuotoksen kirjoittajasta, minkä johdosta niin kutsuttua ansaittua mediaa ei voi ajatella kiinteänä osana yrityksen integroitua viestintää.

KEYWORDS: Public relations, corporate communication, media, publicity, integrated communication

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1 Introduction

In the fall of 2018, the technology group Wärtsilä launched an international initiative that carries the name Oceanic Awakening. The initiative aims to call upon cities and harbors as well as other stakeholders in the marine and energy industry for actions to tackle the environmental challenges that the world is currently facing (Wärtsilä, 2018). The initiative raises awareness about global issues such as overcrowded cities, global warming, and the threatened biodiversity (Ylä-Anttila, 2018). Additionally, the initiative aims to address the operational inefficiencies that, according to Wärtsilä, have weakened the profitability of maritime companies (Wärtsilä, 2018).

As stated by Wärtsilä (2018), shipping is still today the most cost-efficient and sustainable way to transport goods. According to the company, the consumer demand is currently increasing significantly, which is why the maritime industry is forced to seek solutions for the matters that have a negative impact on the industry’s profitability as well as the environment. The Oceanic Awakening aims to bring the industry together to seek feasible solutions for smarter, safer, and ecologically more sustainable maritime ecosystems (Ylä-Anttila, 2018).

In addition to the Oceanic Awakening initiative, Wärtsilä has also founded a network of cities to collaborate on to tackle the issues pointed out by the Oceanic Awakening initiative (Wärtsilä 2019). The SEA20 network (SEA20, 2019) explains that the idea with it was to invite the key marine cities into one round table to further collaborate to solve the above-mentioned global scale-issues. The network clarifies that it would aim to enhance the dialogue between the cities and the industry players through organizing various summits on the topic. The first member cities of this network were Helsinki, Rotterdam, Trieste, and Hamburg (SEA20, 2019).

With this initiative, Wärtsilä aims to become a global thought leader of the maritime industry. According to Aapola (2012, p. 12), thought leadership is a concept that is based on the conspicuousness and reliability of the company and its offering. Furthermore, Aapola elaborates that the thought leader position is often built on strategic differentiation and competitive advantage that are communicated externally through marketing communication. Other characteristics of thought leadership, according to Aapola, are also maximized visibility in all stakeholder groups, aim to support networking within the industry, and to evoke a dialogue. Bourne (2015), on the other hand, describes thought leadership as the intellectual power of the organization, which is often linked to public relations activities. According to Bourne, thought leadership has become an essential tool in global markets over the past years because of the ever-growing need to build trust between stakeholders.

1.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to find out how thought leadership can be built through corporate communication and public relations of a multinational B2B company. The study looks at its research problem from the point of view of grammatical forms and the content of the data. These two aspects constitute *form-content combinations.* The method will be further explained in section 1.3 and in chapter 4. The aim of the study will be achieved through examining the case of Wärtsilä's Oceanic awakening and considering three research questions.

1. Which form-content combinations are present in the data set based on the way in which the authors of the data set represent the world linguistically?
2. How do these form-content combinations construct though leadership?
3. How do the form-content combinations present in Wärtsilä's owned media compare with the ones in professional press?

In the past, a lot of studies have been conducted on the topic of thought leadership and it has been a popular topic especially in the field of brand management (Jevons, Buil, Merrilees & de Chernatory, 2013). However, there has been barely any studies on the topic from the field of communication studies. The previous research on the topic from the communication studies perspective discussed the topic on a relatively broad scale, which leaves plenty of space for further research to be conducted in the field of communication studies (see Ulmer, 2012).

Furthermore, this study will be highly beneficial to Wärtsilä as it will give an overall picture of the content in the company’s communication, and give an insight on what the journalists tend to emphasize while writing on the Oceanic Awakening initiative. The linguistic choices they make while writing on the topic reflect the ways they see the reality around it. Additionally, the topic also holds a personal interest for me thanks to my own work experience in the marketing and communications department at Wärtsilä Marine Business.

1.2 Data

This study will carefully examine the research questions through analyzing the data that is collected from Wärtsilä’s own external communication channels as well as from independent media sources. I will achieve a broad view on the topic through collecting data from a diverse set of sources and by considering different perspectives on the matter. All articles are written in English, which also allows a fair analysis of the tones of voices.

The collected data consists of four articles published online by different media outlets, which all operate in the field of maritime industry or technology. The media sources are chosen to represent the scope of tech-media as widely as possible. For example, Forbes represents economic journalism, whereas MARPRO represents maritime technology. The reason behind a wide media scope is also geographical. The chosen articles are from magazines that come from different parts of the world, for example, USA (Forbes) and Denmark (MARPRO).

Apart from the articles in the professional press, the study also uses in its analysis one article from Wärtisilä’s stakeholder magazine Twentyfour7, a passage of Wärtsilä’s annual report, and one press release published by Wärtsilä itself. All of these channels have different roles and functions in the external communication of Wärtsilä, and, therefore, they generate diversity in the analysis.

Table 1 The data studied

Media	Headline	Publishing date	Words	Publisher / Author
Press release	'An Oceanic Awakening' and SEA20 herald a wake-up call to the potential of our Oceans in an era of unprecedented global change	2018-09-05	939	Wärtsilä
Twentyfour7	SEA20: Marine cities join together for change	2019-09-26	948	Wärtsilä
Annual report 2018	An Oceanic Awakening	2019-02-12	426	Wärtsilä
World Maritime News	Wartsila Unveils An Oceanic Awakening Initiative at SMM	2018-09-05	334	World Maritime News
gCaptain	Wärtsilä Initiative Touted as "Wake-Up Call" for Oceans Role in Era of Global Change	2018-09-14	640	gCaptain
Forbes	Oceanic Awakening' Aims For Smarter, Cleaner Marine Shipping	2018-09-17	570	Forbes / Jeff Kart
MARPRO Maritime Professionals	"An Oceanic Awakening" explained	2018-12-17	1111	MARPRO / MARPRO Team

The other reason for choosing these specific articles was their publishing time and their free accessibility. Articles requiring paid subscriptions were automatically excluded from the scope of this study. It is important to mention that these articles were chosen to represent the entire life cycle of Oceanic Awakening. The Oceanic Awakening was officially launched in August 2018. The very first articles on this topic were published only a few hours after the launch, and the publishing of the articles continued even a year after the launch.

The scope of the data that is used in this study is relatively wide and the length of the articles differ significantly. Variability of data is vital for delivering a proper analysis on the topic. The collected material is presented in Table 1. The URLs and dates of each article are listed in Appendix 1.

1.3 Method

This study is more of a problem-driven study rather than a method-driven study. The problem-driven approach has been used before, for example, in the field of political communication research. The benefit of the approach is that it provides a reasonable framework for engaging with the literature, enabling a versatile set of ideas, and findings to draw analysis from (Branstetter, 2011).

However, this does not mean that some aspects of the well-known theoretical frameworks would be excluded from this study. On the contrary, the approach of this study contains essential elements of, for example, content analysis, and discourse analysis. Thus, the linguistic observations of this study will be made by utilizing elements of M.A.K Halliday's (1985) systemic functional grammar. The problem-driven analysis will include three phases of which each will provide an answer to each of the research questions. The phases are represented in figure 1.

The first phase of this analysis is based loosely on Halliday's (1985, p. 101–144) thoughts of transitivity and the participant roles. Transitivity system is a tool for analyzing the meaning of the clauses and as it forms a part of the experiential function of the language, it can be used to demonstrate how language is used to construct our experience of the world (Öhman, 2018). Even though Halliday's approach is based on functional grammar and is a highly linguistic approach, this research applies the method at a more practical level. Halliday (1985) mentioned that there are six types of processes that a clause can represent. Those processes are *material*, *mental, relational, behavioural, existential,* and *verbal*, and each of them is further explained in section 3.5 (p. 101–130). The clauses of the data set will be analyzed and divided into these six categories.

In addition to process types, the question if the participants are presented as active or passive players is significant when researching the impression desired by the authors. Defining whether the actor is passive or active is based on Van Leeuwen's (1996, p. 43–55) idea of role allocation. According to Van Leeuwen, *activation* occurs when actors are represented as active and dynamic forces in an activity. On the other hand, passivation occurs when the actor is represented as 'undergoing' the activity or being on the receiving party of it. At the end of the first phase, coherent form-content combinations will be formed by taking a further look at the incidence of process types combined with the content of the articles. The form-side of the combinations will be formed based on the observations on the entities of actors, processes, the functions of the processes and activation/passivation. The content-side of the combinations consist of observations of what is said in the articles.

The second phase of the analysis will examine how the form-content combinations drive thought leadership. This question will be answered by using the problem-driven approach. This phase leans on the presumption that thought leadership is achieved by dominating the public discussion. This study assumes that by obtaining media attention, different topics can be raised to the public discussion. Thus, the public discussion can be dominated, since media is an important driving force of the public sphere. In this study, the process of raising topics to the public discussion by utilizing media is called "ways of getting across to the public"

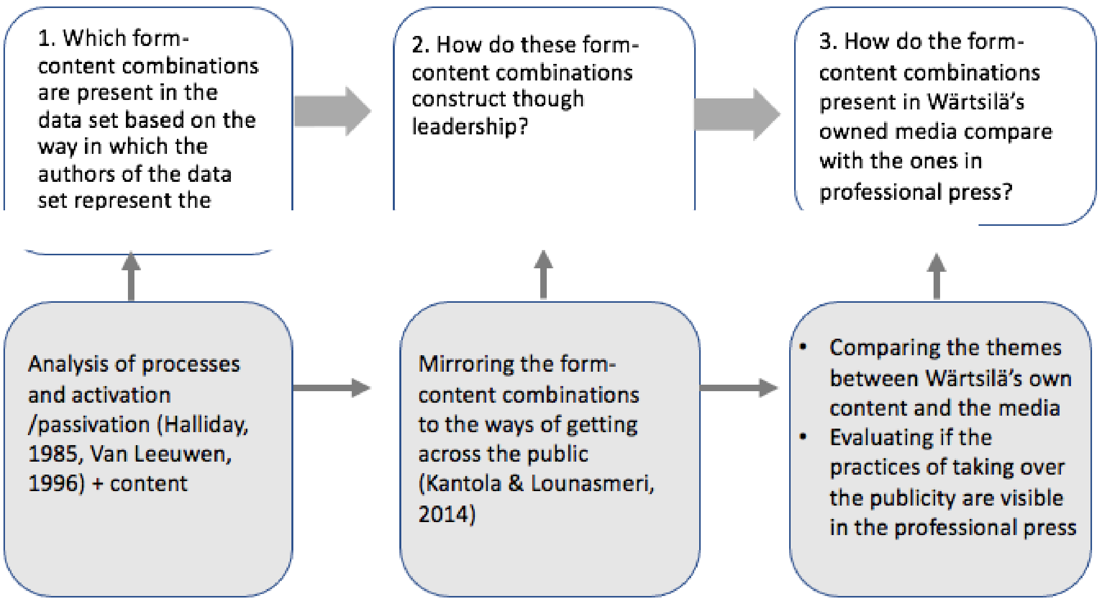

Figure 1 Method and research questions

Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) have distinguished in their research the main practices that the communications and PR professionals use most frequently while taking over the publicity, and in that way building a thought leader position. The main practices will be presented in section 3.4. Moreover, in the second phase of the study, the practices will be examined based on whether these practices are visible in the form-content combinations that were discovered in the first phase of the method. The ways as presented by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) are concrete marketing activities, but this study takes a look at them also at the level of language. In that way, I will discuss whether there are signs of utilizing these ways in both the content of the articles and the language used in them.

In the third phase of the analysis, I will compare the data collected from Wärtsilä's external communication with the professional press. This comparison will be done by looking into the results of the two previous phases as well as delving into differences and similarities found in the data collected from two different categories. This phase of the analysis will generate answers to the research question 3.

2 Communicating in corporate environment

This study belongs the field of organizational communication. As the aim of the study is to find out how thought leadership position can be built with corporate communication and public relations, it is essential to present and define both concepts. The data set consist of articles that are picked from different channels of corporate communication as well as the professional press, which is why this chapter will delve deep in both platforms. The topic touches closely the concept of integrated communication, which is why I will also introduce the concept on communication integration discuss the integrated marketing communication as well. In the end of the chapter, I will apply these concepts to my data set. By doing so, I will consider, to which extent the introduced concepts are visible in my study.

2.1 Different views on communication disciplines

There are various views of communication in the organizations. Some of them have their basis in communication studies and some on business. In this section, I will present four different forms of communication that are often raised into discussion where the topic is communication of an organization. These forms are *organizational communication*, *corporate communication*, *public relations* and *marketing communication*. In addition to presenting these views, I will discuss shortly the history of them and enlighten how do these views relate to each other.

2.1.1 Organizational communication

Organizational communication describes the communication of an organization in a holistic sense, although there are varying views on the definition of organizational communication (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 14). The field of organizational communication is very complex due to the diverse nature of what organizational communication as a study is, does, excludes, includes, and who is proficient enough to define it (Stanley

& Eger, 2014, p. 29). Thus, organizational communication is relatively young as a field compared to other disciplines since it has its roots date back less than 100 years (Gills, 2011, p. 11).

A common viewpoint in many of the approaches is to see organizational communication as the communication between stakeholders for business purposes both internally and externally (Abolade, 2015, p. 7). However, the variation of the concept can be seen when taking a closer look at it. The most common division between the definitions is whether the organizational communication is considered as a function that shares information and meaning through an organization or as a process of interaction, in which the meaning and the experience of an organization is formed, maintained, transacted, and adjusted (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 14).

For the purpose of understanding the concept of organizational communication, it is important to acknowledge the organization's role as a part of a sub-system in a society. Because of this role, an organization is obligated to communicate with an external environment to create a wholesome relationship (Abolade, 2015, p. 7). The following sections will dive into different terms and concepts related to an organization's communication processes with the external environment.

2.1.2 Corporate communication

Corporate communication is a concept that has been widely debated between the schools of business, the schools of journalism and the schools of communication. The latter two schools argue that the discipline is logically more connected to what they do rather than to management education (Argenti, 1996, p. 73–74). Nevertheless, the concept has evolved from the companies' need to refer to a board range of communication internally and externally with a management perspective (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 16).

Corporate communication thrives in an environment where companies are a part of semi-open sociotechnical system that requires continuous exchange with stakeholders such as investors, customers, and employees as well as with other social entities such as local communities, media, NGOs, and lobbying groups (Evangelisti Allori, 2010, p. 9). The focus of corporate communication according to Van Riel is (1997, p. 289) "*mutual interdependency between organizational performance on one hand and corporate identity, corporate reputation and orchestration of communications on the other hand*". Additionally, corporate communication covers various areas of an organization, such as corporate image and identity, financial communications, advertising, media relations, corporate philanthropy, government relations, and crisis communication (Argenti, 1996, p. 77).

2.1.3 Public relations

Throughout the history of *public relations (PR)*, there has been many definitions for the concept. Some of them are designed to cover the phenomena differently in various parts of the world (see Verčič, van Ruler, Bütschi, & Flodin, 2001), and some of them approach the definition from the view point of a specific field, for example, from legal perspective (see Myers, 2016). The International Public Relations Association defines PR as follows:

> Public relations is a decision-making management practice tasked with building relationships and interests between organizations and their publics based on the delivery of information through trusted and ethical communication methods. (IRPA, 2020).

With this definition, IRPA aims to answer the question of what PR exactly is, why it is used and how it is used today (IRPA, 2020). However, it is notable that the last few words of the definition based on IRPA's values and code of conducts do not necessarily cover all types of PR activities. IRPA's definition encompasses many views of the nature of public relations, but it does not define what type of instances are "publics" in this context. Luttrell (2019) enlightens this question by dividing PR into four categories: media relations, community relations, business relations and government relations. The nature of public and publicity is further defined in chapter 3.

It shall also be mentioned that some researches consider corporate communication as a synonym to PR (Van Riel, 1997, p. 288). Angelopulo and Schoonraad (2006, p. 17) point out that it is only natural as it is difficult to distinguish those two fields. Whilst, both corporate communication and PR focus on management, implementation of strategy, and organizations' communication. They often address same issues, use the same practices, and rely on the same theory. However, the difference according to Angelopulo and Schoonraad, lies in the origins of the concepts: PR is originated in journalism, publicity and communication studies, whereas corporate communication has its origins in business.

The concept of PR has also been falsely believed to be synonym to free advertising (Ehrlich & Fanelli, 2012, p. 75). Public relations and advertising traditionally share similar goals, tasks and a lot of activities. In the modern view, the domains have shifted slightly as some tasks and activities that were previously done in the domain of advertising are now carried out in the domain of public relations and vice versa (Xie, Neill, & Schauster, 2018, p. 160–161). Nevertheless, Ehrlich and Fanelli (2012, p. 75) state that public relations should not be referred as free advertising as it is neither advertising, nor free.

2.1.4 Marketing communication

As stated by Angelopulo and Schoonraad (2006, p. 17) marketing communication can mean at the fundamental level a communication element that is a part of a marketing process. They argue that the perception of the nature of this communication has changed over time as well as the concept of marketing itself. Kotler et al. (2012, p. 351) approach marketing communication in a more traditional way, stating that it contains a mixed type of communication that is used to create a clear and compelling message for customers and other stakeholders. This mix consists of five forms of communication:

advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, and direct marketing. However, Angelopulo and Schoonraad (2006, p. 18) note that not all academics and practitioners see PR as a part of the so-called *marketing communications mix.*

The traditional approach has been created over time when marketing was regarded as a transaction, and marketing elements aimed only to this transaction receiving the greatest attention possible (Angelopulo & Schoonraad 2006, p. 18). However, the nature of marketing is currently changing as a result of the information revolution and services revolution of the global economy (Rust & Huang, 2014, p. 206). Over the course of the last decades, competition in the field of marketing has increased significantly, and the perception of marketing has changed (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 18). Competition has increased also in the field of pricing and global presence creating more tension between the companies as well as pressure to cut costs from dissatisfying advertising and continuously increasing media costs (Barker, 2006, p. 154–155).

Marketing as science has shifted its focus to the heterogeneity of customers and the service-based economy (Rust & Huang, 2014, p. 206). The mass media has gained capacity for individual interaction with audience members on a mass scale (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 18). Simultaneously, media channel fragmentation demands re-evaluation of the variety of media channels to deliver the message with the intent that the marketing communication budget is used in the most efficient way possible (Braker, 2006, p. 154). Today, big data enables the marketeers to take the customer relationships into deeper levels and can offer more personalized services (Rust & Huang, 2014, p. 206).

The factors mentioned above have forced the practices of marketing communication to be renewed (Angelopulo & Schoonraad, 2006, p. 18). The need for strategic integration of marketing communication started an explicit move towards integrated marketing communications (IMC) during the 1980s (Barker, 2006, p. 153). There has been various definitions for the marketing communication since then (see Barker, 2006, p. 152–153).

For example, Kliatchko (2008) views it as “an audience driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels and results of brand communication programs”. On the other hand, Johansen and Andersen (2012, p. 247) view that integration has transformed marketing communication from a mere promotional tool to a coherent coordination of the promotion mix with a strategic discipline. The strategic discipline focuses on integrating marketing communication across the media, stakeholders, content, and its measurements into an overall marketing or branding strategy with the aim of creating coherent and coordinated messages within all contact points.

As a reaction to the shift, Kotler et al. (2012, p. 351) claims that the traditional marketing communications mix approach as described earlier must be re-organized under the concept of integrated marketing communications. Thus, according to Angelopulo & Schoonraad (2006, p. 18) marketing communication is viewed as the communication aspect of the relationship between a business and a customer rather than as a discrete set of communication techniques.

2.2 PESO-model

An alternative view to the approach that considers the lines to be blurry between PR and advertising would be to see advertising and PR as fields that are separate, but yet integrated together as fields (Xie, et al., 2018, p. 161). The integration is easier to comprehend through looking at the concepts of *paid, earned, shared* and *owned* media. These four categories form the so-called PESO-model, described by, for example, Macnamara, Lwin, Adi and Zerfass (2016). According to them (p. 377), these four quadrants of PESO-model have been defined in contemporary academic literature in order to effectively categorize media content. In this section, I will further define each concept.

Paid media refers to all types of material contracted between the company and mass media, and it is often considered as the most dominant form of promotional media

(Macnamara et al., 2016, p. 377). The term covers, for example, promotional placements, such as display adds (Cuthill, 2013, p. 193). Paid media has also sometimes been used as a synonym to advertising (see Stephen & Galak, 2012, p. 625).

S*hared media,* according to Macnamara et al (2016, p. 387), means the forms of media that are open for followers, friends and subscribers that are able contribute and comment on it. It is also pointed out that shared media contains the type of content that ranges from comments to posts, to collaborations, and co-productions. Business executives from global economic power areas, such as the United States and China, understand the value of shared media in social relations, two-way conversations, and engagements, despite the channels of shared media being different globally (Xie et al.2018, p. 169). For example, brand-related egagement groups in social media would count as shared media.

Owned media refers to media activities that are created by an organization or its agents in their own channels (Stephen & Galak, 2012, p. 625). Owned media often includes promotional items such as webpages, chatrooms, or mobile applications (Cuthill, 2013, p. 193). It can also be described as company-owned media outlets that can be, for example, stakeholder magazines and newsletters (Xie, et al., 2018, p. 164). Recently, it can also be seen that companies' official Facebook sites are counted as owned media (Macnamara et al., 2016, p. 377).

Cuthill (2013, p. 193) describes *earned media* as brand-related customer engagement. That view highlights the branding perspective; however, another perspective should also be considered. For example, Stephen and Galak (2012, p. 625) see earned media as an activity that is not generated by companies themselves, but rather through its stakeholders, for example, customers (in case of word-of-mouth marketing) or through traditional media publicity. Stephen and Galak (2012) state that marketing activities can increase earned media publicity, but marketers do not directly generate it. According to Xie et al. (2018), the practices of utilizing earned media vary in different parts of the world. They also point out that business executives in the United States were more likely to approach earned media from the traditional media publicity point of view, while the Chinese rather rely on internet based earned media and word-of-mouth marketing when it comes to the earned media.

2.3 Communication integration

Integrated communications, as per Christensen, Firat and Torp (2008, p. 424) can be defined as a practice of aligning symbols, messages, procedures, and behaviors so that an organization can communicate with clarity, continuity, and consistency within as well as across the traditional organizational boundaries. It is a holistic endeavor that takes place at a strategic level and oversees an organization as a whole (Johansen & Andersen, 2012, p. 276). It is described as a process of re-thinking and organizing communication, whilst nourishing a strategically important relationship with stakeholders as well as maintaining a dialogue with them (Angelopulo, 2006, p. 40). This integration can be implemented in various different ways (Van Riel, 1997, p. 300). Even though majority of scholars admit that integration is one of the most significant concerns within communication management, there is still varying views on what exactly should be integrated (Johansen & Andersen, 2012, p. 276).

Partially the same factors that evoked the need for IMC have also raised the discussion for a need for integrated communication (see Angelopulo, 2006, p. 42). In addition to the market forces, during the last decade, there has been an increase in what Christensen, Firat and Cornelissen, (2009, p. 207) described as socially oriented drivers of integration. One of these social drivers is the need for openness and reliability within organizations. Thus, the key issues within corporate communication, as per Johansen and Andersen (2012, p. 276-277) tend to be consistency, coherence and clarity. It is further claimed that integration highlights the corporation as an entity, which tends to result in a holistic approach to communication.

The IMC and integrated communication tend to work with mutual starting points, operational systems as well as co-operative structures with decision making (Van Riel, 1997, p. 300). Thus, the concept of integrated communication is much wider than IMC, since the IMC tends to look at the concept only from the angle of marketing (Christensen et al, 2008, p. 424). On the other hand, integrated communication can also be applied to, for example, an organization's internal communication (see Kalla, 2005). Hence, there also seems to be a slight difference between the disciplines regarding what should be the focus of integrating. In the context of IMC, integration focuses mostly on the marketing communications mix, whereas within the discipline of corporate communication it is emphasized that all forms of communication internally and externally can be integrated (Johansen & Andersen, 2012, p. 277).

As mentioned above, integrated communication sees an organization as a one entity. This means that integration does not encompass only the communication generated by a specialized communications department but rather all means of communication within the company (Angelopulo, 2006, p. 43). Therefore, it is important that integrated communication is seen from a multidisciplinary point of view (see Christensen et al. 2008, p. 242–425), rather than just from the marketing angle. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the longest tradition of integrated communication can be found from the discipline of corporate design (Van Riel, 1997, p. 300).

Despite there being varying views about how to define integrated communication, Johansen and Andersen (2012, p. 277) noted that in the majority of the definitions, the key concept is *one voice* or *one persona* of an organization. The marketing aspect of integration, according to them, seems to highlight that an organization should speak with one voice and present themselves as one *Gestalt.* On the other hand, the corporate communication's approach to this issue is that communication should be integrated to the corporate strategy and therefore, integration involves an organization to present itself as one persona.

The tendency to focus on the so-called collective voice of an organization has also been criticized by Henderson, Cheney and Weawer (2014, p. 35), because of its monotonic nature. According to them, leaving the diversity of individual identities without attention in communication may result in unpredictability from the point of view of the organization. Furthermore, this is the most frequent result when the collective voice has been taken as univocal in when aiming at a single organizational voice, especially when the campaign involves controversial issues. Additionally, Johansen and Andersen (2012, p. 285) suggest that the idea of the single-voice approach would be shifted from a static intra-organizational endeavor to a process that is co-created with stakeholders. This co-creation would enable self-reflection of corporate identity, dialogue with stakeholders, and integration of stakeholder voices into corporate strategies.

Corporate identity is also one of the elements that are often underlined in the context of communication integration. It is related to the phenomenon of one voice or one persona (Johansen & Andersen, 2012, 277). The term traditionally covered only brand elements, such as naming and visual identification used by the organization (Van Riel, 1997, p. 290). Nowadays, it is seen as a tool that is used to create a coherent picture of an organization, and to promote recognizability as well as cooperation within the organization (Angelopulo, 2006, p. 51). In accordance with this modernized concept, corporate identity means the way in which a company presents itself through behavior as well as through symbols both internally and externally (Van Riel, 1997, p. 290).

2.4 Integrated communication behind Oceanic Awakening

Oceanic Awakening is Wärtsilä's initiative that was launched in 2018. According to Wärtsilä (2018), the goal is to transform the world's marine and energy industry to more efficient, environmentally friendly and digitally connected. The goal of the initiative was to wake up the stakeholders of the industry to collaborate. Within the initiative, the company formed a network that aims to have 20 member major maritime cities (SEA20, 2018).

Wärtsilä's aim is that Oceanic Awakening would not be interpreted as a campaign (Ylä-Anttila, 2018). This aim signals an attempt behind the initiative to have a more holistic and integrated approach to communication rather than just focusing on effective marketing communication. In an interview of a Finnish marketing and communication related media outlet Markkinointi & Mainonta (Ylä-Anttila, 2018), one of the initiators of the campaign, Olli Sirén said that the initiative crosses the borders of marketing communications, influencer communication and creative design. This could also be considered as a sign that there is some integrated thinking behind the initiative.

Despite Wärtsilä being behind the initiative, the aim of the initiative according to Wärtsilä (Ylä-Anttila, 2018) is not to promote Wärtsilä itself. The goal of the initiative is to have an impact on the marine industry. By highlighting this aspect, the company aims to convince the audience that profitability is not the only driver behind the initiative. This can be interpreted as a signal of attempting to present the company through its behavior, which matches to Van Riel's (1997, p. 290) definition of building a corporate identity. In an interview with Markkinointi & Mainonta (Alkula, 2019), Wärtsilä's executive vice president, Communications, branding and marketing, Atte Palomäki confirmed that through the initiative Wärtsilä indeed aims to profile itself as the party that calls the whole industry for action and collaboration.

The idea of integrated communication behind the initiative is also visible whilst looking at the initiative from a strategy angle. In the context of integrated corporate communication, there is a strong sense to not only integrate the output of communication, but also a communication strategy into the corporate strategy (Johansen & Andersen, 2012, p. 277). While looking at Wärtsilä's Smart Marine strategy (Wärtsilä 2017, 2020) one can find very similar themes to those that the Oceanic Awakening initiative promotes (cf. Wärtsiä 2018, Ylä-Anttila, 2018, Alkula, 2019). For example, the idea of the industry collaboration to tackle the environmental challenges and the ecosystem thinking are part of both strategies. The similarity between the themes of the corporate strategy and Oceanic Awakening is one of the factors that indicate that there is some level of integration in strategies.

In conclusion, one can observe that the Oceanic Awakening content is presented in nearly all forms of external communication that Wärtsilä uses. This includes, for example, social media, annual reports, public relations activities, exhibition materials, stakeholder magazines, visitor premises of company headquarters, adverts, company website, and the dedicated SEA20 website. This indicates that the media of the PESO-model, paid, earned, shared and owned (see Macnamara et al. 2016) are all designed to promote the initiative. The data articles used in this research are divided between earned and owned media (see figure 2).

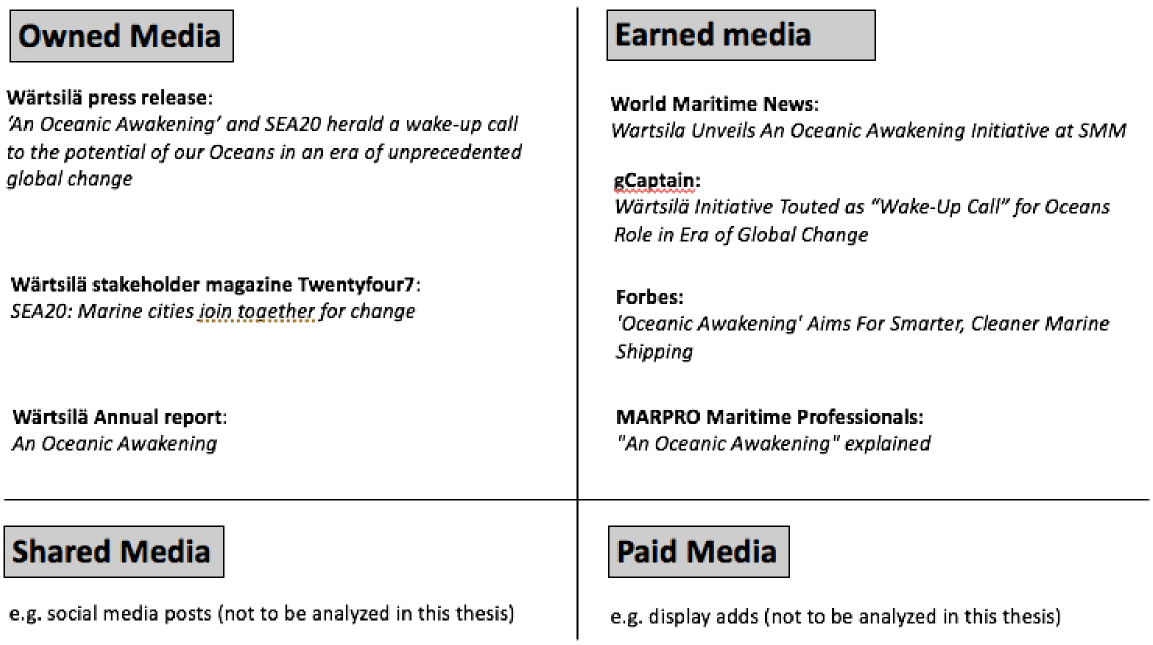

Figure 2 Earned, Owned, Shared and Paid media of Oceanic Awakening

The question of to what extent the external communication can be integrated, is very fascinating. To which extent can the collective voice of the company reach the earned media publicity that is out of the control of company? This is one of the questions that this study aims to provide an answer for while answering to my third research question. Comparing the owned and the earned media enlightens whether the collective voice can exist also in the earned media.

3 Thought Leadership and Publicity

In this chapter, I will introduce one of the key concepts of this study – thought leadership. Yet, before discussing the concept in-depth, it is important to understand publicity, which is, in many ways, involved when discussing thought leadership. In the beginning of the chapter, I will introduce concepts that are tightly related to the publicity and elaborate on the ways that publicity has been transforming during the last years. I will also reflect on how the transformation might impact thought leadership position formation. At the end of the chapter, I will discuss different ways that thought leadership is often perceived. In section 3.4. I will introduce the elements that, in this study, form the basis for building thought leadership.

3.1 Publicity

Publicity and public were shortly mentioned in section 2.3.1 when the concept of public relations was defined. This section looks at the concepts in a deeper level by explaining the nature of publicity. The nature is interesting in the context of this study because this study has one of its methodological cornerstones in ways of getting across to the public, presented by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014).

Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) conducted a research on the concepts of *media* and *publicity*. These two concepts can be distinguished by focusing on the wider concept of *the public sphere.* According to Mills and Barlow (2009, p. 300–301), the concept was originally introduced by Jürgen Habermas, and it is used to describe a realm of social life where public opinion can be spontaneously formed. Mills and Barlow (2009, p. 300–301) interpret this concept by emphasizing that every citizen should be ideally able to participate in the public sphere discussions. In their view, the public sphere exists in a society where all citizens are able discuss and express their opinions freely as private citizens and not as members of business or professional constitutions. They stated that the public sphere should always be unrestricted. In practice this means that the public sphere cannot exist without freedom of speech or the right to express one's opinions in public.

Mills and Barlow (2009, p. 300–301) emphasize also, that in a society where a large-scale public sphere exists, there is a need for certain type of a system for transmitting information in an unbiased way to citizens. Thus, the concept of *media* is an important factor in the distribution of information to the public. The modern public sphere consists of newspapers, magazines, radio, and television as well as of many other media sources (Mills & Barlow, 2009, p. 300–301). The concept of media itself is very hard to define. Conventionally, according to Seppänen and Väliverronen, 2012, p.10), the concept has covered only the traditional mass communication channels such as official television and radio channels, press, and official websites. Additionally, social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are often counted as a part of the new media.

While analyzing closely the traditional mass communication channels, it is important to notice how those channels have combined their platforms together over the years. Seppänen and Väliverronen (2012) name *media convergence* as one example of how the field of media has been changing during the last decades. This means a trend of media companies sharing the same news content on their multiple platforms simultaneously. They also mention that nowadays a lot of people watch the news and read articles from smartphones, which means that communication technologies have a significant role in the way media is distributed, and this fact cannot be excluded from the definition of media. To summarize, media covers simultaneously the communication technologies, content, content production, and interaction with other media users (Seppänen & Väliverronen, 2012, p. 10).

It is important to note, that the concept of *public* must be separated from the *public sphere* (Mills & Barlow, 2009, p. 300). According to Johnson (2006, p. 1) the concept of *public* can be described as a purpose-built solidarity, where mutually dependent individuals seek for a common interpretation of their shared circumstances and an aim for a general response for their needs as well as dissatisfactions that are important to the individuals collectively. This concerns everyone who is affected by the consequences of the discussion to an extent that it is necessary to care about those consequences. On the other hand, the *public sphere* refers to an institution that assumes a concrete form of participation and cannot be characterized as crowd (Mills & Barlow, 2009, p. 300).

The *public* and the *public sphere* are concepts that are defined in the academic literature, however, it seems that publicity is a wider term for the phenomenon (see. Habermas 2008, p. 11). In this study, I understand *publicity* as an umbrella concept that covers both the concepts of the *public sphere* and the *public*.

3.2 Transformation of publicity

According to Johnson (2006, p. 1) publicity is currently going through an era of transformation. In accordance with this view, some researchers even claim that the public sphere is near its terminal state. The reason behind this claim is that its ability to promote solidarity among people and ability to generate agreements on the importance of current problems appear to be disappearing. Johnson also claims that one characteristic of the modern *public* is that common cause is built trough searching solutions to problems that were previously considered private matters.

The father of the term *public sphere* is Jürgen Habermas, who also sees the change in the public and agrees with Johnson's statements (2008, p. 11–12). He finds it important to distinguish the modern *public* and *publicity*. In the *modern publicity,* visibility can be the real reason behind public appearances, and those who have more public visibility often lose their private life.

3.2.1 Personification

A culture, where self-representation takes priority over substantial topics can create troubles for building a thought leader position, especially in terms of public self-representation. Alho (2012, p. 94) views that self-representation has become more common especially in the fields of politics. This development is portraited in the political public sphere since scandals that were previously seen as politicians' private matters are nowadays topics of a public discussion in the media. This trend has been growing since the early 21st Before that journalists, at least in Finland, did not feel comfortable writing headlines on the private matters of politicians (Seppänen & Väliverronen, 2012, p. 48).

This so-called personification can be seen in various media sources ranging from official news outlets to social media platforms (Seppänen & Väliverronen, 2012, p. 47–48). Ranft, Zinko, Ferris and Buckley, (2006, p. 279) described the ways that personification has spread to the field of corporate PR and communication. They noticed that even high-profile companies may aim to retain their competitive advantage at the cost of their chief executive officer's (CEO) personal reputation. According to them, today, the private lives of high-level CEO's have become a growing interest in the media, and intimate information about them is constantly being published by different media sources. This has resulted in normal citizen's getting access to information on private details about CEO's lives, ranging from their love life, health matters and to managerial style as well as professional interests.

As mentioned, this culture of personification might be problematic while building a thought leader position, since the process focuses heavily on an organization's strategy. According to Aapola (2012, p. 17–33), company holding a thought leader position is a specialist in the field and its expertise is acknowledged by customers and other stakeholders. In Aapola's view, the key elements needed in the position are leadership, corporate culture, content, messaging, stakeholder group management skills, and capability to reform when needed. This has a clear conflict with modern publicity where self-representation is valued above these elements. For example, obtaining a thought leader position in the field of electric vehicles might be difficult for Tesla if the public is only interested in Elon Musk's private life.

Nevertheless, Habermas (2008, p.11) is confident that political, literary and scholarly discussion still exist. In that kind of discussion, reaching an agreement on this particular topic is more important to the participants than taking up the issues of their private lives. For instance, in the discourses that focus the issues of common concern, the participants tend to ignore their private lives as there is no need or room to discuss them.

The consequences of the personification have been largely argued. According to Seppänen and Väliverronen (2012, p. 48), the line between public and private is becoming blurred, whereas Habermas (2008, p. 11–12) argues that the line between these two discourses is essential and needed in a society. Rather than excluding each other, these discourses go hand in a hand and complement each other in the public discussion (Habermas, 2008, p. 11–12).

3.2.2 Transformation of media

It is not just the *public sphere* that is said to be in a crisis, but also the entire media industry is said to be in a state of transformation. Aula and Heinonen (2011, p. 87) claim that digitalization and the rise of social media are predicted to be threats to traditional media and especially to journalism. According to them, this is a result of almost everyone having an opportunity to produce content to the public media, and it gives a chance for amateur writers to create content that previously was produced only by professional journalists.

One way to conceptualize the change is to look at Chadwick's (2017) idea of a *hybrid media system*. Chadwick (2017, p. 73) finds that news production is shifting from being controlled by very few elite players such as communications staff and professional news workers to a system where content can be produced by, for example, bloggers. The flow of communication between the elite and regular people has become less centralized and more unidirectional (Marchetti & Ceccobelli, 2016, p. 639).

Aula and Heinonen (2011) note as well that in between the traditional media industry and non-professional content production, there is a large variety of half professionals and even professional content producers. Their job descriptions are closely related to the ones of a traditional journalist, but their salary is paid by non-governmental organizations or other third parties that are chasing visibility in the media. For instance, political bloggers, who are often blamed for being “amateurs” seem also to move toward hybrid, semi-professional models of organizations (Chadwick, 2017, p. 56). This shift has its impacts on commercial communication as well. According to Seppänen and Väliverronen (2012, p. 129), the line between corporate communications, marketing and journalism has become blurred.

In the field of news production, also the concept of timeliness has seen a shift. The rolling broadcast coverage and the internet have turned the cycle of news to “24-hour news cycle” (Chadwick, 2017, p. 72). The information cycle cannot be controlled anymore due to the digital platforms such as Twitter, where competition, negotiation and interdependence of the content producers is continuously present (Marchetti & Ceccobelli, 2016, p. 639).

Whether that is a threat to journalism as a phenomenon or just to traditional journalists, is, according to Seppänen and Väliverronen (2012, p. 16) a more widely argued topic. They explain, that the darkest forecasts for the future of the traditional media have not yet become a reality. Vice versa, the traditional media such as television, newspapers, and radio have managed to become a part of the internet and are now competing with other content producers of the internet. Regardless of the competition becoming more intense, the biggest mass media companies are still growing sufficiently (Aula & Heinonen, 2011, p. 87). One resource for the growth has been combining the resources of different players in the media industry. This phenomenon where separate media technologies come together to perform similar functions and make new media systems is tightly bonded with the concept of *media convergence* (Ouellette & Gray, 2017, p. 47). This concept was explained from the point of view of the media platforms in section 3.1.

This trend might be necessary for the media industry in order to tackle the challenge of growing economic pressure and increased competition, however, it may cause a problematic situation for those who want to have their voices heard in the media. If *media convergence* leads to the situation that the main mass media channels are in the hands of only a few companies, it might lead to a situation, where there is no visibility for parties that are not in a favor of those companies. Therefore, for an institution aiming for thought leadership, it is vital to establish a good relationship with the dominating media companies.

From a perspective of marketing and public relations there are also some unsettling shifts that take place between the public and private. For example, there are some indications of a shift where discussions that previously took place in public channels, now take place in closed environments such as in Whatsapp or in closed Facebook groups (see Niipola, 2020). The rise of this so-called "dark social" will make measuring of the marketing activities in the traditional manner more complex. This trend also leads to a situation where brands do not know what people are talking about them. If this trend continues to grow in the future it will make the process of building thought leadership difficult. The main problem is that it is impossible to dominate public discussions, if the discussions are not held in public in the first place. Even though the public discussions would not entirely vanish, media monitoring will become challenging and it will assuredly cause challenges for the organizations that wish to be thought leaders.

3.3 Concept of thought leadership

Thought leadership is one of the key concepts of this study. Therefore, it is important to define it even though it is hard to give an exact definition that both academia and business practitioners would agree with. Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 9) describe thought leadership as a concept that is often used by communication and PR professionals. In their research, they offered a way to conceptualize *thought leadership,* which was to describe it as a process of offering a topic of discussion or even an agenda that the spokesperson of an organization takes up to the media. According to this view, the thought leader position is achieved once the public considers the spokesperson of an organization as an important figure in the area of certain topic.

There is no clear definition for thought leadership in the academic research. It is rather a concept that is seen slightly differently in different contexts. The reason for this might be that the concept is relatively new for academia. It is yet widely used by communication and marketing professionals (Kantola & Lounasmeri, 2014, p. 9).

The concept is said to have been born in 1994, when Joel Kurtzman wrote a series of articles that discussed people who had implemented a new kind of thinking to business life (Aapola, 2017, p. 17; Kleiner, 2016). At the beginning of its conceptual journey, the charismatic leaders of the world, such as Mahatma Gandhi or Steve Jobs were regarded as thought leaders (Kleiner, 2016). Nowadays, the concept is more likely to be used in regard to an institution in the business world, but the development towards this new usage of the concept has been rather recent (Aapola 2017, p. 17).

According to Rauchs & McCrimmon (2005, p. 1066–1070), thought leadership can also be regarded as a way to promote new ideas, for instance, through logical arguments, factual demonstrations or other inspiring methods. They argue that it is built organically and at the heart of the process is brainstorming. This view highlights the non-hierarchical characteristics of thought leadership. Looking from this perspective, it is important to emphasize the impact that thought leadership has on the public rather than describing it as a process where the public is solicited to join the leader in its views.

Rausch & McCrimmon (2005, p. 1066–1067) compare thought leadership to sport leadership. They explain the comparison with the fact that in sports the leading team has its position only temporarily until the next match, and after it the order changes again. This non-structural and non-hierarchical nature of this view of thought leadership can be challenged, and the process of building thought leadership can also be described to be very structured (see Aapola, 2012). The common denominator of the so-called definitions of thought leadership is highlighting the process as a long-term battle. While looking at this view on thought leadership formed by Rausch & McCrimmon (2005), it is important to note that it was published during the time when the word *thought leader* mainly referred to a charismatic person rather than an institution.

In Aapola's view (2012, p. 17), a thought leader is a company whose expertise is acknowledged by its customers and other influencers in its field. This view looks at the topic only in the context of the business world. According to Aapola, the company has a reputation as company that shares its opinions and ideas widely in its field. Reaching such a position requires strongly led and persistent dialogue with stakeholders and transparency in the markets. Aapola's view differs from Rausch & McCrimmon's (2005) view by emphasizing the trustworthiness and openness of the institution that is aiming to achieve a thought leader position. Rausch & McCrimmon (2005, p. 1068), on the other hand, argue that thought leaders do not have to be trustworthy themselves if their ideas appear to be.

3.4 Ways of getting across to the public

This study will further delve into the matter of how a thought leader position is achieved through media. In this section, I will present some common ways that communication and PR professionals tend to utilize in their daily work when operating with media and publicity. These practices take place at the field of *issues management.* The field encompasses an organization's efforts to monitor its environment, to analyze potential threats and opportunities, and to treat them by communicating with the publics (Sommerfeldt

& Yang, 2017, p. 831). Issues management have a close relation with public relations. The distinction, according to Bowen (2004, p. 65), is that PR professionals are normally also issues managers. However, all issues managers are not PR professionals. Bowen (2004, p. 65) clarifies that the issues management teams are often constructed of legal counsels, product managers and finance specialist in addition to the PR professionals.

Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) have researched the ways in which communication professionals intend to impact to the public by conducting interviews with several communication and PR professionals. According to them, the professionals working for communication and PR agencies see *thought leadership* as a role for providing ideas or even agendas to the media. This is one way that the *thought leader* can have control over the publicity. This view serves as a theoretical presumption here as this study assumes the thought leadership is obtained mainly via media.

While looking at the concept of *thought leadership*, it is essential to investigate how the position is built. There are as many visions for the building process as there are definitions of the concept. Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) discovered in their research the main practices used by the communications and PR professionals while they are aiming to raise a topic to the public discussion.

In this study, I will call these practices as "ways of getting across to the public". The ways, as per Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11), are: *forming coalitions, presenting the topic as a product of journalism, presenting the topic by utilizing a research, having influential people to speak on behalf of the company*, *utilizing a "tone of the nation"*, and *word of mouth marketing.* The practices are presented in figure 3.

Figure 3 Ways of getting across to the public

In the second phase of the study, I will examine whether these practices are present in the forms and content of the data set. As these practices are highly concrete, this study looks at them from the level of language and grammar. In Figure 4, I have listed examples of factors that might indicate the ways that are present in the analyzed material either on the level of grammatical forms or content. Though, it is notable that the analysis is problem driven, and there might be other findings that will be made while carrying out the analysis. The figure gives some guidance to what will be searched in the data set, but it does not give a final image of what was found.

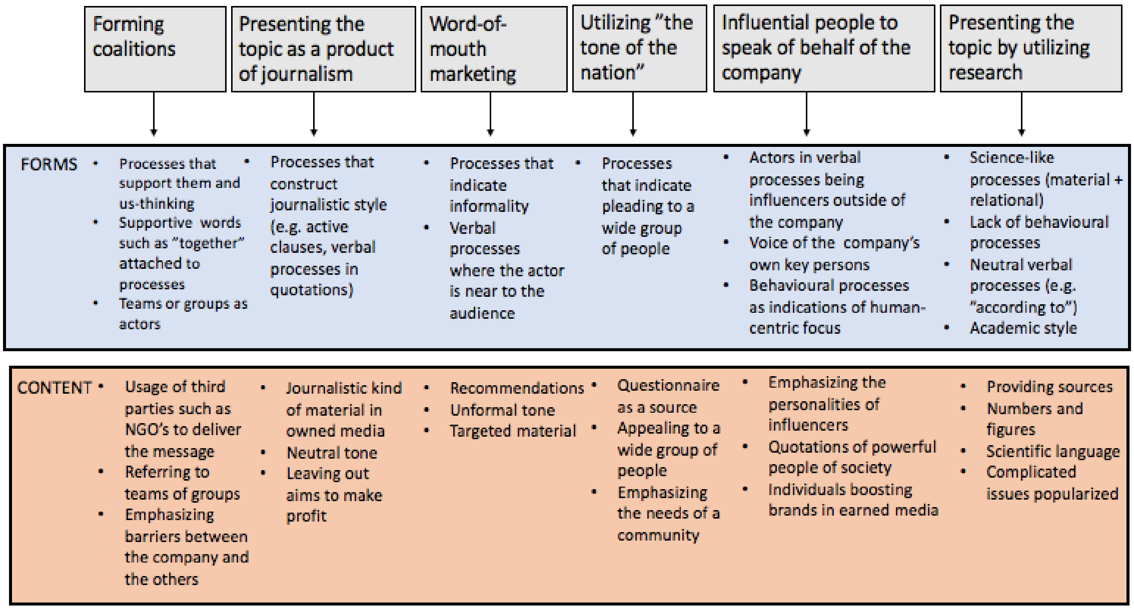

Figure 4 Examples how the ways of getting across the public can appear in data

The first of these ways, described by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11) is **forming coalitions**, which means using third parties, such as politicians and non-governmental organizations to mediate the message to the public sphere. According to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11) forming coalitions has many kinds of strategic benefits. For example, the message is seen as a powerful one if it has several institutions supporting it. Thus, according to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11), the motive of the message is less likely considered as just one organization’s attempt to make a profit. As this study looks at the practices from the level of grammar, forming coalitions does not mean only the practical actions of taking advantage of the third parties. In this study, the coalitions can be built also on the level of language, by referring to these third parties as one group.

The second one is **to present the topic as a product of journalism**. Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p.11) discovered that one way to do that is pitching the media with raw material or even tailormade articles that do not seem like a traditional advertising or brand material. In this study, I will take a look at all signs of language that indicate that the company’s messages are presented in a journalistic manner.

In accordance with Kantola's and Lounasemeri's (2014, p. 10) study, providing material that does not seem like a traditional marketing material can be done also by ordering a study of the topic and offering the results and findings to the media sources. Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 10) emphasize that the academic research is based on facts, and therefore, it is an easy topic for journalist to work on. In this study, this practice is called **presenting the topic by utilizing research.** In addition to researching whether this practice is present in the content of the data set, this study takes a closer look on the linguistic signs that present the topic in light of science. For example, presenting sources, numbers or figures to support the statements are interpreted as signs of presenting the topic by utilizing research.

The fourth way of getting across to the public, drawn from the study conducted by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 10), is having **influential people to speak on behalf of the company**. Since 1970's, there has been a raising trend to utilize the charismatic characteristics of CEOs (Kantola, 2009, p. 423–434). At the same time, media have become increasingly important tool of power for the corporate leaders (Kantola, 2014). Thus, the key people of the organizations are often trained to deliver the message (Kantola & Lounasmeri, p. 10). In this way the organization can use them as a brand resource or a symbol. The personification of the publicity as a fast-growing trend was described more in depth in the section 3.2.1. To conclude, hiring and utilizing a key person as an ambassador of an organization can be a powerful tool. In this study, the signs of personification are seeked from the grammatical ways of quoting the company representatives as well as from the content of the articles.

According to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11), **utilizing the "tone of the nation"** is also a common way of getting across to the public. Appealing to the public opinion can make the message sound more significant and reliable as well as interesting for journalists. For example, making a survey and publishing the results is often used to raise a conversation around a certain topic. On the level of language, this practice can be observed in themes, that in any manner aim to plead to a wide group of people, to paint a picture of a topic that a wide group of people considers significant and reliable.

The sixth way to get across to the public without utilizing the traditional media is **word-of-mouth marketing** on social media platforms. As said in the interviews conducted by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11), blogging, spreading rumors, and utilizing influencers are not seen as advertising rather than recommendations from friends. Thus, companies can build communities in social media, and even provoke movements that can be later exploited in a similar way as the "tone of the nation" (Kantola & Lounasmeri 2014, p. 11). The online communities built upon brands are effective tools to raise brand-awareness and to form the buying behavior of customers in a favorable way (Kim & Lee, 2017). Word-of-mouth marketing on social media has its risks, however, it is relatively cost efficient due to which it has become rather popular lately (Kotler, Armstrong & Parment, 2012, p. 131–132). This study investigates the signs of word-of-mouth marketing that appear both in the content of the articles and on the level of language.

3.5 Transitivity and participant roles

In this study, the data set is analyzed both at the level of grammar and at the level of content. These two aspects come together in *form-content combinations.* The form-side of the combinations is drawn from process types that occur in the data set. Processes are grammatical components that reflect the experimental aspect of the meaning (Halliday, 1985, p.101–102). They can be divided into six types, and each process type enlightens a different model or schema for construing a particular kind of domain or experience (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 170). In other words, they open up way how the writers see the world around them. The choice of process, in a way, mirrors the writer's perceptions the phenomena they describe with language. By taking a close look on how the professional journalist see the company, and on the other hand, how the company sees itself is interesting especially in the context of thought leadership.

The choice of process types reflects the ways that the speaker sees the reality, which is why it is interesting to apply them to this study. Those choices tell about how writers, in this case Wärtsilä or the professional press journalists, experience the world and how they wish their audience would perceive it (see Enell-Nilsson & Koskela, 2019, p. 84). Halliday (1985, p. 101–102) presents *transitivity* as a concept that specifies the different types of processes that are recognized in the language. The way, in which a clause is constructed, is a grammatical function that expresses the reflective and experimental aspect of the meaning. According to Halliday, there are three components to the clause: *process, participants* and *circumstances.* Process is the most significant of them, since it is tightly related to the two other components (Enell-Nilsson & Koskela , 2019, p. 84).

The transitivity system has previously been widely used to examine different types of texts internationally. Enell-Nilsson and Koskela (2019) have utilized the transitivity system to research the IR policies of Danish, Finnish and Italian companies. Nuristiana (2018) researched English health insurance claim forms by categorizing the content to process types. Chen (2016) has researched Sino-British diplomatic thinking by making a statical analysis to discover different process types in both Chinese and English versions of China-UK Joint Declaration. Öhman (2018) utilized process types in a research of participant roles in corporate sites of Swedish and American Companies. All of the abovementioned studies concluded that the material processes, which are the ones that express concrete actions, tend to be the most common process type, but the incidences of different process types varied significantly in these studies.

Halliday (1985) divides the processes into six types**: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal** and **existential**. I will use these six characterizations of processes in the analysis of this study. In addition to the choice of process type, it is significant to make a distinction of how the participants are presented (Enell-Nilsson & Koskela, 2019, p. 84). This is where distinction between active and passive participant roles is needed. In this section, I will first introduce each process type as per Halliday (1985). At the end of the section, I will present the idea of activation and passivation as per van Leeuwen (1996). In the analysis of this study, I will examine the activation and passivation occurring in the data set after categorizing the processes into Halliday's process types. This analysis makes it possible to detect the grammatical choices that are typical for certain discourse. For example, presenting a company in a favorable way can be done by presenting it as an active participant in the processes.

3.5.1 Material processes

Material processes are probably the simplest type of process. As Halliday (1985) defines them, they are the processes of doing things. According to Halliday, the material processes appear in clauses that have an actor and a goal. In Hallidays view, they address an action where some actor "does" something which can be done to some other entity, a target. Furthermore, Halliday (1985) specifies that an actor in material processes can be any object, regardless whether it is conscious or non-conscious.

It is relevant that the action occurs in concrete level in a material world. The previous studies (see Enell-Nilsson & Koskela, 2019; Nuristiana, 2018; Chen, 2016; Öhman, 2018) have found out that the material processes tend often to be the most common type of processes in the human language.

3.5.2 Mental processes

Mental processes are less concrete than material ones. Halliday (1985) presents *mental processes* as the ones that take place inside people's minds. Because of this, they are clauses of perceiving, feeling and thinking. According to Halliday (1985), mental processes differ from material processes in a way that they are sense reserved. This means that the possible participants of the process are from a wider spectrum than they could be in material processes. Halliday (1985) also clarifies, that the perceived matter does not have to be a concrete actor as it can also be piece of information.

For example, in the sentence “Tim realized that he is in a big city”, there is a mental process and the implicated fact (*that he is in a big city)* could not be expressed with a material process. In a mental process, the actor is, in Halliday’s (1985, p. 108) view, required to be conscious in order to be able to think, feel or perceive. This is why Halliday (1985) calls the actor of mental processes *sensers.* Halliday (1985, p. 108) specifies that this means that the actor has to be human or human-alike, even though the modern science acknowledges that consciousness is not limited only to humans or human-like creatures (Low, Panksepp, Reiss, Edelman, Van Swinderen & Koch, 2012). Thus, Halliday (1985, p. 108) also recognizes that in some cases, non-human-like objects can be posed as conscious.

3.5.3 Relational processes

In addition to acting and thinking, there is a process of its own for being or belonging. *A relational process* is a process of being or having (Halliday, 1985). Halliday (1985) divides them to *intensive* (x is y), *circumstantial* (x is at y) and *possessive* (x has y). It can also be expressed with verbs, such as, to become, to keep, to stay, to see, to appear etc. Their major function, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 210), is to characterize and to identify.

Relational processes can also be further divided into *attributive* and *identifying* types (Halliday, 1985). The identifying relational process describes characteristics of an actor that is reversible, whereas attributive do not. For example, there is an attributive relational process in the sentences: “The cat is wise”, “the event is on Friday” and “Peter has a dog”. This can also be seen in the sentences “Peter is the teacher”, “tomorrow is the day of the event” and “The cat is mine”, where there is an identifying relational process.

3.5.4 Other process types

The other three processes are minor categories that are very close to the three main groups, but still slightly distinct from them. Pursuant to types defined by Halliday (1985), *behavioural processes* fall somewhere in between the material and mental processes. The actor that Halliday (1985) calls *behaver* is conscious as it is in the mental processes, but the action is more about doing. The behavioural process can be expressed through, for example, the verbs: to smile, to laugh, to dream or to breathe.

Verbal processes, as defined by Halliday (1985), are processes of saying, but they cover any type of symbolic exchange of information. Clauses such as “the timer tells me to stop” or “I must say I am tired” include a verbal process. Halliday (1985) calls the actor that is attached to the verbal process *sayer,* even though the action does not necessarily have to be speaking. The sayer may be a non-conscious object as well, just as the example “the timer tells me to stop” indicates.

The last process type in Halliday’s (1985) categorization, *existential process* is characterized by the word “there”, which has no representational function in a clause. It represents circumstances where something, such as a phenomenon or an event, is happening. The clause “there is a whole new world out there”, is one example of an existential process.

3.5.5 Activation and passivation

The other aspect that is important while observing transitivity, is activation and passivation. This bases on, in addition to Halliday’s (1985, p. 101–144) theory of transitivity, to Van Leeuwen’s (1996, p. 43–44) ideas of activation and passivation. According to Van Leeuwen (1996, p. 44) activation takes a place when social actors are presented as active and dynamic forces in an activity. Likewise, passivation occurs, when they are represented as being the undergoing part of the activity or in the receiving end of it. Activation and passivation can be expressed by grammatical participant roles in each process type.

In Van Leeuwen's (1996, p. 43) view, investigating the options that the authors have chosen enlightens the institutional and social contexts of the choices. Van Leeuwen (1996, p. 46) clarifies that researching these choices provides answer to what interests do they serve and what purposes are achieved. Thus, as the transitivity system as whole explains the authors perceptions of the surrounding environment (Halliday, 1985, p. 101–144), the distinction between active and passive processes is important because the author's choice reflects their perception of the parties that have a power in the clauses. In other hand, the choice can also reflect how the author wishes the audience to see the set up.

The distinction between active and passive participants is interesting since, the active participants tend to be the ones that the authors believe to be the driving forces of the action. After all, the active forces are the ones authors see as powerful ones. On the other hand, in some cases, like in the data set of this study, an actor that is traditionally emphasized as an active one, wishes not to be described as an active force. This is the case in Wärtsilä's initiative, as the company wishes to be emphasized only as an "enabler" of the actions.

4 Forms and content of Oceanic Awakening

In this chapter, I will analyze the articles in the data set with the three-phase problem-driven method. The data set consists of articles that are picked from different channels, including both Wärtsilä's own external communication as well as the professional press. In other words, the data set is collected from Wärtsilä's owned and earned media. All of the articles in the data set handle the Oceanic Awakening initiative. The aim of the study is to find out how thought leadership can be built through external communication and public relations of a multinational B2B company.

In the first phase of the analysis, I will classify the processes of the dataset to six process types as per Halliday (1985) and consider whether there are any activation or passivation (see Van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 44) occurring in them. By taking a further look at the incidence of process types combined with the content of the articles, the form-content combinations are formed. In the second phase, these combinations will be mirrored to those that are typical when building thought leadership in corporate communication according to Kantola & Lounasmeri (2014). The common ways of getting across to the public were presented in the section 3.4.

In the last phase of the method, I will compare the findings from Wärtsilä's own articles with the ones from the professional press. In this way, I will find out similarities and differences of driving thought leadership in earned and owned media.

4.1 Appearance of process types in the data set

There were 442 categorized processes in the dataset. The number of analyzed verbs is high compared to the number of words in the data set. It is high because of that this study looks at the processes from a more practical level than Halliday's (1985) approach that has its bases on functional grammar. Functional grammar sees the processes only in the predicate verbs of the sentences. However, this study included all verb forms that were presenting some kind of action to the analysis. The exact number of process types in each article can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 Process types in each article

	Material	Mental	Relational	Behavioural	Verbal	Existential	total
Forbes	22	8	16	1	12	0	59
World Maritime News	9	5	5	0	6	0	25
MARPRO	67	19	22	1	7	2	118
Q-Captain	31	5	10	0	9	1	56
Wärtsilä press release 5.9.2018	34	5	16	1	7	1	64
Wärtsilä annual report 2018	22	3	5	1	4	0	35
Twentyfour7 (Wärtsilä)	40	11	17	1	11	5	85
Total	225	56	91	5	56	9	442

Roughly over half of the processes of the data set represented material processes, which made material processes the most common process type of the data set. Another common process type was relational processes that occurred in the data set in total of 91 times. Mental and verbal processes were equally common process types occurring 56 times. The least common process type was behavioural processes. The percentages of the process types in the dataset are presented in Figure 5.

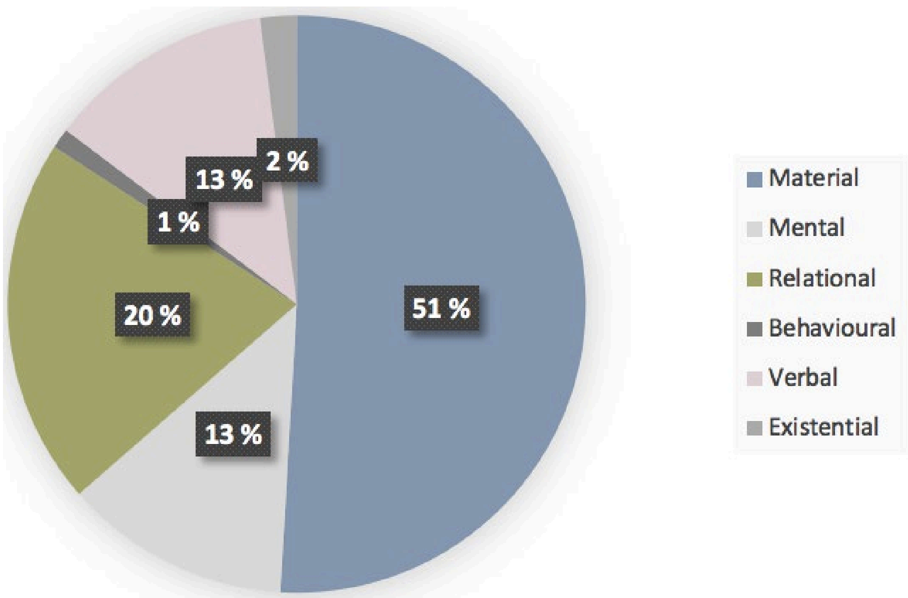

Figure 5 Percentages of process types in the data set

In the sentence in example (1), two underlined verbs were both counted as processes, even though the latter one indicates the goal of action rather than a grammar-based process. This approach enabled more material to be analyzed and a wider perspective to see the ways that the writers see the surrounding world.

> (1) The pay off in terms of the Oceanic Awakening is the opportunity for Wärtsilä to position its technology at the heart of the new ecosystems (MARPRO)

Thus, there were structures such as *"it can and it should be".* In those cases, there were two symmetric verbs in a sentence, and the verbs were counted as separate processes. Counting them separately was also a factor that raised the total number of analyzed processes.

4.1.1 Material processes – processes of creation and description

The material processes form roughly a half of all the processes found in the data set. According to Halliday (1985), material processes are perhaps the simplest type of processes as they represent clauses where someone does something to someone. They take place at a concrete level and reflect the action. Halliday (1985) further emphasizes that the actor of a material process can be either a conscious being or a non-conscious object.

As material processes are a common process type in the human language and it is used in various ways to explain the surrounding world, it had various functions in the articles. However, there were few notable functions of material processes that were typical in the data set. Stating how the circumstances are at a concrete level in the surrounding world, describing the achievements of the company's products, and describing what has been done within the Oceanic Awakening initiative were the most common. In examples (2) and (3), Wärtsilä spokespersons state the circumstances where the initiative takes place.

(2) The marine business, and industry outlook as a whole, is "moving in the right direction," according to Holm. (MARPRO)

(3) -- SEA20 launched with a 'wake-up call' to the world's major marine cities to confront the challenges of a world where sea levels are rising, (Twentyfour7)

Example (4) indicates how the material processes are used to describe the achievements of the company's products. In example (5), material processes are used to explain what concrete things have been achieved by the Oceanic Awakening and SEA20.

(4) -- our intelligent routing and navigation software (NACOS Platinum) and the automated dock-to-dock technology that was successfully tested this year on-board Norled's Folgefonn passenger ferry in Norway. (MARPRO)

(5) Under the auspices of SEA20, an assembly of key global influencers from each major marine city have already been brought together to participate in the SEA20 forum (Q-Captain)

It is notable that material processes were most often used when describing the concrete achievements of Oceanic Awakening or SEA20. The company's products were highlighted only in one article, and material processes occurred only 14 times in the context of describing the products. There were very few cases where the material processes were used to tell about the company itself. If something was told, it was most often done by utilizing mental and verbal processes. As the material processes were the most common process types, this was a clear indication of the fact that the writers rather give the spotlight to the initiative rather than the company itself.

Another prominent observation concerning the material processes was the usage of the verb *to create.* It was used for various purposes and the actors who delivered the process of *creating* were diverse. The verb was used to indicate both positive outcomes of the creation (see example 6) and negative effects that surrounding circumstances create, as in example (7).

(6) If successful, the initiative could create a massive change for the shipping and energy industries -- (Q-Captain)

(7) This creates a barrier to progress. (MARPRO)

To conclude, material processes were used to emphasize the concrete and tangible substances of the world. The fact that they were the most common process type is in line with the results of previous research (see Enell-Nilsson & Koskela , 2019; Nuristiana, 2018; Chen, 2016; Öhman, 2018) and it indicates that the usage of the process type is a common tendency in the human language. The vast incidence of this process type in the data set might also indicate that the writers want to emphasize the concrete and tangible things rather than focusing on, for example, aims and wishes of the actors.

4.1.2 Mental processes – processes of aiming and feeling

The mental processes formed around 12% of all processes that were found in the data set. Halliday (1985) describes the mental processes as the ones that take place in the human mind. The subject in mental processes is what Halliday calls *senser* and that is often a conscious being. However, Halliday noted that non-conscious beings can be given human-like attributes and in this way, they can be treated as sensers. Halliday sets verbs like *to realize* or *to think* as examples of mental processes.

The most common usage of mental processes was to describe the observations or a state of consciousness of either the company, the initiative, or SEA20 network. This was done by verbs, such as, *to realize*, *to focus*, to *understand,* or *to ignore.* Out of the total of 56 mental processes, there were all in all 18 mental processes of this kind.

Another very common usage of mental processes was to describe aims, hopes, wishes and aspirations of the senser. These clauses were classified as mental processes, even though the senser in mental processes should be human or human-like senser. The texts of the data set tend to give the company and the initiative human-like attributes, and therefore, they are treated as sensers. Thus, it is only logical to do so as there are people behind the company and the initiative. Yet, this is one example of how Halliday's approach is applied more on a practical level rather than from the grammar's point of view. The examples (8) and (9) present the mental processes that are used to describe the aims and hopes of Oceanic Awakening and Wärtsilä.

(8) 'Oceanic Awakening' <u>Aims</u> For Smarter, Cleaner Marine Shipping (FORBES)

(9) Wärtsilä Corporation <u>wants to connect</u> 20 of the most influential marine cities into an efficient, ecologically sound and digitally connected network by 2020. (World Maritime News)

The third common usage of mental processes was to describe what is needed or even required by the senser. These kinds of mental processes occurred in the data set 10 times and example (10) is one of them.

(10) <u>We need to secure</u> a sustainable future for our citizens and the planet. (Twentyfour7)

One prominent finding regarding the mental processes was the usage of the senser "we". The usage of the *we* pronoun has been widely researched (see Öhman, 2018; Fløttum, Gedde-Dahl & Kinn, 2006; Dieltjens & Heynderickx, 2014). Öhman (2018, p. 39), divides the usage of we into two categories: inclusive and exclusive. *Inclusive we* includes the reader and *exclusive we* excludes them. Dieltjens and Heynderickx (2014) research the topic in the context of internal communication. They go a step deeper in the division by identifying thirteen different kinds of identifiers of the use of *we.*

In the data set of this study, exclusive we was used a few times to refer to the company itself. According to Öhman (2018, p. 40), this is a common use of the first-person plural in the corporate websites. Öhman specifies that sometimes *we* in this context entails the company as a whole and sometimes just parts of it. In this study, the exclusive we could refer to the company, SEA20 network or its members, like in example (11).

What was more interesting from the perspective of thought leadership, was the usage of the inclusive we. According to Fløttum et al. (2006, p. 68), including the reader to "we" constructs a mutual ground between the author and the audience. In the data set of this study, building this ground by the inclusive we pronoun was strongly present. We, in this context, was used to refer to an undefined group of people to raise some kind of *esprit de corps*. Examples (12) and (13) reify this phenomenon.

(11) " -- And we believe we've made a start." (MARPRO)

(12) We need real-time communication networks (MARPRO)

(13) Ultimately, we must change consumer mindset to focus beyond price, and consider the impact, footprint of every decision we make (Twentyfour7)

In these cases, the inclusive we could be interpreted to include the reader and all people of a nation or a society. The usage of inclusive *we* was mostly attached to the mental processes that demonstrated needs, but there were also other kinds of processes attached to it.

4.1.3 Relational processes – stating the circumstances

There were, in total, 91 relational processes in the data set. Relational processes, as per Halliday (1985) are the ones that address being, having, owning, or taking place. According to Halliday (1985), relational processes can be divided into three categories: intensive (*a is b*), circumstantial (*a is at b*), and possessive (*a has a b*).

Out of the three above-mentioned categories, the vast majority (73 out of 91) of the analyzed relational processes were intensive. Intensive relational processes were, in many cases, used for similar purposes as the material processes that were used to describe the surrounding world. This type of relational clauses mainly described the things that are happening in the surrounding environment. It was typical that the things related to the industry of shipping or the environmental aspects of it were expressed through relational processes and with the indicative form of the verb. This made the statements sound more factual and evidential. The examples (14) and (15) demonstrate such a clause.

> (14) -- that shipping is the most cost-effective way to move goods and people around the world (Forbes)
>
> (15) Better port-to-port fuel efficiency, reduced congestion in ports and high traffic areas, the introduction of real-time communication between stakeholders – these issues have become critical to transforming maritime trading today. (Wärtsilä press release 2018-05-09)

However, there were, a few circumstantial and possessive relational process types in the data set. The functions of the circumstantial processes, such as the example (16), varied and there is no coherent function that would be a common denominator for all of them, or even most of them. Possessive processes occurred in the data set only four times and were used, for example, to describe assets that the company has. The example (17) illustrates one of those.

> (16) A selection of illustrations based on these ideas were on display at SMM (Wärtsilä press release 2018-05-09)
>
> (17) Wärtsilä has a vision unlike any other maritime company. (MARPRO)

Out of all the processes found in the data set, the relational processes were the second most commonly used process type. To summarize, the relational processes occurred 90 times in the articles and formed roundly a fifth of all the processes.

4.1.4 Behavioural processes – unusual devices of narration

The least common process type of the data set was behavioural processes. According to Halliday (1985), behavioural processes fall somewhere in between mental and material processes. This means that the action as such is material, but it expresses activity that take place inside the human mind or in the mind of other conscious being. In line with Halliday's definition of behavioural processes, verbs such as *to laugh* or *to smile*, are examples of behavioural processes.

The behavioural processes were used very little in the articles of the data set. This may be considered to be a result of the fact that the articles described the business environment of companies and the marine industry. The lack of verbs such as *to smile*, *to nod* or to *shake a head* indicates that the articles tend to focus on things and facts rather than on individual humans.

However, there were structures such as example (18), where the process falls somewhere in between material and mental processes. The *behaver* in such cases is not a conscious being, but as mentioned before, institutions and companies are given human-like characteristics in the data set. Hence, there are human beings behind institutions. In the example (18), the city itself is not showing the interest, even though the writer claims so. It is the people in power who do that.

> (18) Hamburg, Helsinki and Rotterdam <u>have already expressed their keen interest</u> in joining this global initiative (Forbes)

Nevertheless, there were also a few classic examples of behavioural processes, such as example (19). They were characteristics of journalistic kind of articles in the data set. The function of choosing such a process type was obviously to enliven the text and to catch the reader's attention.

> (19) The cynics amongst you <u>may be shaking your heads</u> by now. (MARPRO)

To conclude, the usage of the behavioural processes was not at all a common practice of the authors. Altogether, there were only five behavioural processes in the data set. They formed only 1% of all the processes found in the articles.

4.1.5 Existential processes – inaccurate ways of describing circumstances

The existential processes were not common types of processes either. Existential processes, as Halliday (1985) defines them, are the ones that state the circumstances of action by the *there is* structure. In Halliday's view, for example, clauses such as *there is a house by the sea,* contain an existential process. In this study, I will consider also structures such as *it is warm weather outside* as existential processes. The *it is* structure, in my view, operates similarly as the *there is* structure.

The nine existential processes that were found in the data set seemed to serve partially the same purposes as the existential processes tended to do. They were used specifically to explain the circumstances of the marine industry or the surrounding environment overall, but they seemed to do so in a less specific way. The relational processes tended to state the facts just as they are with a recognizable actor, but as the "there is" structure of an existential process gives a chance to describe the subject in a less specific way, the processes seemed to be used for this purpose. The examples (20) and (21) demonstrate this phenomenon. In the examples, the surrounding circumstances are described, but no further explanation of who the stakeholders are or who needs the communication networks, is not provided.

(20) <u>There are</u> so many industry stakeholders working independently (Twentyfour7)

(21) <u>There is</u> a need for real time communication networks (Twentyfour7)

It is notable that the functions of the existential processes were not similar only to the functions of relational processes, but also to the mental processes. When examining example (21), it is also interesting to compare it with the example (11). The example (11) says that the party who needs the real-time communication networks is *we*, but the senser "we" is yet an undefined group of people. This demonstrates that the usage of the inclusive we attached to mental processes is used partially in the same way as the existential processes.

4.1.6 Verbal processes – quoting and announcing

The verbal processes were one of the four most significant process types in the data set. Verbal processes, according to Halliday, are processes of exchanging any type of information. In verbal processes, the actor who is exchanging a meaning is what Halliday calls *sayer*. Even though it might feel natural to consider the sayer as a human or another type of being with the ability to speak, Halliday notes that the exchange of the meaning can happen also in a non-verbal level. For example, Halliday would consider a clause such as *my clock tells me it is six o'clock* to contain a verbal process.

A rather common presence of verbal processes in the data set is not as such surprising, as the data set consists of a press release and journalistic articles that have the tendency to quote commentators. The verbal processes are a natural way to do that. Example (22) demonstrates how direct quoting is done by a verbal process, whereas example (23) contains an indirect quotation.

(22) "It's the first project of its kind," Holm <u>states</u> (MARPRO)

(23) Thibault-Ahlström <u>says</u> that communication is key to the initiative's success. (Twentyfour7)

Out of 56 verbal processes found in the data set, 21 were attached to either direct or indirect quotations. The rest of verbal processes described the process of sharing information in other ways. There was a wide range of sayers who share the information in the data set. In most cases, the sayer was an institution such as Wärtsilä, Oceanic Awakening, the SEA20, or the SEA20 member cities. In examples (24) and (25), the sayer is such an institution. However, there were also some non-conscious and non-human-like sayers. In example (26) the sayer is Wärtsilä's quarterly report.

(24) In 2018, Wärtsilä issued a rallying cry which resonated throughout its customer industries, -- (Wärtsilä annual report 2018)

(25) 'An Oceanic Awakening' and SEA20 herald a wake-up call to the potential of our Oceans in an era of unprecedented global change (Wärtsilä press release 2018-05-09)

(26) The company's latest quarterly report ably demonstrates that fact (MARPRO)

It is interesting that one of the most popular verbs attached to the verbal processes was *to herald* that was used also in example (25). According to MOT Oxford Dictionary of English (2020), the definition of the verb *to herald* is to "be a sign of that something is about to happen". This somewhat unusual verb was used two times in Wärtsilä's press release, and it made its way to almost all of the professional press articles of the data set. This is interesting since, according to the MOT definition, the verb includes an assumption that something is going to happen and has therefore a positive tone in it. Journalists, then again, tend to aim to a certain level of neutrality.

4.2 Activation and passivation

In this section, I will examine the activation and passivation occurring in the data. This is done by making a distinction between if the participant is presented as an active party of the activity or as an undergoing part of it. This analysis makes it possible to detect the grammatical choices that are typical for certain discourse. Making this distinction while researching the company's owned media gives an answer to how the company would like to be seen. On the other hand, the choices of the journalists reflect the ways that they see the company. From the point of view of thought leadership, it is crucial to find out if there is any conflicts between the ways that the company see itself and how journalist see the company. For example, Wärtsilä wishes to be seen as an "enabler" of the SEA20 network. If the journalists, then again, consider the company as an active player behind the network, there clearly is a conflict of interpretations.

According to Van Leeuwen (1996, p. 44) activation occurs when the participant is presented as a doer, an active driver for the activity. Passivation occurs when they are represented as being the undergoing part of the activity or as the receiving participant. In this study, activation and passivation may appear both at the grammatical level and the at the level of contexts.

In this study, the data set was analyzed at a rather practical level, which means that some grammatically active clauses were interpreted as passive and vice versa. For example, the usage of "you" as the subject of the clause was interpreted in some cases as passivation. This was the case when the "you" did not obviously refer to the reader but was distinctively used to express an undefined doer like "one" or "someone". This was the case in example (27).

(27) "If <u>you connect</u> things <u>you create</u> greater efficiency, understanding and value. -- " (MARPRO)

As figure 6 indicates, presenting the participants as active doers were far more common than passivation. Altogether, there were 76 passive clauses in the researched articles, and they formed around 17% of all analyzed clauses. Active clauses were used mostly when emphasizing what either Wärtsilä, SEA20, Oceanic Awakening has done. The passive clauses, then again, faded away the doer.

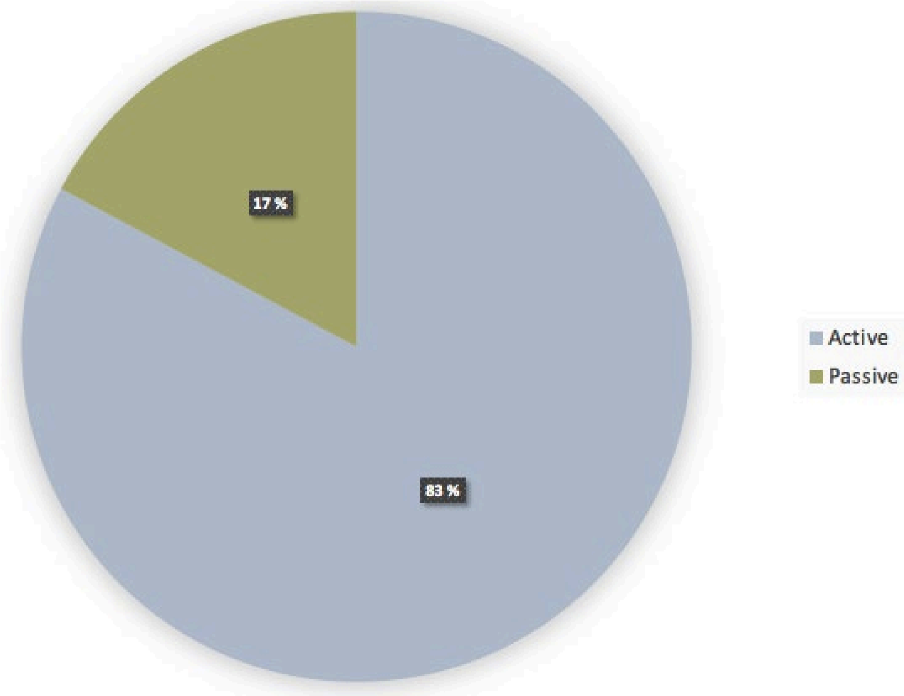

Figure 6 Active and passive clauses of the data set

In example (28), passivation leaves out the party who would be responsible for cleaning the coastline. In this way, the reader gets the idea of clean cost lines without the writer having to editorialize the fact of who is really responsible for cleaning it. Example (29) is from the annual report of Wärtsilä. In other articles, Wärtsilä highlights that it cannot achieve the goals of the initiative alone, and, therefore, needs collaboration. The annual report has been written for the purposes of investor relations, so focusing on the role of other, sometimes competing companies, is not perhaps the best way to present the initiative to the audience. The idea of co-operation is present in the context, but not in the grammar.

(28) The Blue Belt situates the new "smart port" at a remove from the shore, while the city coastline is given a radical clean-up (Wärtsilä press release 2018-05-09)

(29) This [the radical transformation of the world's marine and energy industries] will be achieved through open discussion and co-operation with every willing stakeholder group, with the aim of benefiting society at large. (Wärtsilä annual report 2018)

Nevertheless, in this context, it is interesting to note that activation in clauses did not necessarily mean that the doer would be defined or clear for the reader. As discussed in section 4.1.2, the usage of inclusive we as a subject could also be interpreted as not defining the active party of the process.

Passivation was common especially with the material, mental and existential processes. In the existential processes, the *there is* structure as such includes a passive tone. However, according to Öhman (2018, p. 46–47) the existential processes are not always grammatically passive. In some cases, there is a causative participant called *intitiator.* Based on this observation, the structures as example (30) were classified as existential processes. Example (30) has an initiator, whereas the example (31) is grammatically passive. However, both of the examples have a passive tone. Example (30) provides the industry, government and the city leadership as an answer to the question "*where the lack of trust occurs*?" but not to "*who does not trust to whom*?".

(30) -- one of the biggest challenges facing maritime cities is a lack of trust between industry and government, and among city leadership (Twentyfour7)

(31) --, maritime businesses are faced with major opportunities to improve operational inefficiencies -- (gCaptain)

When comparing example (30) and (31), one can observe that passive voice in existential processes supports the findings made in section 4.1.5. Existential processes with passive tone are used for describing the circumstances in an inaccurate or unspecific way.

The functions of passivation, when attached to mental and material processes, seemed to be somewhat the same as the functions of activation when the subject was the indefinite and inclusive we. On behalf of the material processes, this was discussed briefly in chapter 4.1.2. By utilizing passive tone attached to mental and material processes, the authors stated that the society or some other undefined group of people needs or even requires something without describing specifically who is the party behind the need. This similarity can be observed when comparing the examples (32), (33) and (34). Example (32) includes an active mental process with the subject "we". Example (33) demonstrates a passive mental process "is required", whereas example (34) is a passive material one. The function of all these clauses is yet very similar.

(32) We need to secure a sustainable future for our citizens and the planet (Twentyfour7)

(33) Rapid acceleration to benefit the entire sector, as well as society at large, is urgently required (gCaptain)

(34) We simply cannot afford to wait for the marine and energy industries to evolve at their own pace. (Forbes)

Passive tone attached to material processes had other functions as well. As discussed in section 4.1.1, material processes were used to describe the concrete actions that have been done within the Oceanic Awakening initiative. In most cases this was done by using active verb forms, as in example (35). There were, however, some clauses that indicate the fact that Wärtsilä would not like to promote itself by the Oceanic Awakening, but rather be just "an enabler" of the conversations. In examples (36) and (37) passive material processes were used to emphasize this aim.

(35) A global corporation called Wärtsilä is pushing "An Oceanic Awakening (Forbes)

(36) A creative session held last month in Hamburg, brought together 18 experts from New York, Singapore, Helsinki, Rotterdam and Hamburg. (World Maritime News)

(37) The network, to be launched under the company's An Oceanic Awakening initiative (World Maritime News)

There were also some, although very few, passive forms occurring together with the relational, behavioural and verbal processes. However, a majority of all those processes were presented in active form, as the processes tend to be in favor for it. Verbal processes expressed mostly quotations of specific people, and therefore the usage of active forms was common. Those that were passive had, in many cases, the function of not promoting Wärtsilä as the doer in the sentences, like in example (38).

> (38) The not-for-profit initiative, called Oceanic Awakening, <u>was introduced</u> during this year's SMM trade fair in Hamburg, Germany. (GCaptain)

Relational processes were rare in passive forms because of the fact that the authors would use existential processes instead. For example, the clause *"People were in the room"* would turn naturally into a passive as *"There were people in the room."*

4.3 Form-content combinations of getting across to the public

In the second phase of the analysis, I will analyze the findings made in chapters 4.1. and 4.2. on a qualitative level. This means identifying the themes from the text and delving deep into the textual contexts that they are tied with. By doing so, the possible presence of the ways of getting across to the public will be discovered.

The practices of getting across to the public (see Kantola & Lounasmeri, 2014) were presented in section 2.4. In sum, the ways were forming coalitions, presenting the topic as a product of journalism, presenting the topic by utilizing research, targeting influential people to speak on behalf of the company, utilizing the "tone of the nation" and word-of-mouth marketing. At this stage of the analysis, the articles in the data set are scrutinized to see, if and where the content of the text include the practices of taking over the publicity. At the same time, I will consider to which extent the findings made while researching the grammatical forms drive thought leadership. These two levels of scrutinization come together in *form-content combinations.*

4.3.1 Tone of the nation

Utilizing the "tone of the nation" means appealing to the public opinion and making the message sound more significant, reliable and interesting (Kantola & Lounasemeri, 2014,

p. 11). On a practical level, this can mean making a survey and publishing the results. This is often used to raise a conversation around a certain topic. At the level of language, this practice can be observed in form-content combinations, that in any manner aim to plead to a wide group of people. This is done to paint a picture of a topic that a wide group of people considers significant and reliable.

In the analysis in sections 4.2. and 4.1., there were a few recurring findings that were raised from the functions and usage of the process types. One of them was the two different usages (inclusive and exclusive) of the subject “we” combined with mental processes. The mental processes, in both cases, were used to represent hopes and needs of the group that the subject refers to. Using mental processes in this sense was an effective way to appeal to the reader, since the reader was also included in the activity.

The first usage of *we,* was to refer to an undefined group of people. In this way, the writers could avoid passivation, as well as avoid specifying the actors behind the action. It was obvious that the “we”, in these cases, was very likely to refer to a wide group of people at a societal level. In these cases, the usage of *we* could be seen as a method to build some kind of *espirit de corps.* This could be interpreted as a sign of utilizing the tone of the nations at the level of language. This form of driving thought leadership was rather common in the data set. Example (39) indicates how this form is present in the data set.

(39) <u>We need to secure</u> a sustainable future for our citizens and the planet. (Twentyfour7)

In the example, *we* assumedly refers to a large group of people at a societal level. This conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the sentence is not a part of a quotation where the company spokesperson would refer to the company with the use of the subject. Also, the word *our* reveals the nature of *we* in this case. There is no such a thing as Wärtsilä’s citizens, nor citizens of SEA20 or Oceanic Awakening. The subject in this case must be some wider institution or the humankind as a whole.

4.3.2 Forming coalitions

Forming coalitions, as Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) define it, means using third parties, such as politicians and non-governmental organizations to mediate the message to the public sphere. As this study looks at the practices from the level of grammar, forming coalitions does not mean only the practical actions of taking an advantage of third parties. In this study, coalitions can be built also at the level of language, by referring to these third parties as one group.

While looking at the Oceanic Awakening as a whole, one can conclude that forming coalitions is perhaps the most used way of getting across to the public, since the SEA20 network already is a coalition in itself. At the activities level, the Oceanic Awakening seems to emphasize forming coalitions a lot. However, the coalitions were also formed by the use of language in the data set.

The other usage of *we* was to refer to the company or to the parties that are or should be in active co-operation with the company. This kind of *we* is an exclusive one. It was obvious that in this context, the pronoun was chosen as a subject to create some kind of *us and them* thinking. These types of sentences, for example (40), painted an image of an industry that should work as a team to tackle the challenges facing it. Example is a part of a quotation by a Wärtsilä's spokesperson in the professional press.

> (40) "We need real-time communication networks, data enabled processes and decision making, connectivity across segments and industry verticals – we need to work together. (MARPRO)

Example (40) does not, however, give a clear indication of who is meant by the first-person plural pronoun. The people to whom the *we* refers to are somewhat unclear. However, something can be deduced from the fact that not every citizen needs the data enabled processes or connectivity across the segments. It is the industry that needs them. On the other hand, the last sentence reveals that the subject cannot only refer to Wärtsilä either, as Wärtsilä cannot work together alone.

The usage of *we* in this context can be interpreted as building coalitions at the level of language. By using words such as *together,* the writer creates a gap between the industry players who should collaborate to tackle the challenges and the rest of the world. By doing so, the responsibility of solving the problem is given to all the industry players if they work together. Consequently, there are clear coalitions built on the level of text, and that is one way to build thought leadership according to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014).

4.3.3 Influential people as deliverers of the message

At a practical level, having influential people to speak on behalf of the company means having the key people of an organization trained to deliver the message and consequently using them as a brand resource or a symbol. It could also mean utilizing influencers outside the company to deliver the message in terms of commercial partnerships.

The *sayers* in the data set, in the cases where they were human beings, were in all cases the company's spokespersons. Wärtsilä has spokespersons across the company. The comments are given by various persons at different levels of the organization, however, CEO Jaakko Eskola is the most quoted one. Eskola's statement made its way to three out of four articles in professional press, which indicates that the CEO is an influential spokesperson in the eyes of the professional press. In example (41) Eskola's statement leans strongly on passive voice and pleads to the society. In this way, utilizing the voice of the company CEO is used similarly to the "tone of the nation" (see the section 4.3.1).

> (41) -- said Wärtsilä's President & CEO Jaakko Eskola. "The calls for greater efficiency, sustainability, and connectivity are simply too strong <u>to be ignored.</u> Rapid acceleration to benefit the entire sector, as well as society at large, <u>is urgently required</u>, and 'An Oceanic Awakening' is our wake-up call to everyone, heralding the beginning of our journey to making the future of shipping and energy a reality." (Forbes)

Wärsilä's aim is to use influential people also outside the company as spokespersons of the Oceanic Awakening (Ylä-Anttila 2018). The Forbes article that was a part of the data set tells that key influencers from the SEA20 cities have been invited to participate in an online forum and to ongoing series of events and workshops. However, while looking closer at the sayers of the verbal processes of the data set, one can observe that there were no influential people outside the company used as sayers. This tells that there is certainly an aim to utilize influencers outside the company, but for some reason they are not present in at least in this data set.

Hence, the lack of the behavioural processes that was discussed in the section 4.1.4. would indicate that the focus of the articles was not on the individual persons. The fact that there were no descriptions of people, for example, laughing, crying or nodding, could be a sign that the data set was majorly focusing on institutions, facts and phenomenona rather than on individuals. This kind of nature of the articles does not leave much room to elaborate on human actions.

4.3.4 Presenting the topic by utilizing a research

Presenting the topic by utilizing research operates partially the same way as presenting the topic as a product of journalism would. According to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014, p. 11), this means providing material that does not seem like traditional advertising or brand-related material. This can be done by, for example, ordering a study on the topic and pitching media with the results. In this study, all of the themes of that kind are interpreted as presenting the topic by utilizing a research.

According to the article in Wärtsilä's stakeholder magazine Twentyfour7, the SEA20 will release a global analysis of future of maritime cities and industries. However, perhaps since the analysis was released after the articles of the data set of this study, the results of the analysis are not included in the data set. Since the analysis has been ordered and written, there is a motivation to appeal to researched facts in the communication of the Oceanic Awakening.

The data set gave some indications of writers aiming to present their arguments as if they were results of research. This mentality was present specifically in the active relational and material processes that often included a verb in an indicative form. This way of presenting the topics could be interpreted as a signal of presenting the message as is it was a research result. In example (42), the active material process combined with the indicative form of *be* emphasizes the fact-like nature of the sentence. The aim for reliability and an academic tone was also created by giving exact numbers and statistics, as example (43) indicates.

(42) Wärtsilä President and CEO Jaakko Eskola argues that shipping <u>is</u> the most cost-effective way to move goods and people around the world. (FORBES)

(43) "Around 90% of world trade, worth at least USD 24 trillion in goods and services, generating a GDP of USD 2.5 trillion annually, <u>is carried by sea</u>," says Andrew Calzetti, Marketing Director, Wärtsilä Marine Business. (Twentyfour7)

However, example (42), just as other similar sentences, do not provide any type of source on what the information is based. Providing accurate sources as a backup to the information presented is of upmost importance in a scientific text. Thus, in the articles of professional press, the ways how the journalists quote the company's spokespersons break the "illusion" of science. In example (43), the verb *argue* emphasizes that the matter is what Wärtsilä CEO considers as a fact, however, that is not necessarily the case.

4.3.5 Presenting the topic as a product of journalism

According to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014), presenting the topic as a product of journalism demonstrated, for example, by pitching the media with material that do not seem like traditional marketing material. In this study, I will take a look at all signs of language that indicate that the company's messages are presented in a journalistic manner.

One of the articles of the data set was taken from the company's stakeholder magazine. It had similarities to the journalistic articles in the data set. These similarities can be observed by looking closely at, for example, the verbal processes in the headlines of the data set. The company's press release headline, as example (44) shows, includes a verbal process *to herald*. This verb could be considered as a synonym to the verb *to declare* or *to profess.* The ceremonial word choice makes the article different from professional press articles, where, like in example (45), the verbal process is somewhat more neutral.

(44) 'An Oceanic Awakening' and SEA20 <u>herald</u> a wake-up call to the potential of our Oceans in an era of unprecedented global change (Wärtsilä press release, 2018-05-09)

(45) An Oceanic Awakening <u>explained</u> (MARPRO)

The way that the company's stakeholder magazine describes the initiative with the verbal process is not as neutral as example (45) is, but it aims for a certain level of neutrality. In example (46), the verb *to call* has a slightly less ceremonial tone than the verb *to herald*. Additionally, by looking closely at the other processes in the article picked from the company stakeholder magazine, one can observe that there certainly is an aim to approach the topic journalistically. For instance, as example (47) indicates, the boldest statements of the company are part of quotes of the company representatives, just as they would be in a journalistic article. Also, the company seems to alienate itself from the initiative, which makes the content sound less company-centered. In the example (48), the company talks about the organizers, not itself, even though it mentions itself as an "enabler" of the initiative.

(46) The initiative <u>calls</u> for cities to join together to create sustainable infrastructure for the future through collaboration, smart planning and the best ideas from the marine, energy and digital sectors (Twentyfour7)

(47) " -- <u>This is a marathon</u> that <u>will stretch</u> well beyond 2020," Calzetti <u>says.</u>

(48) The goal of the organisers is to have 20 members on board by the end of next year.

Content that looks a bit like journalism is relatively typical finding in a company's stakeholder magazine, since it is a media that often provides a platform where the company can publish content that has similarities to journalistic products. The articles are, however, written for commercial purposes. Despite this, the journalistic approach in the stakeholder magazine is somewhat superimposed and constrained. In example (49), the initiative is described with relational and material processes that are combined with words that have a very commercial style. Altogether, the phrases such as the excitement of about the first year and making goals reality make the sentence sound like an advert rather than a journalistic product.

(49) The SEA20 initiative isn't a short-term project. It is an investment in the future. After the excitement of the first year, the partners are committing to go the distance to make its goals a reality. (Twentyfour7)

In comparison, the articles of the professional press are far more critical to the topic. For example, word choices around the processes in example 50 reflect the author's critical thinking.

(50) Of course the drivers for this project are not completely altruistic. Wärtsilä is, after all, a business… (MARPRO)

To conclude, a certain aim for driving thought leadership by presenting the topic as a product of journalism was present in the data set. However, this option was not used to the fullest. The stakeholder magazine would have given a suitable platform for the articles with a less commercial approach. The article picked to the data set from the company's stakeholder magazine did not reach the level of neutrality, which would have been a characteristic of a typical journalistic article. Choosing more neutral words and tones to the stakeholder magazine article would have been one way to use this way of getting across to the public to the fullest.

4.3.6 Word-of-mouth marketing

The sixth way of getting across to the public according to Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) would be the word-of-mouth marketing. This would mean actions taking place in, for example, social media platforms. For instance, blogging, spreading rumors, and utilizing influencers that are not as seen in advertising are counted as ways to do this.

For an outsider, it is very hard to see whether any word-of-mouth marketing is utilized, since as long as these marketing activities come directly from the companies themselves, they would not be considered as word of mouth marketing. Utilizing influential people as spokespersons of the company can be, in some cases, counted as a word-of-mouth marketing, though it is a slightly different practice. However, there were not any signs of utilizing influential people to deliver the message in the data set, even though the content of the article insinuated that this will be one of the tools in the Oceanic Awakening communication repertory.

To conclude, there were not any signs of the word-of-mouth marketing in the data set of this study. Even if the practice is widely used, it would have been hard to recognize that from the data set of this study as the data used was not optimal to discover any signs of the word-of-mouth marketing.

4.3.7 Conclusion of form-content combinations

All in all, utilizing the tone of the nation and forming coalitions would seem to be the practices that Wärtsilä uses while building a thought leader position through its communication. From the perspective of the themes, utilizing the tone of the nation could be recognized through passive mental processes and active mental processes, where the senser is “we” that referred to an undefined group at a societal level. Coalitions were formed by active mental and material processes, where the subject *we* referred to the company or the SEA20 network. This was supported by words such as “together”. In addition, existential processes were also used to support forming coalitions, although they were a slightly more inaccurate way to do that.

Utilizing the tone of the nation and forming coalitions occurred notably in the data set. Thus, there were no indications that these practices wouldn't be utilized to the fullest. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that utilizing the tone of the nation and forming coalitions were the strongest ways of getting across to the public in the data set.

Figure 7 summarizes the presence of the different ways of getting across to the public in the data set. The green boxes represent the findings that supported getting across to the public. The red boxes represent the findings that did not support getting across to the public, and in that way, building a thought leader position.

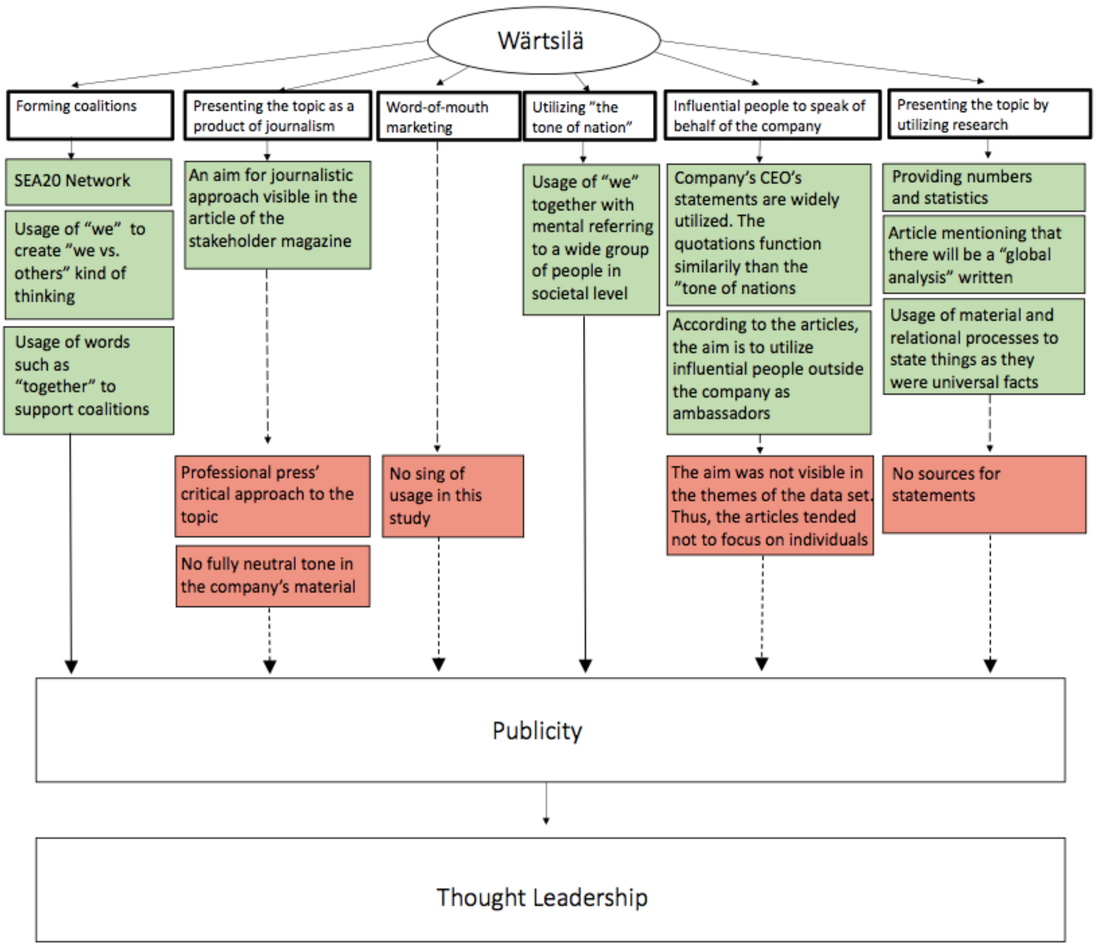

Figure 7 The presence of the practices of taking over publicity in the data set

Utilizing research to present the topic as well as presenting the topic as a product of journalism was weakly present in the themes of the articles. At the level of grammatical forms, utilizing research was visible in the active relational processes that described the surrounding environment of the maritime industry. This could be done with the active material processes as well. In both cases, indicative verbs created a tone that made the statements sound like universal facts. Presenting the topic as the product of journalism operated partially from the same standing points. Thus, the journalistic practices could be seen in the verbal processes. In addition, the tendency to quote spokespersons of the company was similar in the company's own material and in the purely journalistic products.

Even though there were signs of these two practices in the articles, there were indications that they were not used to the fullest to get across to the public and act as a driver for thought leadership. Adding more objectivity and sources to the facts would have made the text look more like journalism and supported the scientific approach of the issues.

When it comes to having influential people to speak on behalf of the company, the company's CEO's voice is present in the data set. This can be concluded from the sayers of verbal processes. The CEO's statements are used for the similar purposes as the tone of the nation. The content of the articles indicated that there is an aim to utilize influential people outside the company as ambassadors, but the influential people were not present in the data set as sayers of the verbal processes. It is also essential to make a remark that the data set as a whole focused on institutions and phenomena, but not on individuals. Word-of-mouth marketing was not present in the articles at all.

4.4 Comparing Wärtsilä's own material with professional press

In this phase of the analysis, I will compare the themes of Wärtsilä's owned media with the content of the professional press. By doing so, I will find out whether the authors of professional press see the surrounding world similarly to Wärtsilä's. Thus, I will find out to which degree integrated corporate communication can reach the earned media.

It seems like the process types described in section 4.1. have almost the same ratio of presence in both owned and earned media. This is demonstrated in Table 3. The table indicates how often each process type occurs in both earned and owned media. The occurrence in the perspective of the total number of all process types in each form of media is demonstrated in the "percentage" columns.

Table 3 Incidence of process types in the owned and earned media

	Earned media	Percentage	Wärtsilä	Percentage
Material	129	50 %	96	50 %
Mental	37	14 %	19	10 %
Relational	53	21 %	38	20 %
Existential	3	1 %	6	3 %
Behavioural	2	1 %	3	2 %
Verbal	34	13 %	31	16 %
total	258	1	193	1

It seems like process types occur in similar proportions in both earned and owned media. At the level of language and forms, this indicates that the authors of the professional press see the world somewhat similarly as the company does. There is not any major difference in the ways that they describe the surrounding world. The focus points that the authors have when they analyze the circumstances are mostly the same.

The fact that half of both forms of media consists of material processes is a sign of the author's tendency to focus on real world events rather than an idea world where the processes would be mostly mental. This claim can also be supported by the relatively high number of the relational processes in both content categories. Then again, the lack of behavioural processes in both forms of media indicates the tendency to focus on facts, institutions and phenomena rather than on human actions. There is also a lack of existential processes in both forms of media. Existential processes were mostly used to describe the circumstances inaccurately. Drawn from that fact, it seems like both professional press and Wärtsilä aim for a high level of accuracy in the articles.

The number of verbal processes is interesting since it is slightly higher in Wärtsilä's own material than in the professional press. As the major function of the verbal process was to quote the company representatives, it can be concluded that the company tends to utilize more quotations of its own keypersons than the professional press would do. In that sense, the company utilizes its own influential persons to deliver its messages in its own material slightly more than the professional press does. However, the difference is not significant.

While looking at the comparison of these two forms of media from the perspective of content, similar ratios could be explained with the fact that the professional press tends to give relatively lot of room for quoting either the company's press releases or spokespersons directly. Around 43% of all process types that were found in the professional press articles were in direct proximity of quotations. This allows the company to have a great amount of its own material directly quoted in the professional press. For example, Wärtsilä's CEO Jaakko Eskola commented the initiative in Wärtsilä's press release. The 75 words long quotation was directly quoted to three out of four articles of the professional press.

The major difference between Wärtsilä's own material and the professional press can be found at the level of tone and content. When taking a close look at the word choices of the company's own media and the professional press, one can see a slightly greater amount of criticism in the professional press. The journalists' critical thinking can be observed by comparing how the professional press and the company's own content describe the same topic. Examples (51) and (52) tell both about the situation where the company is currently at with collecting participants to the SEA20 network.

(51) Thus far, the cities of Hamburg, Helsinki and Rotterdam have announced their membership, with <u>others to follow shortly.</u> (Annual report)

(52) The wave <u>seems to be growing</u> slowly. A SEA20 Twitter forum has just over 60 followers as of this writing. But a company rep say much more participation and activity is on the horizon, including summits to be held and intelligence reports to be issued. A total of 20 port cities are being targeted. (Forbes)

Example (51) indicates that it is certain that other cities will join to the initiative. In comparison, the example (52) has a way more critical approach to the topic. It mentions that so far, the interest towards the initiative has been mild and highlights that the expectations of how many cities will join are only the expectations of the company. This kind of critical approach in the professional press articles was briefly discussed in section 4.3.5.

In conclusion, the construction of the text at the level of process types was the same in both content categories. The similarity can be partially explained with the fact that the professional press contained a lot of quotations, and the quotations were naturally generated by the company. However, the differences stand out while examining the content and tone. The professional press tended to have a way more critical approach to the topic. In the light of this, it can be concluded that the professional press do not outsource the content generation to the companies and companies cannot fully consider the professional press as a platform of integrated communication.

5 Conclusion

This study took a closer look at the communication of Wärtsilä's Oceanic Awakening initiative. The aim was to find out how thought leadership can be built through corporate communication and public relations of a multinational B2B company. The data set of the study included seven articles, of which three were picked from the professional press and four were Wärtsilä's own material. The topic of all the articles was the Oceanic Awakening initiative.

To find out how thought leadership was built through communication, the articles were analyzed in the level forms and content. The method of the study was problem-driven and contained elements of content analysis as well as discourse analysis. At the first phase, the form side of form-content combinations was examined by utilizing Halliday's (1985) theoretical framework of participant roles and transitivity system. The first step was to identify the material, mental, relational, behavioural, existential and verbal processes of the articles. By doing so, the functions of the processes were identified. The identified functions were mirrored to the ways of getting across to the publicity, presented by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014). By looking at the processes as well as the content surrounding them, the ways in which the themes build thought leadership were explained.

Material processes formed around half of all the process types in the data set. They were used mainly to state how the circumstances are at a concrete level in the surrounding world. They were also used to describe the achievements of the company's products and elaborating on what has been done within the Oceanic Awakening initiative. However, the description of the company's products did not have a central role in the data set.

Mental processes were used to indicate the aims, hopes, and wishes of the organization and the needs of the society. In the passive tone, they were used to indicate matters that are needed or even required. Typically, active mental processes were used together with the senser “we”. This could be either inclusive or exclusive we, meaning that it referred to either the company itself, as well as the SEA20 network, or an undefined group at a societal level. Mental processes formed around 13 % of all processes in the data set.

Relational processes were the second most common process type by forming around one-fifth of all process types. They were used partially similarly to the material processes. Relational processes tended to describe the attributes of the company and its initiative or the surroundings where maritime business occurs. The difference in the usage of material and relational processes was that relational processes were used for slightly fewer concrete purposes than the material processes.

Verbal processes were as common as mental processes. The major function of those was quoting the company’s spokespersons and reporting on the actions done within the Oceanic Awakening initiative.

Behavioural processes were very rare in the data set. This can be explained with the fact that the content focuses heavily on the substance rather than human beings. The few behavioural processes found in the data set had mainly the purpose to enliven the text and to catch the attention of the reader. Therefore, the theme formed by the behavioural processes was not considered to be one of the themes that would build thought leadership.

Existential processes were also a very minor process type. Those few that could be identified in the data set functioned similarly to passive mental processes, stating the things that are needed or required either by the maritime industry or the society as a whole.

The majority of the processes were active. Active clauses were used mostly when emphasizing what either Wärtsilä, SEA20, Oceanic Awakening, or some idea or driving force of them has done. On the other hand, the passive clauses, then again, faded away the doer. They were used to alienate the company from the initiative and emphasizing it just as an enabler of the SEA20 Network. They were also used when the author wanted to avoid stating who is responsible for doing certain actions.

In the second phase of the analysis, the themes drawn from the process types were mirrored to the ways of getting across to the public. The ways of getting across to the public, presented by Kantola and Lounasmeri (2014) were forming coalitions, presenting the topic as a product of journalism, utilizing the tone of the nation, utilizing research to present the topic, having influential people to s4peak on behalf of the company, and word-of-mouth marketing.

Utilizing the of the nation and forming coalitions was highly common in the articles. On the level of forms, utilizing the tone of the nation was indicated by passive mental processes and active mental processes, where the senser is an *inclusive we* that referred to an undefined group in a wide perspective. Coalitions were formed using the active mental and material processes, where the *exclusive we* acted as subject and referred to the company or the SEA20 network. Looking from the perspective of content, the statements of this kind were supported by words such as “together”. Although only a few, there were also existential processes used to support forming coalitions.

Utilizing research to present the topic and presenting the topic as a product of journalism were also present in the form-content combinations of the data set. In the forms’ side of the combinations, utilizing research was indicated by the usage of the active relational processes that described the surrounding environment of the maritime industry. In some cases, this was also done by the active material processes. In both cases, verbs in an indicative form created a tone made the statements sounding like universal facts. Presenting the topic as the product of journalism operated partially similarly. Yet, the journalistic approach could be seen also in the verbal processes, as the tendency to quote the company representatives was alike in the company’s own material as well as in the professional press articles.

Although utilizing research and presenting the topic as journalism were present at the form-content combinations of the data set, there were indications of that they were not used in their full potential to take over the publicity and to be a driver for thought leadership. Adding more objectivity and sources to the facts would have made the text look more like journalism and supported the scientific approach of the issues. Thus, providing sources for the provided numbers and statistics would have added the reliability in the academic sense.

When it comes to having influential people to speak on behalf of the company, the sayers of the verbal processes indicated that the company's CEO is the person whose voice is present in the data set as various quotes. The CEO's statements were used for similar purposes as the tone of the nation. It was also mentioned in the articles that there is an aim to utilize influential people outside the company as ambassadors, but the influential people were not present in the data set as sayers of the verbal processes. However, the data set as a whole focused on facts, institutions, and phenomena and not on individuals. Word-of-mouth marketing was not present in the themes of the articles at all.

In the third phase of the analysis, the articles from the professional press were compared to the company's own material. The major findings of this phase were that the form-content combinations were similar in both content categories. The similarities could be partially originated from the fact that quotations were given a lot of room in the professional press articles. In this way, similar sentences were found in the company's own material and the professional press. By comparing the tone and word choices, especially in the verbal processes, it was prominent that the professional press had a lot more critical approach to the topic.

One of the key findings of this study was that thought leadership was not built by focusing on individual persons. As the press still sticks on topics that are purely not related to personal issues of the speakers, it can be claimed that the public sphere, as Habermas defines it, is still very much alive. In other words, even though personification seems to be a trend in some ways in the public sphere, it seems not to be a must for a company to make its messages out to the public through the media.

However, the question of whether the public sphere actualized in the public discussion of the Oceanic Awakening initiative as Habermas defines it, can be argued on. The characteristic of the participants seeking for a mutual understanding and solutions to their dissatisfactions seemed to be present in the discussion. The Oceanic Awakening appealed to climate change and other environmental issues that are common problems of humankind. In the other hand, it can be argued whether Wärtsilä's purpose to participate in the public sphere is purely the aim to solve the climate crisis. After all, the purpose of commercial corporations is to generate money to their owners. It can be also argued if the dissatisfactions are the same across the public sphere. Wärtsilä aims at a radical transformation of the marine industry, but is the need for the change commonly shared? Climate change is certainly a mutually shared dissatisfaction in today's industry, but how about the aim to create a digitally connected ecosystem?

The most obvious drivers in the discussions were commercial, as a global listed company does not operate as charity would. Making the way into headlines would not be possible from any institution that thinks it has a word to say, which would, in this case, be a requirement for the public sphere as Habermas defines it. Most of the professional press articles referred to a fair where Wärtsilä first launched the initiative. Attending to a global exhibition of this kind is neither possible for every company, nor cheap. This prevents the genuine Habermas' public sphere from actualizing in the global professional press.

The findings of the last phase of the analysis were concluded by comparing Wärtsilä's owned and earned media. The study indicated that the professional press tends to give a remarkably lot of room for the voice of the company. This means that some of the content generated by the writers of the company's press releases as well as the comments of the company spokespersons were present in the journalistic articles. This softens the line between the owned and earned media. The line still exists though, as none of the articles included the company-generated text to an extent where the author could be considered to be the company instead of the journalist. However, this implies that basing the communication strategy on isolation between the different content categories of PESO model is not feasible. For example, the content that is originally produced for the purposes of social media (shared media) might as well end up to the earned media. This is important to notice when considering the targeted audiences for the content.

The tendency of including a lot of voice from the company indicates also that even though the press does not focus on representatives as persons, it is yet worth to train them to operate with the media. The comments from the spokespersons might be one of the most significant ways to drive thought leadership, as the volume of the comments making their way to the publicity seems to be vast.

The question of whether the integration of corporate communication can reach the media presence of a company is also a complex dilemma to answer with the findings of this study. The company's spokespersons' quotes and the press release material can be parts of an integrated communication strategy. Therefore, to a certain extent, the media's presence can be integrated. By utilizing the ways of getting across to the public in their full potential would potentially open the doors for a company to integrate its communication even beyond that point. As this study covered only Wärtsilä's communication which did not go so far, it is impossible to say if that is even possible. Although going beyond that would be possible, it is also questionable if that is a reasonable aim for corporate communication.

The findings of this study conclude that if a company looks at its actions with critique and has a neutral tone in its communication, it can drive thought leadership in terms of bringing it closer to journalism. In the communication of Oceanic Awakening, this was done by alienating the company from the initiative and emphasizing it just as an "enabler". Nevertheless, this practice of driving thought leadership was not utilized at its full potential. By bringing corporate communication closer to journalism and in that way making it possible for the journalists to use the content as such would not, however, be a convenient solution to a corporation that operates from commercial standing points. First of all, at least in the light of this study, it cannot be said that the journalists would utilize the content without critique even if such content would be available. Producing content that aims to fully journalistic approach would in that sense be, in the worst-case scenario, a waste of resources. Secondly, even if communication with a journalistic approach would contribute to the thought leader position, this study cannot take a stance on whether being a thought leader is commercially profitable. The nature of business is, after all, to generate wealth to its owners.

This battle between corporate communication and journalism is emblematic to the media that is in transformation. It is evident that the blurring lines between journalists, corporate communication personnel, lobbyers, and other kinds of non-traditional media content producers had an effect to the results of this study as well. Luckily, basing on the finding that professional press tended to handle the corporate initiative with critique, it seems like fact-based and unbiased journalism still exists even in the field of the maritime professional press. Nevertheless, it is evident that the blurred lines of roles of communication professional can make it easier to drive thought leadership in terms of media relations. For example, if the company's communication professionals have firm relationships with journalists, it is certainly easier to pitch the respective media with the company's topics.

From the point of view of the public sphere the fact that the professional press still concentrates on issues instead of individuals is a positive thing. It is a positive thing also from the point of view of a company that aims to integrate its communication. It is easier to make through a coherent message to the publicity via media if the media leaves the spokespersons as individuals to background and focuses on the substance instead. However, there are also downsides to this aspect. The employees are often one of the greatest resources of the company and communication that walks over them can leave out nuances that would make an impression to the audiences. Thus, shading out the nuances that are typical to people-centric communication can be considered as boring and monotonous. In the end, strategic communication is so far always generated by a human.

The conclusions of this study, as described, can be applied to further deliberation on thought leadership. Wärtsilä could be used as an example to demonstrate the ways in which thought leadership can be built. The conclusions of practices that were utilized in the communication can certainly contribute to further deliberation of publicity, corporate communication and transformation of the media. However, it is worth mentioning that this study covered only one company and only a very small coverage of press, not to even mention the media as a whole. Thus, the scope of data was chosen to be applicable to deep qualitative analysis. It was decent for the purposes of this study, but not wide enough to draw conclusions that would hold true in all respective cases. Therefore, this topic should be further researched with a wider scope of data that would contain material from all sides of the PESO-model. In addition to that, more companies could be included in the study. Comparing different companies with each other would generate interesting notions to the research of the thought leadership.

Because of the fact that there is relatively little research on thought leadership in the field of communication studies, there are various opportunities for the further research. Because of the lack of thought leadership research that utilizes well known theoretical frameworks of communication studies, conducting a study of, for example, discourses, themes and genre would be beneficial for the field. Hence, examining the intertextuality between companies and the professional press would certainly be a way to make generalizable findings on thought leadership.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. The articles used in the analysis

Twentyfour7. SEA20: Marine cities join together for change. September 26th, 2019

Wärtsilä Annual report 2018. An Oceanic Awakening.

Wärtsilä Corporation, Press release. ‘An Oceanic Awakening’ and SEA20 herald a wake-up call to the potential of our Oceans in an era of unprecedented global change. September 5th, 2018

GCCaptain. Wärtsilä initiative Touted as “Wake-Up Call” for Ocean’s Role in Era of Global Change. September 14th, 2018

MARPRO Maritime Professionals. “An Oceanic Awakening” explained. December 17th, 2018

Forbes. 'Oceanic Awakening' Aims For Smarter, Cleaner Marine Shipping. September, 17th, 2019

World Maritime News. Wartsila Unveils An Oceanic Awakening Initiative at SMM. September 5th, 2020