



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET
HANDELSHÖGSKOLAN

FROM BLOG TO BUSINESS

YOUNG WOMEN'S NEW WAY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2013

BACHELOR THESIS

AUTHORS:

JULIA MINGES 910227

OLIVIA WETTSTAM 910810

TUTOR:

MARIA NORBÄCK

Acknowledgements

Finally we made this thesis reality. It has been a long way, but thanks to a few very important people, we made it!

We are very happy and feel a great gratitude towards our three interviewees; our three blog writers, who despite a full schedule and other projects took time for us and the interviews.

Thank you,

Emelie Ohlsson, Sanna Preifelt and Nellie Berntsson.

*We would also like to thank and honor our mentor, **Maria Norbäck** for all the support and valuable inputs we received during the writing process. We probably would not have gone so far on this road without you.*

Göteborg, 5 juni 2013

Abstract

In a world more connected than ever, we find ourselves calling, texting, emailing, twittering or facebooking each other every single day. The blogs have been introduced and are being used over large parts of the world, also Sweden is under its' spell. Almost every other girl at the age 15-21 in Sweden writes a blog today and some use their blogs as platforms to create businesses. You can see young, driven female bloggers who start writing a blog and then use the blog to create their own businesses. Our aim with this thesis has been to study and analyze how these bloggers are using their blog as a platform for business.

Through interviewing three bloggers of different sizes, ages and with different themes and through collecting text material from two of the largest blogs in Sweden, we have tried to define how these women have used their blogs in order to create business and how they engage in entrepreneurial activities. We have also studied the individuals, the bloggers, the entrepreneurs, behind the blogs and looked upon different attributes which according to our theory are necessary in order to become a successful entrepreneur.

In the end of this thesis we have identified some major themes which are necessary for a blogger to become a successful entrepreneur. The importance of networking with other people and the fact that a blog can be seen upon as a virtual CV are the most distinct conclusions we have drawn. The bloggers are also becoming living organizations, carrying around their businesses and their brand wherever they go.

Additionally, we have identified some distinct attributes in the bloggers personalities which create good conditions for them in order to succeed as entrepreneurs. The most common attributes we found regarding our bloggers were their *willingness to work hard*, their *lack of fear for failure* and their *ability to motivate oneself*.

Do we believe that the bloggers in our study should be called entrepreneurs? Or is this just a common thought, applied by people who are only seeing the top of the iceberg?

Key words: blogs, business, blogging, entrepreneurship, platform, creating, business opportunities, attributes.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	6
1.1 Problem statement	8
1.1.1 Purpose	8
1.1.2 Research Questions	8
1.2 Background	8
1.2.1 What is a blog?	8
1.2.2 History of blogs	9
1.2.3 Statistics	11
1.2.4 Making money out of blogging	12
1.2.5 The process of going from blog to business	13
1.3 Bloggers	15
1.3.1 Emelie Ohlsson	15
1.3.2 Sanna Preifelt	15
1.3.3 Nellie Berntsson	15
1.3.5 Kenza Zouiten	16
1.3.6 Isabella Löwengrip	16
2. Methodology	17
2.1 Research design	17
2.2 Empirical material	17
2.2.1 Interviews	17
2.2.2 Text material	20
2.2.3 Creating the empirical part of the thesis	21
2.3 Analysis	21
2.4 Trustworthiness	22
2.5 Literature review	23
3. Theory	25
3.1 Previous research on the area	25
3.1.1 Bloggskolan	26
3.2 Entrepreneurship	28
3.2.2 The entrepreneurial mindset	29
3.3 Causation and Effectuation	33
4. Empirical material	36

4.1 Interviews	37
4.1.1 Interview with Emelie Ohlsson	37
4.1.2 Interview with Sanna Preifelt	41
4.1.3 Interview with Nellie Berntsson	45
4.2 Text material	47
4.2.1 Text material from www.kenzas.se	47
4.2.2 Text material from www.blondinbella.se	51
5. Analysis	54
5.1 Bloggskolan	54
5.1.1 Networking	54
5.1.2 The blog as a CV	56
5.2 The entrepreneurial mindset	57
5.3 Causation & Effectuation	65
6. Discussion	67
6.1 Conclusions	67
6.2 Critical approach of the blogging success stories	69
6.3 Implications	69
6.4 Further research	71
8. Bibliography	72
9. Appendix	74
9.1 Appendix 1	74

1. Introduction

Blogging. - A term loaded with negativity for some people, but with positivity for others. Some people read blogs as a part of their daily routine, while others associate blogs with young women who have an interest in fashion and lifestyle. Though the opinions on blogging differ, it is a fact that the blogging phenomenon has got a hold on the world.

The phenomenon of writing and reading blogs started out in the United States, thereafter spread worldwide and in the last ten years it has reached Sweden with a strong impact. Today there are lots of active blogs in Sweden. 89 percent of the population has an internet connection in their home, which provides the possibility to access blogs, both as writer or reader (Stiftelsen för internetinfrastruktur, 2013). According to statistics, there are about 570 000 registered blogs in Sweden. Over 50 percent of Swedish girls aged between 14 and 21 are writing their own blog, while over 75 percent are reading others (Findahl, 2012). Therefore, we believe that the blogosphere, which means the realm of Internet blogs and the people who read or write them (Dictionary.com, LCC, 2013), holds an unknown amount of possible business opportunities for those who know how to take advantage of it. When talking about business, we refer to actions of a commercial, industrial or professional type, which is done by someone.

Not only are there a lot of blogs and blog readers in Sweden, a few of them have already used their blog as a platform for expanding their business. Several bloggers in Sweden, all of them with blogs of different sizes, started out writing blogs about their lives and hobbies, and today they have started their own businesses in their areas of interest. How did they do this? How did they use their blog to create business? These questions are leading us towards thoughts about the phenomenon entrepreneurship, which deals with ways of creating, exploring and discovering business opportunities. Could this way of using a blog as a platform for making money and thus engage in business activities of various kinds, be seen as a new form of entrepreneurship? How do blog writers create this process?

An interesting point about this new form of entrepreneurship, the creation of business opportunities using existing ideas and turning them into something new, is the people behind them. Many researchers have looked into entrepreneurship through the years, and they are still trying to define what resources and qualifications an entrepreneur need.

Today, many of the largest blogs in Sweden are written by young women, who write about fashion, their lifestyle and interests. This is an interesting aspect that makes us want to focus on female bloggers in our studies, since they definitely stand behind the majority of the blogs written today (Findahl, 2012)

Historically the man has been the norm for an entrepreneur (Nyberg, 2012), but today this is changing, partly because of the wave of female bloggers, making their way as entrepreneurs. Many of these female bloggers have today reached success by networking in the social media, where they have been given a lot of attention and money through their entrepreneurship. Is this entrepreneurship created by these women using their abilities and qualifications in order to succeed? Are there any common patterns in the way they are proceeding and is there a common way to go? Our aim with our thesis is to go deeper into this area and these questions, and make a contribution to something which has not been fully explored yet.

As we will explain to the readers in our method chapter, it has been difficult to find scientific research around our subject, and the material is restricted. Therefore, it is of high importance to do research within this field and this makes our thesis and our studies significant for the future research of the subject.

1.1 Problem statement

1.1.1 Purpose

“The purpose of this thesis is to study and analyze how bloggers can use their blog as a platform for business.”

1.1.2 Research Questions

In order of getting a better view of what we are searching for, we have narrowed down our purpose to three questions which will help us guide our research.

- Are there any key success factors to acknowledge in order to be able to make business out of your blog?
- Are there certain attributes which are required by the blogger, to be a successful entrepreneur?
- Are there common patterns regarding how the decision making is performed by bloggers?

1.2 Background

To be able to understand the purpose with this thesis, you first need a background to our subject and this will be given in this section of our thesis. The themes we are going to discuss in the following paragraphs are what a blog is, the blog’s history, how you measure statistics on a blog, how you can make money out of blogging and to conclude we will give you some examples of people who have gone through the process from blog to business. In our thesis, we will focus on both the blog as a platform for business and also the process of going from blog to business, since we think they overlap each other.

1.2.1 What is a blog?

First of all, what exactly is a blog? The word blog derives from the expression web blog and most commonly the blog is used as a personal diary or a log on the internet, available for everyone to read online. Usually the blog has a title and a short descriptive text, which

describes the main theme of the blog and the writer. The creator of the blog is writing regular blog posts about different subjects, whereas the subjects depend on the blogger's interests. Every post has an indication of date and the blog readers can publish comments on each post, discussing, criticizing and communicating with the blog writer, but also each other. However, not everyone want to write a public blog and there are also several ways of making your blog less public, like creating a password for accessing the blog or block readers from publishing comments on your posts, if a discussion is not desired (Nationalencyklopedin, 2013). In the last couple of years, the blogging phenomenon has expanded and as a result of this, new ways of blogging have emerged. Today, there are different kinds of micro blogs, where the update is limited to a few pictures, words or sentences every time. A few of these pages are Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram. (Våge, Stattin, & Nygren, 2005)

1.2.2 History of blogs

The following paragraphs are built on Våge, Stattin and Nygren's (2005) book "*Bloggtider*", which discusses the development of blogging the last couple of years.

The blog phenomenon started over twenty years ago in the United States of America, when the internet slowly grew to be more and more accessible. The opinions about who actually founded or invented the first blog differ. Some say the man who invented the World Wide Web, Tim Berners-Lee, was the owner of the first blog, or at least he owned the webpage which was the forerunner of the blog in 1991. Others are supporters of the idea that a webpage in 1994, started by Justin Hall, was the first blog. Either way, few can deny Dave Winer did have an important role in the development of the blog as a new phenomenon. Winer was a software engineer who, among many other things, created a publishing system for blogs and a program for blogging.

The word *weblog* was introduced by Jorn Barger in 1997. What earlier had been called links with commentaries, Barger now entitled weblog. The former blogs differed from our definition of blogs today. In the beginning the word blog referred to a webpage where you recommended other websites. Usually there was a link to another website, and sometimes also a small comment. In other words, the blogs back in the nineties were journals over the webpages you liked to visit. This way, people shared their interests and slowly a type of social

network was built, where everyone linked to each other. Later on, the name weblogs became wee-blogs and finally settled at the term blogs, which is the word we use today.

The blogging break-through came during the summer of 1999, when webpages and platforms for blogs were created which did not require any special knowledge for using it. Now, anyone could build a blog and this service was free. The blog platform *Blogger.com* was the one to change the blogging style from writing about links to writing more about general topics like news or current matters. *Blogger.com* made it easy for everyone to publish anything on the internet, either they wanted to write about links or something entirely different.

No one could ever imagine what impact blogs would have on the world and society in the future. With a rapidly and constant growing amount of blog writers and readers, the blogosphere has become one of the quickest ways to spread information and opinions today. There have been several incidents when it has been shown how big impact blogs can have regarding spreading news and information. The 9/11 act of terror and the US army entering Iraq gained a lot of attention from the traditional media, but there was also a huge discussion and opinion formation created on the blogs, which had become more popular and reached out to more and more people. The impact of social media, blogs inclusive, was now a fact. (Våge, Stattin, & Nygren, 2005)

Today, blogs are an integrated part of social media and the possibility to connect and reach a broad mass of people through blogs provides a lot of opportunities for those who know how to take advantage of it. The blogging phenomenon was born in the United States, but the blogging wave has reached Sweden and other countries as well. In Sweden, the blogging industry is rapidly growing, and as written earlier in this thesis there were 570 000 registered blogs in Sweden in 2012 (Findahl, 2012). With this amount of blogs, and even more blog readers, the opportunities within this area are growing even larger. Not only can you use the blog for writing about personal interests and opinions, but the blog also provides possibilities of reaching out to many people. This has resulted in a new form of creating business opportunities, using your blog for business purposes. At least this is something we have observed when reading blogs the last couple of years.

1.2.3 Statistics

The following paragraphs are in reference to Susan Gunelius (2013) who emphasizes that there are many different ways of counting visitors and other statistics on blogs. Previously we have ascertained that the blogosphere is steadily growing, which leads us to questions about how big the blogosphere is today and the percentage of the population who can be reached by it. The sizes and popularity of blogs are difficult to measure, and when you look at blog statistics you have to keep in mind there are many different tools to measure this. To introduce the most common tools for measuring, you can use hits, visits and unique visitors.

Visits show the number of times anyone has entered your blog during a certain period of time and each entry on your blog is counted once, irrespective of if it is the same visitor. If you want to count how many visitors a blog has in total, you probably do not want to count each entry, but each entry by a new visitor and never double-count. However, it is extremely hard to make sure you never double-count and if a visitor has deleted their cookies since their last entry on the blog, they will be counted as a new visitor.

Another way of measuring the traffic to a blog is by looking at hits. Hits mean that every file that downloads from a blog is counted as one hit. On a blog, files that could be downloaded are ads, an image in the blog post, a blog logo, and then also the page itself. If all these files are found on one blog, one entry in one page would give four hits. You could also use a common method of measurement by looking at page views, which summarizes all visits on all different pages on one blog. Some visitors might watch one page while others continue to other pages. Page views are the statistics advertisers preferably look at, since every additional page view creates an additional opportunity for the advertisers' ads to be seen and clicked on by the visitors. (Gunelius, 2013)

In the blogosphere these tools are used as a mix and it is hard to say what tool is most accurate. Since you have all these different kinds of measurement tools bloggers can also wangle with their statistics, and also buy higher statistics. For example, one of Sweden's largest blogs, *kenzas.se*, has 396 319 unique visitors, while it has 1 541 132 visits and 1 996 240 page views each week, and here you can clearly see the difference between the various tools (Tailsweep AB, 2013). A blog can seem gigantic if you look at page views while it seems to be much tinier according to unique visitors.

Many blog writers in Sweden started with writing a blog, which they later have expanded into different directions. The blog has been a platform for new business opportunities, collaborations with other bloggers and also companies. Some have taken it further by introducing their own jewelry or clothing designs, writing books and starting up their own companies. Even if you are not interested in the blogosphere at all, it is hard to avoid all the bloggers, who you can find everywhere today. For instance you can see them in talk-shows, TV-shows, advertisements and newspapers. People's opinions about the blogging phenomenon and bloggers differ, however most people have some kind of opinion or thought about this topic.

1.2.4 Making money out of blogging

One area that needs to be raised is how bloggers can make money out of their blogs. The most common type of income for a blogger is generated by selling advertisements. If a blogger has a niched blog, a well-known blog or simply enough readers, they can sell advertisement space on their blog on their own. If not, there are plenty of services which can be used for this purpose. One type of service is the programs where the blog writer can choose ads they find suitable for their blog and its' content and the income the blogger can receive from this is received in relation to the amount of blog readers who click on the ads to get more information. An example of this kind of program is *Google's* popular program *Google AdSense*. Another type of service is the programs which connect bloggers with possible advertisers and in return the blogger gets commission for every ad placement, like *Tailsweep*. (Microsoft, 2013)

Selling advertisement is the most common way of making money out of a blog, however there are other ways that should be mentioned. Different affiliate programs are one way, which are taking on an intermediary role between blog writers and online sites, for example used by *Amazon.com*. For instance, if the blogger mentions a book on his or her blog, the affiliate program creates a direct link from the blog to the online site, which creates an opportunity for the reader to get more information about the book. If the reader thereafter buys the book, the blogger can get paid for this. (Microsoft, 2013)

Another way to earn money is through sponsored blog posts. This means that the blogger gets paid for writing about a certain company's products and services. However, this type of blogging income has been highly questioned. Many people do not think it is ethical correct, that it lowers the blogger's credibility and if a blogger chooses to do this, he or she has to make it absolutely clear it is a sponsored post. (Sjöstedt, 2012)

A blogger can also earn money out of videos they upload on their blog. Many bloggers have a distinct niche in their blog and many of them are uploading short videos, talking about a theme or make a tutorial for the blog readers on how you, for example, do a certain make-up style. The blogger can then use a program where he or she can get paid in direct relation to the amount of viewers. The income the blogger can receive from this is related to the videos' CPM, Cost per Mille, which means advertising cost per thousand views. (Sjöstedt, 2012)

Some blog portals have systems where people who register blogs on their portals can earn money on their blogs. One way can be by looking at page views, another one by the amount of readers who click on the advertisements that the portal put on the blog. However, this only generates a small amount of money if the blog is not a really big and popular blog.

To conclude this part, a blogger has to see and exploit the opportunities the blog can generate to make money out of a blog, and this can be one way of creating new businesses. The blogosphere also shows the importance of keeping up good customer relations with your already existing customers, the blog readers. Everything bloggers do will affect their brand, their blogs, their businesses, which make it of high importance to deepen the blog reader-blogger relations. (Sjöstedt, 2012)

1.2.5 The process of going from blog to business

Before we go deeper into our subject, we want to explain what blogs can contribute with and shortly introduce what we refer to as going from blog to business. Additionally, we will give some examples of this to show the blogs' power and how it can be a solid base for business and entrepreneurship.

Today you can find many bloggers who have managed to go from zero blog readers to thousands, tens thousands or even hundreds of thousands. Many of them started out writing

about their lives and their hobbies and a majority of the female bloggers wrote about fashion and shared products they had bought, or uploaded photos of their outfits. No one would probably have guessed how big this blog phenomenon would get. Blog readers look for inspiration and role models and bloggers provide them an insight in their lives, sometimes only the good parts, sometimes only the bad, and sometimes both. An ordinary girl becomes a celebrity, who is famous for writing a blog. Their fame then makes it possible to expand their brand, their blog, their name.

A blogger is a living brand. Everywhere the blogger goes, and any time, people will observe her, judge her. A blogger stands for her brand. What she writes and shows on the blog and what actions she takes outside the blog will therefore indirectly affect her brand. This fact also makes it possible to use and take advantage of the created brand, to take the brand further, and go from blog to business. The blog creates opportunities since the bloggers can use their celebrity and credibility they have created within a certain area on their blog, to expand the brand into new directions. We have living proof of bloggers who have adopted the process of going from blog to business and below some examples will follow.

Kenza Zouiten went from writing a fashion blog to modeling, to be a guest designer for both clothes and jewelry brands and are now about to start her own fashion line. *Isabella Löwengrip*, famous by her blog name *Blondinbella*, went from a 14 year old teenage blogger to open up her own businesses, running a magazine, running a blogging portal, being a lecturer and much more.

Few would have guessed these young female bloggers would become strong, influential entrepreneurs. Here we can see the power of blogging. What they all have in common is that they all started a blog, and after that their roads have not been identical, however they have all gone from only being a blogger to being active with different projects and having their blog more as the core for their business and projects.

1.3 Bloggers

For our thesis, we have decided on two ways of collecting empirical data. One is to interview bloggers, and the other one is to do text analysis of bloggers' blogs. In this section of our thesis we are going to give short introductions to the bloggers who have been parts of our thesis and our study.

1.3.1 Emelie Ohlsson

Emelie Ohlsson started her blog career in 2006 when she opened up a blog where she wrote about her thoughts after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2005, where she lost her younger sister. Later she turned her blog into a photography blog where she shot some celebrities, bloggers, weddings and other themes. Today, she sells photography courses, both web courses and private courses. During her blog career she has done other projects such as running a magazine, selling shoot straps and being an ambassador for Canon.

1.3.2 Sanna Preifelt

Sanna Preifelt is a 22 year old girl. Four years ago, she started her blog, www.sannasrum.se, creating a corner for her thoughts and interests. Since a few years back, Sanna have had a huge interest in creating web-designs and in 2009 she took her first steps into the area of blog designing. In the beginning Sanna made all of her blog designs for free, creating and offering a lot of time on the designs, but later noticed this was not sustainable. Therefore she began to offer blog designs in exchange for a small payment and a small business was created. Even though three years have passed, Sanna is still creating designs for people all over Sweden. In addition to this she is also making do-it-yourself-videos for people who want to learn designing on the web.

1.3.3 Nellie Berntsson

Nellie Berntsson was born in 2000 which makes her one of the younger bloggers in the Swedish blogosphere. In 2009 she started her blog, where she mainly wrote about her biggest interest, horses. Today she still writes about horses, but also more about her life, fashion and

projects she has going on. She has done photo shoots for several clothing brands and stores and in addition she has been a guest on *Webbdagarna* which is an event and meeting place for everyone who works with digital media (Internetworld, 2013). *Webbdagarna* is a Swedish word which can be translated to *The Web Days*, though in our thesis we will refer to it as *Webbdagarna*. The stream of readers to her blog have increased steadily since her blog start, however there was a great increase in 2011 when she was one of the participants in the Swedish show *Ponnyakuten*, where the attendants get help with their horses. *Ponnyakuten* can be translated to *The pony emergency*, but we will refer to it as *Ponnyakuten*.

1.3.5 Kenza Zouiten

Kenza Zoutien started her blog in 2006 and has gone from around 100 unique readers each week back in 2006 to around 500 000 unique readers each week in 2012 (Zouiten, Hur många läsare har jag?, 2012), which makes her blog one of the most popular in Sweden. Though a point has to be made, we can not be sure these statistics are correct since there are many different ways to measure blog statistics as we mentioned in our background. Kenza started out writing about her life, hobbies, fashion and friends and the biggest difference between her blog today and her blog in the beginning is that she is more private today and writes less about her opinions and private life. From an ordinary teenager she has gone to being a model, a designer, reporter for MTV, TV-host and she has been on the cover of several popular Swedish magazines. When looking at the comments on her blog, you can make the conclusion she is one of the most liked bloggers today.

1.3.6 Isabella Löwengrip

Isabella Löwengrip, better known as *Blondinbella*, is one of the early pioneers of the blogging phenomenon in Sweden. At the age of 14, in 2005, Isabella started her blog, writing about nothing else than boyfriends, parties and her everyday life. As 8 years have passed and Isabella is still blogging with one of the largest blogs (in regard to amount of readers), you can understand something is special about this young woman. Creating an enterprise with several companies, holding lectures and writing self-help-books about self-esteem for young women, planning to publish a book for young “*economistas*”, you can see she has what could be called an entrepreneurial spirit. Never giving up and always having new ideas has taken

Isabella from a young ordinary girl to one of the most successful and powerful young women in Sweden.

2. Methodology

The reason we chose to write our thesis about blogging and entrepreneurship is because we wanted to discover and examine the business opportunities which can emerge out of something as simple and ordinary as blogging. Or is it as simple as you may think? We are both reading several blogs and the last couple of years we have been able to follow the increasing popularity of blogs. In the last years an increasing amount of people who started out as bloggers writing about their everyday life have taken advantage of the publicity and the opportunities which have arose through their blogs and used them to create businesses. We chose to focus on the Swedish blogosphere and Swedish bloggers, on one hand because we thought it would be most interesting for us to dig deeper in an area we are already familiar with, on the other hand Sweden is a country where blogging is extremely popular, which makes it of higher interest for our purpose.

2.1 Research design

In order to get in depth information about how blog writers actually are going from blog to business and their thoughts about this theme, we chose to contact blog writers to get personal interviews in a qualitative study. We made the decision to interview persons because we did not find it relevant or even possible, to get equivalent deep information from a quantitate study with surveys or questionnaires. The trustworthiness of our study would also be larger if we had first-hand information from someone, instead of hoping the right person is sitting in front a computer and answering our questions.

2.2 Empirical material

2.2.1 Interviews

When choosing interviewees, the important thing for us was to contact blog writers who are active in some kind of business as a result of their blogging career. Amount of blog readers or kind of entrepreneurship did not matter; all we wanted was a broad range of bloggers, active

with some kind of business, to get different angles of this theme. In addition we wanted to focus on female bloggers, since they seem to stand for the majority of blogs.

Preparing for the interviews

Already in the beginning of the research we understood that it would be hard to meet and interview the today famous blog writers with the most famous business ideas, since they have a pretty strict schedule. Instead of focusing on category of blog or amount of readers, we tried to collect as many blog writers as possible relevant to our study, and we did not want to close any doors. In order to find bloggers, we made a search on different blog platforms, to get an overview of the most popular blogs and thereafter tried to locate blogs where the blogger had, in some way, used their blog as a platform for business, or started process going from blog to business.

We put together an email with the interview request. First, we sent out this request by email to 29 bloggers which we before had found on different portals and top lists. The result from this was three saying yes, two turned down our request and one maybe. The remaining 23 did not get back to us at all. Approximately two weeks after this we sent out the request again, a little bit modified, to the 23 bloggers who did not give us an answer the first time we contacted them. This time 3 more answered no, and one answered yes, while the other ones still did not give us an answer. Now, we had four interviewees, though we had a hard time to find a suitable date and time for our fourth interview and we also had some problems with the communication between us, the authors, and the blogger we were supposed to interview. Due to lack of time we could not perform the fourth interview and we therefore landed on a total of three interviews.

We came to the conclusion that meeting the bloggers and have an eye to eye conversation gave much more material for our study. There were limitations with conversations through email which resulted in less information and material. Even if we had the possibility to email back and forth with additional questions and requests to explain certain areas more, the email conversation would not give the same breadth and depth as the face-to-face conversation did.

In preparations for the interviews, we created a questionnaire (see Appendix) with questions on different themes we found interesting regarding blogs, business and the blog as a platform. When we did the questionnaire our final purpose was not set and therefore the questions in the

questionnaire covered areas we later chose not to use in our thesis, since we later had chosen our focus and not all areas covered in the interviews fitted this frame. The questionnaire was more of an introduction to what we wanted to talk about in the interviews and not a questionnaire where we wanted one answer to every single question. Before we performed the interviews, we sent out the questionnaire so the interviewees could get a hint of what subjects we wanted them to talk about, and what we were looking for.

During the interviews

Two of the three interviews which were going to be performed, the ones' with Emilie Ohlsson and Sanna Preifelt were performed through a meeting with them face-to-face. In general we wanted to create a real-life atmosphere, where our interviewees felt relaxed so they could open up and speak from their hearts, getting more personal and more detail-oriented. Therefore we tried to perform all of the interviews face to face.

The third blogger we interviewed, Nellie Berntsson, had a hard time finding a suitable date and time for meeting us, therefore this interview was made through email. Even though we were against emailing interviews we still wanted to include the email interview since every interviewee was worth a lot to us, in regard to the difficulty to find bloggers who approved of being interviewed for the study.

In both cases, either we made an interview meeting in real, or emailing each other questions and answers we definitely did not want to create any restraints. We used a semi-structured method when doing our interviews since we wanted them to freely tell us about the topics we had chosen. Every now and then we guided them with questions and keywords, which were relevant to our study, so that they would deepen their thoughts. The later was of course easier to achieve when meeting the blogger in person, but we had the possibility to mail follow-up questions to Nellie, hoping to get additional information, if we wanted her to explain something further.

Before every interview, and in the email to the blogger, we made it clear that the material which we would get out of the interviews were to be published in our Bachelor's Thesis, open and available for everyone to see. It would be a public document and if they were uncomfortable with that, they had to tell us to remove the parts affected. In addition, we emphasized it would be possible for them to do the interview and remain anonymous if they

wanted to. Since they all agreed to the circumstances, we started to interview the bloggers, and we kept it more of a discussion than a hearing. We wanted to make it clear there were no right or wrong answers.

After the interviews

After the interviews had been made, we had a lot of empirical material. The face-to-face interview with Sanna had been about 1 hour and 30 minutes long, and the discussion with Emelie lasted for over one hour. Luckily we had recorded the interviews as audio files on our phones in order to have access to the material afterwards and this meant we did not have to rely on our own memory, but on the original source. Afterwards we were able to listen to the material over and over again, transcribing large parts of the interviews and also taking important notes while listening. From the email interview we had all the material documented already, so we could simply choose what parts to use.

Below you will find a summary of the people we have interviewed.

Interviewee	Blog	Time	Place	Type of interview	Data	Interviewers
Nellie Berntsson	Nellieberntsson.se	2013-04-22	Internet	E-mail	Written e-mail	-
Emelie Ohlsson	Emelieohlsson.se/blog	2013-04-16	Helsingborg	Face-to-face	Recorded audio-files	Julia Minges, Olivia Wettstam
Sanna Preifelt	Sannasrum.se	2013-04-15	Göteborg	Face-to-face	Recorded audio-files	Julia Minges, Olivia Wettstam

2.2.2 Text material

To have more data to analyze from we also decided to study two of the most popular blogs in Sweden, *blondinbella.se* and *kenzas.se*. These two blogs and the young women behind them, Kenza Zouiten and Isabella Löwengrip, are the most common examples when talking about bloggers who have used their blog in order to create business. When studying these two blogs, we refer to the action of reading their blogs from the very beginning of their blog career until present time. There is a huge amount of text material found on these two women's blogs and it would be a loss if we would not use this material in order to complete our study. When reading these two blogs and collecting text material from them, our aim was to find answers to the same questions we asked in our interviews. This was possible by fast-reading every blog post they have written and looking at their end-of-year-résumés, where they have listed

all the important happenings which took place during the year. To find the information we were searching for, which was of importance for our study, was to look for keywords such as entrepreneurship, business, opportunities, attributes, entrepreneur and networking. We aimed to summarize their process from blog to business by identifying the opportunities they have been given and the opportunities they have created, which had led to what we refer to as entrepreneurial activities, business activities. This gives us an empirical complement to our interviews, as these blogs are indeed very interesting to study on basis of their high popularity.

2.2.3 Creating the empirical part of the thesis

When we had to decide which parts of the empirical material from both interviews and text material we wanted to use in our thesis, we noticed common themes could be found, which appeared in the majority of interviews we performed and blogs we read. On behalf of this, we chose to split the material into different parts under the following headlines; *starting blogging*, *transforming the blog*, *networking*, *brand*, *entrepreneur*, *attributes* and *the future of the blogging phenomenon*. In that way we would achieve a structure which provided a good overview. Although we found common themes regarding the interviews and text material, not all themes could be found for every blogger and therefore not all themes will be presented for every single blogger in the empirical material. Some interviews and text material were more comprehensive than others, however we did not want to take away interesting aspects from every interview or text material only because these aspects could not be found in all cases.

2.3 Analysis

A reflexive approach

In order to get a theoretical background of how to analyze the material we have collected from our interviews and from the text material, we have used the article “*Beyond neopositivists, romantics and localists: a reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research*” (Alvesson, 2003). This article and theory guided us through the interviews and afterwards when we were going to analyze the material collected. Alvesson (2003) is discussing the term reflexivity in a way where he emphasizes the consciousness and consistent efforts which are being made in order to view the subject from different angles or at least trying to avoid a strong angle and vocabulary. On basis of this, it was of high importance for us to be open for different angles when we did the analysis, and to avoid a

strong, angled vocabulary and be critical to what empirical material we had collected. Regarding the empirical material collected, we want to clarify this material comes with uncertainty and we can not set up scientific conclusions based on this material since it comes with several pitfalls. Text material from blogs is very well equipped with information, but the information given is selective and given from the individual behind the blog. He or she chooses what to write, and what not to write and a blog reader may only see half of the blogger's life, which makes it important to handle this material with caution. It is of high importance to keep a distance to this material and be careful not to believe the information, for example *Blondinbella* writes on her blog, can be connected to any theory. All of the material collected was taken out of its context, and cannot be analyzed without acknowledging the total context the empirical material was collected from.

The analysis procedure

The plan was to use our chosen theories and apply them on the empirical material collected from interviews and text material. This led us to the decision to divide our analysis into three parts; *Bloggskolan*, *The entrepreneurial Mindset* and *Causation and Effectuation*. In the part where we are analyzing our empirical material from the point of *Bloggskolan*, we chose two sub themes from this theory, *networking* and *the blog as a CV*. These two themes were chosen since they were two important parts from the theory and the majority of our interviewees or studied bloggers emphasized the importance of networking and referred to the blog as a potential résumé for other projects. Regarding the other two theories chosen, we tried to compare the material collected from the interviews and the text material from the blogs and thereafter we tried to find common patterns or differences between those.

2.4 Trustworthiness

As we mentioned before, we need to have a critical and open minded approach on the material we have collected from our interviews and from the blogs. This is of extra importance when analyzing the text material from the blogs, since they are written by people who probably want to beautify themselves and what they are doing. They do this in order to attract more blog readers and also companies which can result in possible collaborations. Even though it is not our main focus with our thesis, it is naïve not to mention that everything on blogs is used to strengthen the names of the bloggers and a way of marketing themselves. The blog writers select what they want to present and what they want to keep in the dark, which means we, and

the blog readers, always have to keep in mind the information given on blogs is not always the whole truth. There are different angles of everything and we only do see the bloggers' perspective, therefore we have to rethink and be careful with setting up conclusions based upon blog posts.

Regarding the interviews we also are aware of that all the things the interviewees are telling us, does not necessarily have to be true, or the full truth. Anyway we have tried to collect all the data and make the best of it, trying to come close to reality. We also have acknowledged that our cases studied, could be exceptions from the majority. The situations and cases we have met do not have to apply on the broad mass. Our study was based upon three personal interviews and two text materials, two blogs. This is not enough empirical data to suggest that the blogosphere is working this way. We have to accept the fact that the time and space was limited for us to make a larger study, and so we cannot really say that our conclusions from this bachelors' thesis apply on the reality.

An important part of this thesis was to make the interviewees feel that we did not want to expose them in any way. We assured them that they could be anonymous if they wanted to, since this thesis was going to be a public document, available for everyone to read. However no one asked of being anonymous, and this made our thesis a bit more trustworthy, since the bloggers stand with their names behind their statements.

Regarding the young age of one of our interviewees, Nellie Berntsson, we have to keep in mind her low age may be reflected on her answers. But since she is blogging and has experience of the blogosphere, she was a good candidate for interviewing and we think she brought a newer, younger aspect of the blogosphere, and her view on making business out of a blog.

2.5 Literature review

In order to get the readers of our bachelor thesis a background of the blogging phenomenon, which not everyone may be familiar with, we intended to create a background in the introduction chapter with the most relevant information about how blogs are working, how to make money out of blogging and the history of blogging. For this part of the thesis, we used

the library in a very traditional way, searching the library for and borrowing books, which we then read and used to get a background perspective on blogging and entrepreneurship.

We also searched the internet for statistics and other facts, using common search engines like Google, but also the university's own library website "*Göteborgs universitetsbibliotek*" where we had access to several databases, like *Libris* and the common search engine *Summon*. In this way we hoped to gain more scientific information from articles from science magazines or old essays about blogging and business. This was important for us, since we planned to create a part in the theory chapter of our thesis which we wanted to call previous research. In this section, we planned to give the readers access to research about this theme, convincing them that this is an interesting part to study, where previous research already had been made. The problem we then faced was the lack of previously made studies on the area. Today, you can find a lot of research on blogs and other social media, since people and companies have started to realize what possibilities blogs and social media provide in terms of ways to reach out. However, we still found a problem in searching for literature and research which explored the way blogs are used for creating businesses and how bloggers may be seen as entrepreneurs. The previous research within the area of blogs and business were not angled in the same direction as our thesis and therefore we did not find anything of use for our study. Even though this was disappointing, it strengthens our belief that research within this area has to be made.

As we were searching different blogs and other information related to blogging, we came across an electronic book on the internet, created by three bloggers named Clara Lidström, Annakarin Nyberg and Frida Ramstedt. By paying 149 Swedish kronor you were able to take part of a school or course online, called "*The school of blogging*" but in the original language Swedish called *Bloggskolan* and in this thesis we will from here on use the Swedish word. *Bloggskolan* is an 88 pages long web based course on how to take your blog to creating business and be successful. We found this a good complement to our study and therefore we bought this course, using it in parts of our study. As *Bloggskolan* was a handbook on how to take your blog to business, we decided to use it in our theory, putting it under our chapter of previous research. In the analysis we are going to use *Bloggskolan* as a theory, trying to connect our blogger to the theories in the web course.

Also, we did choose two more scientific theories in our theoretical framework, which later would be used in our analysis. We wanted to find two theories which fitted in our aim to answer our research questions and our purpose. Since we wanted to examine how bloggers can use their blog as a platform for business we chose one theory which discuss what attributes are required to be able to be a successful entrepreneur. In addition to this, we found two of our key words in this chapter, the words entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. We did use the definition of those words from the commonly used website *Wikipedia*. Even though most people do not really trust or rely on this website, we chose to use it anyway since we wanted to use a definition which was not scientific or hard to understand but a definition which anyone could use. According to us, the most common definitions are often looked up on *Wikipedia*, and therefore we chose this definition. The other theory we chose was chosen because we wanted to define how the entrepreneurs are taking decisions, in what kind of processes and for what reasons, and also to see if any common patterns could be find regarding the process of going from blog to business and if certain means could be found.

3. Theory

In the following section we will present the theory we have chosen to use in our thesis. First, we will discuss which previous research has been made on the are and what problems we encountered when searching for this, then we will give you a short introduction to what entrepreneurship is and after this we will present two theories which we will later use to analyze our empirical material.

3.1 Previous research on the area

Today, the blogosphere is widely open to almost everyone. If we are interested, we can find blogs about every little theme or niche we could ever imagine and starting your own blog goes within a few minutes. It is hard to say that blogging is something new these days; today it is more part of our daily lives than it ever was. Due to this large attention, a lot of research has been made on blogging. You can find a lot of research on blogs and other social media, since it is getting a very important and successful way to reach out to a market, to the people. However we noticed a problem in searching for literature and previous research, exploring the way the blogs are used for creating organizations, being entrepreneurial. There was barely any research made on blogging and the emerging entrepreneurship. And if there was, it was not in

the right angle of the theme, the same we wanted to explore. However, while searching for research and literature, we ran into a school, which meant to teach the reader how to make business out of her blog. This school was called *Bloggskolan*. It was a self-help book about what steps to take and what to think of when creating a blogging career. This book was kind of a handbook on how to “do it yourself”, and even if innumerable articles and instructions of this kind can be found, we think *Bloggskolan* provides a deeper insight to how to make a business out of a blog. It does not only involve instructions on how to make money out of a blog, but also aspects which are important for being able to create a living business, not only to gain money on advertisements. Some aspects which are raised in *Bloggskolan* could also be found in our interviews and this is way we chose to use this book as theory. Though *Bloggskolan* turned out to be written by three successful bloggers itself, the school seemed like a good way to go, though the people behind it knew what they were talking about.

3.1.1 Bloggskolan

A Google search will provide you innumerable volumes of lists of how you fast and easy create a successful blog. However, if you are searching for something more explaining and extensive, it might be more difficult to find. You would think there would be more research around blogging and the blog as a platform for business, since the blogosphere is huge today. Surprisingly, there is not much material and research to be found within this area. Three people who have created this more comprehensive and deepened guide book, are Clara Lidström, Annakarin Nyberg and Frida Ramstedt. Today, they perform lectures around Sweden about blogs and business and they also are the authors of the e-book, available to buy online, called “*Bloggskolan*”. *Bloggskolan* can in English be translated to The Blog School, however in our thesis we will from here on refer to it as *Bloggskolan*. The main theme in this publication is how you can go from running a hobby blog to using your blog as a motor in your business.

To shortly introduce the authors, Clara Lidström is the woman behind one of the largest life style blogs in Sweden, *Underbaraclaras.se*, and besides writing a blog herself she is also active as a writer and a photographer. Frida Ramstedt also runs a popular blog within the fields of design and interior design, *trendenser.se*, and has also launched her blog as a monthly magazine in collaboration with *Bonnier*. Last, the third creator of *Bloggskolan* is Annakarin Nyberg, who is a writer, lecturer and internet researcher/scientist.

Bloggskolan (Lidström, Nyberg, & Ramstedt, 2012) touches questions and themes on how to create a blog which stands out, how to attract more readers, how to make money out of your blog, how to use a blog to build relationships and networks and how to take the step from hobby blog to a business with the blog as a platform. In this study, not all material from this online book will be of importance, but we have selected a few themes to include in our thesis.

The authors talk about how to make yourself heard within the large horde of blogs and also how you network most efficiently to create opportunities and build valuable contact networks. First of all, they acknowledge the fact that the internet is not full and there is still space which is unused. Even though the blogosphere gets more and more crowded, there are still possibilities for new bloggers to rise, although blogs today probably have to be more niched than their precursors. A blog is a platform for meeting and creating new contacts and these contacts have to result in mutually exchange. One crucial part of networking in the blogosphere is to dare to contact people and businesses which are important for your branch of blogging.

A blog can also be seen as a CV, a résumé. The blog is a tool used to make others attracted to you and therefore every single part of a blog should be well thought-out and represent the blogger in a truthful way. Blogs are living marketing canals which often are updated every day. A lot of people use their blogs in marketing purpose and a blog is a great channel for example artists, where the blog creates a way for them to reach out with their art and their work.

One important aspect of blogging and networking is to reevaluate the view on competitors. Many simply see them as competitors, while they would probably gain more if they saw them as cooperators, co-workers, people to work with and to learn from. Your fellow bloggers give you the opportunity to network and a blogger network can give you tons of advantages. After all, you are all sitting in the same boat and you can help each other without losing anything. Though, a point has to be made that you neither can be too naive. You have to be sure of what you gain from a collaboration and clearly put up requirements for the cooperation so someone else will not be able to take advantage of you and your blog. If you change your picture of other bloggers from competitors to co-workers, you will have a great possibility of networking, which is an important piece of turning a blog into business.

When you look at the three creators of *Bloggskolan*, they together are a perfect example of how you can network through the blogosphere. By reaching out and building relations and networks with others, the three of them have gotten in contact with each other which have led to the creation of *Bloggskolan*. Some networks and relations are built on friendship grounds where experiences and interests are exchanged, while other networks are built mainly because of strategic reasons which results in benefits for your own business.

A blog is also a catalyst for business and there are many opportunities to find a way of making business out of a blog. The step from blog to business is mainly done within the fashion industry; however there are possibilities in other segments as well. People easily think only the largest bloggers like *Blondinbella*, *Elin Kling* and *Sofi Fahrman* can live on the revenues from their blogs, however this is a common mistake. There are several niched blogs today where the blogger can make a living out of the revenues gained from the opportunities the blog has created as a platform, for example received by giving lectures, doing freelancing jobs and other additional jobs. One common misunderstanding about the blogosphere is that bloggers' incomes only come from the blogging itself and advertisement revenues; however the blog is often a condition for many of the jobs a blogger receives which in the end contribute to the blogger's income.

Success is subjectively, just as a successful blog. Some bloggers want to create possibilities of earning money out of their blog to be able to make a living on the blog revenues in the future, while other bloggers want to create a blog where they can ventilate their creativity and hobbies which they want to share with others. Regardless of what your definition of a successful blog is, there is money to earn in the blogging industry.

3.2 Entrepreneurship

The purpose in our thesis is to examine how bloggers are developing and taking their blogging a step further and due to their involvement are starting to engage in entrepreneurial activities. In order to understand this process, we first have to define what entrepreneurship really is. The definition of this widely used term is not as simple as it seems. The opinions of what an entrepreneur is, what entrepreneurship means and what kind of qualities that are

required by an entrepreneur have differed a lot throughout the years. According to one of the most used websites in the world, *Wikipedia*, an entrepreneur is;

“A loanword from French, and is commonly used to describe an individual who organizes and operates a business or businesses, taking on financial risk to do so”.

The definition of an entrepreneur which can be found above gives a very positive view on the entrepreneur. The attributes used to describe this person are indeed highly positive, creating a picture of an entrepreneur as a determined and strong person. While blogging is a term loaded with positivity and negativity, entrepreneurship is, according to us, a term mostly loaded with positivity. Entrepreneurs are often referred as people who dare to take chances on and strive after their dreams and ideas. Magazines, TV shows, blogs and other media convey this picture and this message. For us, the authors of this thesis, the term entrepreneur is loaded with positivity, though we are well-aware of the fact that this can be a result of the picture and definition which have been conveyed to us by media and society.

Let us return to the description of the entrepreneur. The words used to describe an entrepreneur, are only a few and superficial. One of our aims with this thesis is to define what kind of qualifications could be found in the entrepreneurs' personality, which makes them more likely to succeed in their way of managing businesses. We want to deepen our view on what success factors could be behind the emerge of young female bloggers who more and more often start up their own businesses. Therefore we searched for theories within this area, theories of what an entrepreneur is and some kind of attributes which would be required in order to become an successful entrepreneur . We wanted a theory which strengthens our belief that there has to be some personal qualifications lying behind the success of these young women. In the next section of this chapter, we discuss “the entrepreneurial mindset” as a theory relevant for our study, since this theory emphasizes different attributes which are preferred in order to become a successful entrepreneur.

3.2.2 The entrepreneurial mindset

The internationally engaged consultant and writer Roger Cowdrey is discussing the entrepreneur and her attributes in his book “*Creating an entrepreneurial mindset*” (2012). He

emphasizes that an entrepreneur is different in the way she thinks and acts and that there are several attributes which are required by an entrepreneur.

History of the word entrepreneur

Cowdrey (2012) begins to discuss the different meanings of the word entrepreneur, showing us that the word has a long history. Through the history of entrepreneurship, several attributes and qualifications have been added to the definition of the entrepreneur. In the beginning, in the 13th century the word was first introduced. The word was then derived from the French verb “*entreprendre*”, which meant to undertake or create something. Starting in the 16th century, the association to business was made which meant that you now undertook or created something in business purpose. The fact that entrepreneurship meant taking risks in business did not show up until the 18th century, when one realized that creating and managing businesses did not always mean it would be successful. There was no guarantee being an entrepreneur, that business would be prosperous. In the 19th century different kinds of skills were added to the definition. Having knowledge and possessing the skill of managing were now part of being an entrepreneur. This knowledge or skill did not mean you had to be educated at a university or other institutions, but collecting knowledge, knowing what one were up to, came to be an important factor and part of the entrepreneurial way. (Cowdrey, 2012)

The history of the term entrepreneur has changed during the last couple of hundred years. When discussing these attributes and qualifications which have been added, it is important to notice that all these attributes have been added by economists, who have been affected and live in the western world, and the view on these topics are angled so they fit in the western community we are living in. Since a long time, the western community is controlled by an invisible power telling even the youngest members of our society that the most important thing with any kind of business is to be successful. In these parts of the world, being successful is equally the same as gaining profit, and the idea of an entrepreneur is naturally affected by this. (Cowdrey, 2012)

The path of an entrepreneur

However, the author of “*Creating an entrepreneurial mindset*” (2012) is claiming that there are entrepreneurs, which do not only have the goal of economic success and profit, but also other things. The environment of an entrepreneur is not easy. A lot of entrepreneurs are

starting out as people who do not have the necessary capital or recourses to succeed on first trial. A lot of entrepreneurs started out with almost nothing, using the resources which were available, trying to pave the way toward their vision. The path towards one entrepreneur's vision may be difficult and can turn out in unexpected ways. Even though these difficulties exist, one can succeed. Roger Cowdrey (2012) claims that entrepreneurs have a collection of attributes which are required to succeed on the stony road they have ahead of them. These attributes are part of the entrepreneurs' personalities and these qualities are leading the entrepreneur successfully towards their visions.

Attributes possessed by successful entrepreneurs

The attributes that successful entrepreneurs are possessing are very personal oriented qualities (Cowdrey, 2012). The attributes are part of your personality but they are also able to achieve with training and consciousness about what to do. Below, the required qualifications according to Cowdrey (2012) are listed, with an explanation to their importance. Even though the attributes are listed separately, they are all very strong connected to each other and are indeed affecting one another as well.

As an entrepreneur, one of the most important things is to have *a clear and achievable vision*. The entrepreneur has to believe in his idea, trusting it is possible to realize. He or she needs to be really optimistic about the realization of this vision in order to make himself trust this idea and also to make others believe in it. Entrepreneurs have to rely on their own capabilities, but they are also in need of support from outside. There are hardly any entrepreneurs who have paved their way all by themselves, without any support. The entrepreneur needs a network of people, trusting and believing in him and his idea, sometimes also guiding him in the right direction, and because of this it is extremely important to have this clear and achievable vision. If you do not believe in the vision yourself, who will? The dependence on a network, either it is family and friends believing in your idea, or other organizations or sponsors financing your project with either capital or resources, the entrepreneur has to be open for other opinions and response from his social environment, in order to improve. The second necessary attribute is to have the *willingness/will/ability to listen to others*.

Another interesting part of engaging in entrepreneurial activities is the lack of knowledge of what is going to happen in the future. In the beginning the entrepreneurs only have their own vision and plan of what is going to happen. But there is no certainty in the future, which

means the entrepreneur has to have a *willingness to take calculated risks*. There is no one there telling you that the decisions you make now, will guarantee success in the near future and it is really important that entrepreneurs have a clear vision in which they believe in and which they are willing to risk resources, capital and plenty of time for. Sometimes there is also a lack of certainty for what resources are going to be present in the future. This is also a kind of risk, planning and continuing towards a vision without knowledge about existing resources. It is important to understand that the future resources or capital are not a certainty. Some things you cannot control, and therefore it is important to have *a vision where resources may not be in their control*. Meaning, you maybe have to change your way, choose another path on the way towards the vision, depending on what resources are given at that time.

Sometimes, taking risks is resulting in a failure. The difference between an entrepreneur and other people is that the entrepreneur will not give up so easily. Cowdrey (2012) is claiming that a successful entrepreneur is not afraid to fail. He has got to have *a lack of fear of failure*, which forces him to rise up, even though he has fallen plenty of times before. Due to his optimistic nature, a successful entrepreneur will try to bypass the problem, seeing an opportunity where others are seeing a problem, giving up instead. This attribute is also very close connected with the *willingness to work hard*. A lot of people tend to think that a successful entrepreneur just happens to be at the right time and place, but in most cases, the truth behind the success is really hard work. Maybe hundreds or thousands of hours has been invested in the idea, failing all over again and then finally, making the vision reality.

Above the mentioned qualities, the entrepreneur has to have some abilities himself, tightly connected to his own personality. *Self-awareness* is said to be an important part of practicing entrepreneurship. With self-awareness the author is meaning the individual's ability to understand and act upon their own skills. It is important to understand what ones capabilities are, but also what limitations one is possessing. With that awareness, the person can fill out the lack of knowledge or capability not existing, with help from other people or organizations.

It is also important that the entrepreneur has a bit of *confidence* and possesses the ability to *motivate oneself*. When going a long path, working towards achieving a lifelong goal or vision, there will be people supporting you, but also some trying to pull you down, over and over again. There are always people who will try to stop you from fulfilling your vision, thinking they have much more knowledge or experience. And hence, it is important to believe

in your vision and believe in yourself, finding your motivation to continue, even though there are people trying to get you down. This belief in yourself and your vision requires a confidence personality who is willing to stand for his principles and not be lead off the way.

Below, the different attributes are listed, in order to give the reader an overview.

Attributes
<i>A clear and achievable vision</i>
<i>Willingness/will/ability to listen to others</i>
<i>Willingness to take calculated risks</i>
<i>A vision where resources may not be in their control</i>
<i>A lack of fear of failure</i>
<i>Willingness to work hard</i>
<i>Self-awareness</i>
<i>Confidence</i>
<i>Self motivation</i>

Source: “Creating an entrepreneurial mindset, page 12 (Cowdrey, 2012).

3.3 Causation and Effectuation

The bloggers we have interviewed and whose blogs we have analyzed are all young women who, because of their decision of engaging in different business activities had to make several decisions due to their vision of achieving something. Many of these young bloggers have faced a lot of choices, which had to be made and the path they chose led them to the point where they are today. Therefore it is an interesting point of view, taking the following theory into account when examining entrepreneurship.

In the article “*Causation and Effectuation: Toward a Theoretical Shift from Economic Inevitability to Entrepreneurial Contingency*” published by the Academy of Management (2001), the author Saras D. Sarasvathy is discussing a problem of making decisions nowadays. In a world where everyone can start their own company, the problem will be the lack of understanding for the process starting and making decisions for a company that may not exist yet.

Definition of causation and effectuation

Introducing the causation and effectuation model leads us to the first question about what the author means with these expressions. First, let us define what the words causation and effectuation actually mean;

“Causation processes take a particular effect as given and focus on selecting between means to create that effect.” (Sarasvathy, 2001:251)

“Effectuation processes take a set of means as given and focus on selecting between possible effects that can be created with that set of means.” (Sarasvathy, 2001:251)

In this stage of studying entrepreneurship, we understand that engaging in entrepreneurial activities requires a lot of decisions made by a person, in this case an entrepreneur. Someone actively has to decide whether to act upon given or yet not existing business opportunities, or not. Organizing and managing an enterprise or a business will always imply taking decisions. Decision-making will always be one of the main tasks one have to face, when starting or leading a business or managing possible business opportunities

The lack of existing companies

All theories and models created for businesses are meant to be applied on already existing companies. But the problem is, when figuring out and working on something as a vision, you are probably starting out with nothing. A lot of visions and ideas are created by people who do not have a running business, people like you and me, wanting to make something out of their dream. And so, some of the introducing questions Sarasvathy (2001) is discussing, and which are giving us a hint of the problem and one point of this article are “how do we make pricing decisions when the firm does not exist yet, or even more interesting, when the market for the product/service does not yet exist?”

The problem the entrepreneurs have to face is that in a lot of cases there is not any organization yet, but a vision. And so Sarasvathy is claiming that if we knew exactly what kind of firm we wanted to create in the beginning and establishment of an organization, we could use all the existing theories and models to create this company (Sarasvathy, 2001). Additionally, when you do not know exactly what to do with your vision or general idea but still wants to make something out of this vision, you need to use the process of effectuation if

you want to succeed. In conclusion, when making entrepreneurial decisions for the future, *Sasavathy* has proposed the process of effectuation to be the dominant decision model, rather than using a causation model, both explained and discussed below.

Basically you could say, in this context, causation and effectuation are simply different ways of making decisions. The connection to the entrepreneur is the way the entrepreneur is using either a causation or effectuation process to make a decision or to implement his business strategy, idea or vision.

Examples of causation and effectuation

In order to illustrate examples of causation and effectuation processes, Sarasvathy (2001) is using simple cases such as a simple daily task as cooking a meal. According to the causation and effectuation theory there are two ways this task can be managed. In both cases you will have an idea of what your vision is, in this case having a finished meal in front of you. Either you can use the process of causation, meaning you choose a recipe from a book, make a grocery list and then go buy all the stuff in advance. Then you strictly are following the recipe in order to succeed. As a result you have a planned, well-organized meal in front of you. On the other hand, using an effectuation process will make you achieve your goal, but in another way. For example, when planning a meal, you could just take a look in your refrigerator, checking what kind of groceries you already have at home, and with the existing products, make a great meal, which then, also leads to your final vision; having a cooked dinner in front of you.

Obviously you can apply the causation and effectuation process on a lot of decisions made in different situations. They can be applied in your everyday life like the example above or you could also use the processes on decisions made by entrepreneurs, who are acting in business situations or upon different entrepreneurial activities and opportunities. In conclusion, there are different ways of acting upon opportunities and so by achieving something. The difference is that a causation process is focusing on choosing between many different means to achieve a desirable effect whilst using an effectuation process means choosing between possible effects caused by a set of means. The author is claiming that causation processes are effect dependent, while effectuation processes are actor dependent, meaning that a causation process depends on what goal or effect is wished for, while a effectuation process depends on who makes the decisions, what kind of person and what kind of qualities this person possesses.

Business decisions

The way of using the process of effectuation when deciding upon business opportunities, the entrepreneur has the ability to create a lot of different outcomes, allowing the entrepreneur to change and construct his former vision or idea, so these might end up in something entirely different, but yet successful. A lot of famous and successful companies and organizations started out as something else, but turned out to become something different as planned from the beginning. This effectuation process can lead one to many different paths, starting out on the same road, the entrepreneur just has to decide, which way to choose.

Sarasvathy (2001) is also claiming that there is an existing special ability of the successful entrepreneur using an effectuation process. Entrepreneurs are not only identifying and using business opportunities as they are found, but rather they are also creating the opportunities.

4. Empirical material

In this part of our thesis, we present the empirical data we have collected from conducting interviews and collecting text material from blogs. First, we are going to present the information we received from the interviews we have performed and this will be done by first summarizing the important aspects from our interviews with Emelie Ohlsson, Sanna Preifelt and Nellie Berntsson, one summary for each person. When doing the summary, we have selected certain themes that we could distinguish from the interviews, and themes which are interesting for the purpose of our thesis. Thereafter we will present a similar summary regarding the blogs of Kenza and Isabella, where we have read their blogs and searched for information within the same themes as we touched in the interviews.

Before reading the empirical material we want to remind you that when we have summarized the interviews we have made and the text material we have collected, we have uncritically retold the information we have received from the bloggers, from the interviews or from their blogs.

4.1 Interviews

4.1.1 Interview with Emelie Ohlsson

Starting blogging

Emelie started blogging in 2005 when the blogosphere had not exploded yet. In 2004, on the 25th of December, a tsunami hit the countries surrounding Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean. At this time, Emelie and her family were in Thailand and they were one of the many families who got ripped apart in this catastrophe. Emelie's younger sister was one of the people who lost their lives in the tsunami and when Emily got back home to Sweden she started writing a blog which contained her thoughts and life after the tsunami. What differentiated her from other bloggers was her story, and it seemed like people found it interesting to read about her chaos. After she had started her first blog about the time after the tsunami, she quickly went to the top on Sweden's top list of the most visited blogs. Back then she had around 3000 readers and at that time this amount was quite extraordinary.

Transforming the blog

After about two years, Emelie decided to take a different turn with her blog. On December 8th 2007, she announced that she had decided to start over and now wanted to leave her past behind and start something new. In the fall of 2006 she had bought a system camera, and was determined she wanted to become a professional photographer resulting she turning her sorrow blog into a photo blog. But if she would have started her blog today, she thinks she would probably not have made the same blogging career as she has done today.

Through her blog, she started searching for models to photograph, because now she was determined that she really wanted to improve and get better. Back then, Emelie did not have clear business thinking with her blog, and it was not until 2009 that she started to think and see her blog as a business. From being a fun hobby, it went to a business where she acknowledged the importance of upholding a brand and give out the correct signals.

When she started her photo blog, a girl instantly contacted her about holding a photo course for her and some friends. After the implementation of this course, Emelie got a lot of compliments and received other course requests which led to group courses about once a

month which was a fun, extra income for Emelie, who was an upper secondary school student at the time.

In 2008, her photography career started for real. She had a photo-shoot with the Swedish famous singer Carola Häggkvist, she photographed one of Sweden's most popular bloggers, Isabella Löwengrip, *Blondinbella*, and these shoots was break-through for Emelie's photo career. Later on she photographed the wedding of the Swedish hockey player Henrik Zetterberg and his wife and also Swedish TV4's profile Susanne Sjögren. If a photographer shoots celebrities, a lot of people directly think of her as great photographers and even if the shoots with celebrities were not any special to Emelie, they certainly were good for marketing purpose.

In 2009 she decided to really focus on her photography career. Hence, she started having private photography courses and also shot a lot of weddings. When she started with her private photography courses the requests exploded which gave her five to six courses each week that summer. Talking about the same thing at each course turned out to be wearisome, which is why Emelie in 2010 started thinking about a way to share her knowledge without having to be present and this led to the idea to record a DVD.

In 2009, Emelie started a collaboration with the web course company *Coursio*. Through this company she could sell a web course which people bought and then the money were quickly transferred to her bank account, a very cost-effective alternative. The web courses quickly became very popular and still today her main income comes from her web courses. Even though she could make a living on the income from these courses, there are so many other projects she wants to realize. The last couple of years she has been running a magazine, had to shut down the same magazine, worked as an ambassador and course leader for *Canon*, produced and sold shoot straps and many other projects.

Networking

Today Emelie has had photo shoots with many of the big names in Sweden's blogosphere. These shoots have been an outcome of networking. Bloggers have contacted Emelie, and Emelie has contacted bloggers. A photo shoot creates a good exchange for both Emelie and the other blogger. The bloggers wants beautiful pictures for their blogs and Emelie wants to be seen on their blogs to market herself which creates a giving exchange between them.

Brand

Advertisements on a blog is a popular way of gaining revenue for bloggers, and as many other bloggers Emelie started out being a part of an advertisement network. In the beginning she appreciated all the money she received from advertisements and this was an important income for her while she was younger and did not make a lot of money. When her blog became bigger, she realized the advertisements were not always good for her brand which is why she did a conscious decision to have less advertisement on her blog. Instead she is today selling advertisement to companies today without this middle hand. When doing this by herself she can choose which advertisement she wants to have on her blog, which was not the case before and this could affect her truthfulness and brand. The revenues from advertisements are minor in relation to what the company gains from this, and today she feels it is not worth risking her brand. She is also aware of her blogging business and wants every post to be private, inspiring and selling.

Provoking is something Emelie has taken distance from. She would rather have a small blog where there is a positive atmosphere between her and the readers, than having a large blog where 90% of the blog readers are angry at her. The latter will not work in the long run if you want to build a long-lasting brand and be able to take your blog further, to a business.

Emelie thinks the power of blogs is great. A great way of reaching out, being able to communicate with your customer circle and market your brand and what you do. She says a blog is powerful, and especially if you have had it for a longer time it is a solid platform. Almost all jobs Emelie has had, she has gotten partly through her blog. It is hard for Emelie to see what her career would have looked like without her blog, since the blog has been a complement to everything she has done.

She sees herself as a walking brand and she always have to think about what she is doing and how it affects her brand. Therefore she thinks it is important to make her brand as close to herself as possible, which reduce the pressure of her acts.

Entrepreneur

On the question if she sees herself as an entrepreneur, Emelie gave a determinate yes. She has many projects ongoing collaterally and in her head approximately five ideas are waiting to go

from idea to reality. After a mental breakdown one-two years ago she decided to step down a notch and today she has found a better balance between her projects.

Attributes

Emelie thinks she has been able to take her blog from blog to business mainly because of her personal attributes, like her humbleness and the fact people can relate to her and are not provoked by her. She is always personally engaged in her course students and helping them. Even if some people think of her as a cool blogger, the message she want to spread is how she is just an ordinary girl. Driven is also one quality which describes Emelie, and she thinks this quality comes from her experiences during and after the tsunami. From an unthankful teenager she went to a goal-oriented young woman who worked to get where she wanted and followed her dreams. Without the tsunami she would not have been as focused, stubborn and driven as she is today, and she also thinks these are the factors which have led to her success.

As an entrepreneur, Emelie thinks you need a certain thinking to run projects successfully and that it takes a lot to be an entrepreneur. Howsoever everyone can study and learn, but for her it was natural and already as a child she went around selling stuff. It takes endurance, stubbornness and toughness to become an entrepreneur and you have to be able to handle stress and higher tempo.

The future of the blogging phenomenon

Regarding the future of blogs as a phenomenon, Emelie thinks the blogosphere and the number of blogs is going to increase even more. In addition to blogs, she thinks the interest for *Instagram* and *Facebook* will also grow and especially *Instagram* will get huge and provide a channel where people can reach out to businesses. There are still space in the blogosphere for new blogs and new top bloggers will be able to find their way to the top, though blogs today probably have to be more niched than a couple of years ago. To conclude, Emelie does not think people have understood the power of blogs yet.

4.1.2 Interview with Sanna Preifelt

Starting blogging

Sanna Preifelt is an ordinary Swedish girl, born in 1991 and is today living in Gothenburg in Sweden. As many young women in Sweden, Sanna has her own blog, named *www.sannasrum.se*.

In 2007 she started her blog on the web site which today is the blogging portal *Devote.se*. The portal *Devote* was pretty popular, but Sanna was a bit disappointed, though she really had found interest in coding and designing her own blogs' appearance. The only thing you could do was to change your header, which was too boring for Sanna, switching to one of the most popular blog portals, *blogg.se*. First she did not understand the coding and designing process at all, but she became pretty determined and one day she said “*Now I am going to learn this, I am going to understand this now!*”, and so she did, learning by doing. Today she has about 300 blog readers per day, either way she is updating her blog frequently or less often.

Transforming the blog

Sanna has a medium sized blog nowadays, she does not have a lot of readers, but she has a small amount of loyal readers, following her, a thing which she is pretty comfortable with. However she tells us that a couple of years ago, she was trying to get a large blog. She was really determined to be the “*new Blondinbella*”, which back then and still is a large role model for a lot of young girls, trying to make a blogging career. In order to get famous through the blog she started networking, especially through integrating the blog with several social medias, like Facebook and Twitter. She also gave a lot of comments on other blogs, resulting that her name was seen and that she got on the top list of *blogg.se*, “*people who have commented the most*”, giving her about 2 000 visitors on that day, hoping that a few ones would actually stay for longer time, reading her blog.

In 2010 Sanna moved to London in order to work as an au pair and you may say that this was kind of a break-through point for Sanna's blogging career. She brought her old blog readers with her and attracted new ones like family, friends and other unknown people, interested in her life in London. This flow of people actually made her blog the largest au-pair blog in Sweden. But this new attention did also have a backside, she started to feel guilty and pushed

to write blog posts every day, making it more like a job than a funny and optional activity. The reason she felt a pressure of having to blog was the fear of losing blog readers.

Today Sanna has a more relaxing attitude towards her blogging career. She does not really care about how many blog readers she has, though the most important thing is to feel comfortable. Today a week can pass before she updates her blog, but she does not stress about that, though she does not want to have the largest blog of all anymore.

Networking

The networking part is also very important in order to drag sponsoring and paying companies to the blog. The more you are active and become a member in different networking sites or mediate portals, the more companies can see and find you, resulting in more offers and opportunities.

At the first thought if she herself has gained any opportunities by blogging she says no, but then changes her answer to yes, though she has gained a lot of personal development through her blogging career. She emphasizes that she really has grown as a person, met a lot of new people and it also helped her out of a small depression. The possibility of writing all of her feelings down, all your thoughts helped her clear her mind and start over, so the blog had a kind of therapeutic effect on her.

Brand

Sanna knows what power is hidden in blogs nowadays. You do not even have to have the largest blog in order to attract different companies, wanting to promote their products on the blog. Even though Sanna does not have the largest au-pair blog in Sweden anymore and also has a pretty relaxed attitude about when and how to blog, every now and then she is getting offers from different organizations, wanting her to promote different kind of products. Because of her being a member in different networking sites, companies do contact the site, wanting them to find bloggers which satisfies different criteria, like amount of readers, niche of the blog or age, and the site itself then contacts Sanna about these offers. The most of the time it is about new products on the market, that Sanna receives these products for free, and in return she has to write something about them on her blog, making her blog readers buying those products as well, used as a marketing strategy from the organizations. She also makes money on her blog through advertisements or just by publishing links. The first incomes she

gained from advertisement came in 2009, before she went to London. By the time she was in London the blog was niched about the London and au-pair life and therefore the offers of advertisement stopped for a while, until she got home again and started with her design again.

Sanna is well aware of the advantages for companies being visible in different blogs, and she mentions that receiving a product is not the optimal exchange. Money is always better, but is not as common as achieving products. But money is not always everything; she tells us that she also has morals concerning some offers. She explains that she several times has been offered a small amount of money in exchange for writing and promoting casinos or gambling online. This is something that she is not particularly fond of, if she should write about such things, there has to be more money included, otherwise it is not worth it, in regard of the negative associations with her blog and name. It is important that the products or links have some kind of relation to her niche of blog, which means design and her everyday life.

Today Sanna barely gets any large offers from companies, maybe every three months there is a proposal. But the large opportunities do not come so often.

Some bloggers have also tried to become more readers through provocation on the blog. Sanna also tried this once, but she soon realized this kind of provocation was not her thing, since she could not handle the negative atmosphere of the commentaries very well. She would rather have a nice and gentle tone on her blog.

Entrepreneur

Sanna is making a small amount of money out of advertisement and other stuff; however her largest income from blogging derives from her self-made videos. Though she is really good at coding web sites, including coding her own designs for blogs and web pages, her skills are really demanded from a broad mass of bloggers, wanting her to teach them how to make more beautiful web pages. On all her videos she has made through the years, she has about 200 000 views in total.

Beyond the do-it-yourself-videos, she is also selling blog designs to a lot of people. Bloggers, who do want to get a new, personal design on their blog, can contact her in order to get a design, made by Sanna. It all started in 2009 as she began to make free designs for bloggers who asked for it, mostly friends and relatives. She soon realized that this was not sustainable

though she spent a lot of time, doing these designs for nothing in return. And hence, by the end of 2009 she started to take money in exchange for building a blog design. What many people did not understand is that buying a design from a “real” web designer or a company would cost a lot more money than she was asking for, so a lot of people are almost getting upset when understanding that they have to pay. However, Sanna understands the importance of her work. She barely does any exceptions, not being paid, emphasizing that a design attracts people to blogs, making them want to read and maybe stay. And therefore, the design, the first impression is important, and something that she should get well-paid for, in order to do.

The last three years, Sanna has done a lot of designs, the ones people have paid for, but also for free. She thinks that over these years she has sold over 70 different blog designs to people all over Sweden, to people of all ages where most of the people are finding her through Google searches or through links.

Today, Sanna is not dependent on her blog as a source of income. She finds it really relaxing not to have this pressure, having to blog in order to get money. The money emerging of the blogging she makes today is just an extra income, nice to get when it happens but nothing necessary. Almost every month she gets a payment from her blogging, and mostly it is at least 300 Swedish kronor, deriving from all her different activities.

When asking the question if Sanna sees herself as an entrepreneur, she surprisingly says no. She does not have the time or energy starting a business and doing such stuff she says, making us comment on our perspective of entrepreneurship. We are emphasizing that an entrepreneur does not have to be someone who has a registered company or any employees etc., but a person who creates and takes advantage of possible business opportunities, something which we see in Sanna, seeing the possibility in creating a business of the designing process of blogs. She then agrees and says that she until now has seen an entrepreneur as someone like *Blondinbella*, someone running a company, but now she agrees with our perspective, when thinking of it. In total, she is using 10 hours every week for engaging in what we call these entrepreneurial activities, in this case blogging, making videos or creating designs.

Attributes

At the question of if everyone could be an entrepreneur Sanna is pretty determined saying no. She sees a lot of especially young women or girls, trying and believing that they can make a career out of blogging, like *Blondinbella* or *Kenza*. Sanna emphasizes that succeeding with blogging as a career is not possible for everyone. She believes that some people, really engaged and good at what they are doing can be successful, maybe not with gaining money in the beginning, but getting opportunities. She thinks that different opportunities taken, can lead to something entirely new, something unplanned.

It is also important for an entrepreneur or person to realize what you can do and what you cannot. There are limitations for everyone; it is not possible for everyone to do everything that depends on the person. But you can search for opportunities and take the chances you get.

The future of the blogging phenomenon

Regarding the future of the blogging phenomenon, Sanna thinks that certain kind of blogs, like blogs who are niched on fashion or make-up are going to be less successful in the future. She thinks that there will be more blogs about fashion or other things, but you have to really be unique, do your own thing in order to be visible in the broad mass of blogs. Even though she does not really see an end on the blogging era, she believes in an increasing market for other kind of blogs, like *Twitter* and *Instagram*.

4.1.3 Interview with Nellie Berntsson

Starting blogging

Nellie was born in 2000, and she started her blog in 2009 at a very young age of nine, then mainly for fun. During this time she read a lot of other blogs written by older girls and these bloggers uploaded movies from their horse riding sessions getting inspired by this and thinking it was really exciting and cool. Therefore, in 2009, she decided to start her own blog, where she wrote about her biggest hobbies, horses and riding.

Transforming blog

She started out blogging at the blog portal *blogg.se*, where she in the beginning had around 60 unique visitors every week. After approximately 1,5 years, companies and different blog portals started to contact her about collaborations, advertisement and similar. Later on she has

been blogging on contract and also figured on top lists of “Sweden’s most read blogs”, this according to herself, though we cannot say this with certainty. This process has taken some time, however Nellie thinks this development has been just right.

Regarding the possibilities her blog has given her, Nellie has, as told in the background, been standing as a model for stores as *hooks.se*, *rutstore.se*, *kimstore.se* and others. As told, she was also a guest at the Swedish event *Webbdagarna* in 2013, which is an event for everyone who works within the field of digital media. At this event she was interviewed about her blog, the future of her blog and what her goals are with her blog.

As said in the background part of our thesis, Nellie was one of the contestants in the Swedish show *Ponnyakuten*, and after her contribution there, a new stream of blog readers found her blog and it increased in popularity. Nellie has also benefited from gaining acknowledge from one of the most popular bloggers in Sweden, *Tyra Sjöstedt* who runs the blog *tyras.se* and whom has recommended and mentioned Nellie several times which has led to an increasing number of readers to Nellie’s blog, according to herself.

Entrepreneur

Two years ago Nellie did not see herself as an entrepreneur, but that picture has changed and today this is a word she would use to describe herself. Today she can definitely say she runs some kind of business and entrepreneurship. One example of this is when she spoke in front of 1 500 people at the event *Webbdagarna* in Stockholm, where they called her and the other speakers “small entrepreneurs”. Nellie means that she, and her blogging comrades, are the future leaders, since they know what they want and are really determined.

The blog’s impact for her future entrepreneurship has been crucial. Companies wants to reach her blog readers and this makes the blog an important channel for companies to reach out. One other thing the blog has created for her is the possibility to reach out to others, her blog readers, and affect and influence them in different ways. A blog can create many opportunities, and since Nellie is the creator and writer of her blog, she is the one who has created the possibility to go from blog to business.

Attributes

According to Nellie, there are certain qualities you need to have to go from blog to business.

Most important is that you have an enormous drive. You have to be able to stand up to those who do not believe in your ideas and always think forward despite being in adverse wind. The reasons why Nellie has succeeded with her blog are, according to her, that she differs from the mass. She dares to go against the stream, she believes in herself and she is not afraid to compliment other people. Most important when you run a business is to believe in yourself and what you do. To sum it up, she is herself.

4.2 Text material

In this section we will give you the empirical material we have collected from reading blogs of two young women; Kenza Zouiten (Zouiten, Kenza, 2013) and Isabella Löwengrip (Löwengrip, 2013). Before reading these two parts, we want to remark that the information we have collected from the blogs is of a subjective angle, which means the bloggers' angle. Statements in the following texts are the bloggers' and not ours and we want you to keep this in mind when reading these paragraphs.

4.2.1 Text material from www.kenzas.se

Starting blogging

Kenza started writing a blog in December in 2006 and in the early days of her blog she mainly wrote about her life, her boyfriend, clothes and what she was up to during the days. The blog posts were short and not often were pictures attached. Already later in January 2007, she went to the top on the most active list on blogg.se. In the start she had around 100 unique visitors each day, but this quickly increased to 3000 readers in February.

Transforming blog

At the beginning of her blog career, Kenza's biggest dream was to become a model and in February she wrote about going to a test shoot with a model agency and the agency told her that they wanted to work with her. Kenza was happy about the fact she could now call herself a model, which had been her dream for such a long time. This month she also started writing more about clothes and beauty products and more and more pictures was added to the blog posts, though not pictures of her.

Later in 2007 she got in contact with another agency, through her own agency, who wanted to have her as their model at a photo shoot. If enough people would click on the advertisement where she starred, she would get a gift card as a reward. Products was also sent to her for free and the companies wanted her to review the products in her blog, which she back then happily did without thinking much about how much the company could gain from her marketing. This year she was also invited by the blog portal blogg.se to attend a blog advertisement meeting with other big bloggers, like *Blondinbella*. Back then the blogosphere was still small and unexplored.

At the end of 2007 Kenza wrote a short summary about her year where she said her biggest successes during the year had been her blog and her modeling. Her blog has become one of the largest in Sweden and she has also got a couple of nominations and prizes for her blog. You can see a clear distinction between Kenza's blog posts in 2007 and the ones in 2013. In the start of her blogging career she wrote a lot about her private life, her problem with her alcoholic father, her opinions in different matters and also some about politics. These themes is not something she writes a lot about today and here you can see how it has changed when she has gotten more and more blog readers.

The blog year of 2008 brought many possibilities to Kenza since her blog grew bigger and bigger and in the end of the year she had approximately 10 000 unique visitors each day which made her blog the most visited private blog in Sweden. This was the year the popularity of her blog really exploded, which also made her and her blog of high interest for magazines and TV-channels who now started contacting her repeatedly. Though she was happy for the attention of her blog, most of the time she turned down different proposals from TV and magazines and this is something she has continued with until today's date.

She initiated her collaboration with Sweden's largest leather distributor *Jofama* which implied designing a leather jacket, and this collaboration continued with both designing jackets and small collections for *Jofama* until the year of 2012. The *Jofama by Kenza* leather jackets became a huge success and ten thousands of her jackets have been sold throughout Sweden. In addition, Kenza wrote on her blog in 2012 that she sees women wearing her *Jofama by Kenza* jackets every single day. During 2008 she did her first cover shoot with the Swedish magazine *Frida* and she also did a fashion shoot with the jewelry chain *Ur&Penn*. This year

she also got the opportunity to work for *MTV Sweden* as a blog reporter at MTV Europe Music Awards where she stood at the red carpet meeting and interviewing celebrities.

In the beginning of 2009, Kenza started blogging for MTV where she was going to update regularly about music and celebrities and she was also had different mission like going to concerts, galas and premieres and give blog reports. This year she also did a bathing suit shoot for the Swedish magazine *Expressen*. Once again, she worked for MTV at the MTV Europe Music Awards, this time in Berlin. The collaboration with *Jofama* continued and she also started collaboration with the shoe company *Wildflower* where she was a guest designer. She did cover shoots for many magazines and participated in some TV-shows. On the 5th of October 2009 she announced she had reached 100 000 unique blog readers each day.

The year of 2010 continued with similar projects as the year before. The collaborations with *Jofama* and *Wildflower* continued and a new cooperation with Sweden's largest jewelry company *Guldfynd* was started, where she designed a jewelry collection. MTV gave her a mission to follow the band Tokio Hotel's Nordic tour and in the autumn she starred as a host for the web TV-program *Kenza & Tyra show*, alongside another popular Swedish blogger, Tyra Sjöstedt. After recording a song with the Swedish singer Darin in the show, music producers contacted her and she started taking singing lessons and the plan was to start a singing career, however Kenza later on decided to not continue with this since she did not feel wholeheartedly for this career turn.

Thanks to the great success of her jewelry collection in cooperation with *Guldfynd*, she continued her collaboration with them and released another collection in 2011. Also the collaboration with *Jofama* continued with a mini collection. After being a host for *Kenza & Tyra show* she continued on this line with being a host of the programme *Modelljakten* (The Model Hunt) on Swedish channel five in 2011.

In the year of 2012, Kenza's blog turned six years and this year brought some distinct changes for her. She stopped all her collaborations with different companies where she acted as a guest designer, such as for *Guldfynd* and *Jofama*. After she ended her collaboration with *Jofama*, she thanked them for giving her the opportunity to work with them and for the experience she gained from this. Instead of guest designing she was now going to start her own fashion line and she registered a company together with her business partner under the name *Ivy Revel AB*,

which she later announced was the name of her fashion brand. She is a part-owner in and the creative director of this brand and also the designer of the brand's clothing.

Throughout the years, she has done innumerable fashion shoots for magazines both in Sweden and other Nordic countries and also for clothing companies such as the fashion web shops *Nelly.se* and *Bubbleroom.se*. Today Kenza works for the agency *Elite Model Management*; however her dream is no longer to be a model and the modeling jobs become less and less. Her own clothing collection will be launched in June 2013.

Beside incomes from the advertisement on her blog, she also has incomes from her other projects but she has said that as a blogger you earn the most on advertisements.

Networking

Through her blog, Kenza has found a lot of friends in other bloggers and also done collaborations with other bloggers, for example doing photo shoots with one of the bloggers we have interviewed, Emelie Ohlsson.

Brand

On her blog, Kenza emphasizes that she prefers to not have too much advertisement on her blog, to avoid the blog from being seen as a huge advertisement website. Kenza has written in her blog how thankful she is for the opportunities she has gotten through her blog. She is certain she herself has taken her to where she is today, since the blog is her blog and her creation. Though, she sees her blog as a great marketing channel to reach out with herself and her projects and without the blog she thinks she would not have been seen as much as she have today and would probably not have had the opportunities to do all the fun projects she has done during her years of blogging.

Attributes

A lot of people wonder how Kenza's blog got so popular and she thinks this is because she started her blog in the right time. Since the blog phenomenon was not big in Sweden in 2007 her blog grew bigger alongside the whole blog phenomenon which probably contributed to her popularity today.

4.2.2 Text material from www.blondinbella.se

Starting blogging

It all started in 2005 as the 14 year old Isabella started a blog where she wrote about her everyday life, about school, her boyfriend, her problems and parties. Even in the early beginning of her blogging career she mentions that she put high importance on independence. She wants to take care of herself and financing her own life and taking her own decisions.

Transforming the blog

In the fall of 2006 the number of projects Isabella was engaged in increased, due to the popularity of her blog. Isabella was also passionate about political issues and got more and more active in the party “*Moderaterna*”. She became very fond of trying to affect and change society, and argued for a change in power of the Swedish government. Isabella saw the potential in using her blog to reach out to people, not only writing about her own life and problems but also about her political persuasion and things she thought were worth fighting for.

In the autumn of 2007 business continued for Isabella and more and more projects were coming up. She did an interview for a Swedish teen magazine which was interested in making a reportage about Isabella, the successful 17-year old girl which at this point had engaged in several entrepreneurial activities. A short time after this interview, Isabella’s blog *Blondinbella* had a record of visitors. Isabella had 9 800 unique visitors and 41 000 page views per day and the interest for her blog was increasing.

Networking

Isabella thinks the most important things when you establish and build your brand are to invest in the right things, make contacts and alliances and also be able to enjoy the ride.

Brand

Isabella thinks that being exposed in public probably resulted in new streams of readers to her blog. Reaching almost 500 000 blog readers each week made her a kind of celebrity in Sweden and more and more people started recognizing her in public. About being recognized as a celebrity in Sweden she has mentions that she has always kept her feet on the ground.

She thinks that the life she is living now is something she wants to use as a platform to build a solid foundation and also use as a platform to establish her name and brand.

Entrepreneur

Her first attempt of starting a business was at the age of 14-15. Since she was writing a blog which was already read by many young people, this made her realize the power she had to affect her blog readers. Isabella was strictly against smoking at this time and because of this, her first attempt to make a difference and gain her first entrepreneurial experience was to start a group against smoking. The name of the group, which people was able to join on the internet portal *Playahead*, an earlier substitute to *Facebook*, was “*Fina flickor röker inte*”, which means “pretty girls do not smoke”. The group encouraged young girls to say no to smoking and by that resist the peer pressure from the social environment.

In 2007, Isabella kept on working with girls and their self-esteem, continuing her work from the year before with her anti-smoking campaign for girls. In the summer she announced another of her many ideas named “*Tjejgruppen*”. The idea was, as in the previous year, to strengthen young girls’ self-esteem, a vision which has followed Isabella through all these years and which still is an issue close to her heart.

In late August in 2007 one important step towards financial independence was taken when Isabella and her father registered her first incorporated company “*Blondinbella AB*”. In 2008 she started her second company, a web shop named *Bellme*. In addition to this she held lectures about the blogging phenomenon all around Sweden, she got interviewed in a lot of different newspapers and magazines and besides this she had other projects going on.

At many times of her blogging career, her life was very busy. She notices that being *Blondinbella* with all the projects and the blogging is a 24 hour job which does not leave any room for longer vacations or time-outs. The blogging itself took least of the time and most time was spent on other projects. Even though she at this point was really busy and had an assistant, taking care of administration and business related things, Isabella again and again mentions she was happy and proud of what she was doing. All the work was rewarded, at this time her company *Blondinbella AB* earned a few hundred thousands of kronor every month, from where she could choose her own income. In addition, her own web shop *Bellme* had a turnover of millions of kronor, making it possible for Isabella to save and invest a lot of her

revenue, and plan for the future. In the end of the year, she had been active in many projects and she was ranked to be one of the top 100 of the most powerful people in Sweden, an incredible achievement for an 18 year old girl who had started out writing a blog.

In 2009 she introduced her own clothing collection Classified and this year her first book was released, “*Egoboost*”, a book for young women about self-esteem which had the purpose of boosting young women to believe in themselves and improve their confidence. In addition, Isabella held lectures about this theme and entrepreneurship at different universities and schools around Sweden.

In January in 2011 she founded a magazine for young women who wanted to focus on their career. It was thought to be a magazine for women between the ages of 18-30 years, who had a large part of their business career in front of them and lead these women into the right direction. At this time, she had had five registered organizations, *Blondinbella AB*, *Bellme AB* which she then sold, *Classified AB*, *Spotlife Europe AB* a blogging network and then *Löwengrip Invest AB*, an investment company in which she was the only owner.

Attributes

In the end of 2007, Isabella mentions an interesting aspect about the fact that you do not have to be the smartest woman or man in the world in order to succeed as a young entrepreneur. The most important thing is to have a network of people around yourself, who help and lead you in the right direction. On a question a blog reader asked her, about how high IQ she has, she answered that she probably has a pretty normal intelligent quotient, but once again she emphasizes that you do not have to be extraordinary smart in order to be an entrepreneur. However she mentioned that she was still really proud of herself, being able to achieve all the things mentioned. She is proud of being able to earn money on her hobby, to write a blog. In January 2008 Isabella ascertained that she could make a living out of blogging, due to the salary she achieved from her company *Blondinbella AB*. She was now so booked that she did not even have time for blogging anymore, but had to plan her blogging in advance.

5. Analysis

For the analysis of our study, we have decided to divide our empirical material into themes, which we have chosen on basis of the theory we have chosen to use. On behalf of this, we will separate the analysis into three main themes. First of all we have looked to find themes which have been raised in both *Bloggskolan* and in the material from our empirical studies. From this we selected the sub themes *Networking* and *The blog as a CV* which we chose on basis of what themes we found most distinct in our interviews and text analyses. We have chosen to divide the analysis in sub themes in order to make it easier to follow our thoughts. Our second theme is that we apply our data on the theory of the entrepreneurial mindset and our third theme refers to when we use the theory of causation and effectuation to understand the empirical data we have collected.

5.1 Bloggskolan

5.1.1 Networking

In “*Bloggskolan*” the three authors Frida Ramstedt, Clara Lidström and Annakarín Nyberg are raising many important aspects when trying to take your blog to business. One of the main themes of the book is to emphasize the importance of networking. To manage to operate the process of going from blog to business your network will be one of the success factors and this is something our interviewees and blogs of study have confirmed. Consequently the bloggers of our study have all emphasized how networking has been a crucial part of their blogging career. All of them have been in contact with other bloggers through collaborations or through mutual acknowledgement of each other. Kenza emphasizes the importance of collaborations, Sanna mentions the importance of networking to be seen on different portals and by companies and Isabella clarify the advantages of making contact alliances, and here we can quickly see how important networking is for the bloggers.

To continue with examples of networking from our interviews and text material, Emelie photographed Isabella in the beginning of her photo career and this was a breakthrough for her since her name and her work was seen on Isabella’s blog which at this time already was one of the largest blogs in Sweden. Later on she has also done photo shoots with Kenza, and many other popular bloggers, and every time Emelie has photographed another blogger she has been exposed for the other blogger’s readers which have led to new blog readers for her

blog. The benefit for *Blondinbella*, which in this case has the blog with the most readers, would be getting professional photos taken of herself, which she can use in marketing purpose of her blog. Since blogs with beautiful pictures tend to attract more readers, this is a mutual exchange, even though the exchange between bloggers often tends to gain the blogger with fewer readers. Even if the exchange may weigh more to one of the blogger's benefit, this type of exchange is very common in the blogosphere, and there are many signs that the bloggers in our study are seeing other bloggers more as friends and equals instead of competitors.

Another example of this from our studies is how Nellie has achieved opportunities through being noticed and recommended by her blog companion Tyra Sjöstedt. Since they both write about horses, Tyra, which is also a very successful blogger and entrepreneur, paid attention to this young girl and recommended her blog to her readers since she saw Nellie as a young version of herself. Tyra wanted to give Nellie a push into the right direction, giving her the opportunity to let her blog grow. With this case, we once again want to emphasize the positive consequences of networking and give an example of a spontaneous recommendation, not being competitive at all, but only supporting. In the interview with Emelie, she also said she has received a lot of blogger friends through her blog, since they are all dealing with the same thing, they understand each other and have insight how it is to act in the blogosphere.

From the examples above we see the importance of networking within your own niche which is also something important which the authors of *Bloggskolan* highlights. Until now we have brought up examples of bloggers seeing other bloggers as their equals instead of competitors and how this has influenced their blog careers and to make this study as truthful as possible we also want to show examples of bloggers who instead see other bloggers as competitors and how this has affected their success. One of the most read bloggers in Sweden is *Kissies.se* which is written by Alexandra Nilsson. During her blog career she has provoked a lot and hazed other bloggers and pointed out their weaknesses. Even though *Kissie* is not part of our study, we chose to include her in this small part of the analysis because we both have seen the impact from networking, and a negative example of this would strengthen our conclusions. Both *Kissie*, *Blondinbella* and *Kenzas* are three of the most popular bloggers in Sweden, however there are many examples of how Isabella and Kenza has used their blog as a platform for going from blog to business and few examples for Alexandra. Sure, Alexandra gains revenue from advertisement and she receives products from companies, but in

comparison to Kenza and Isabella, she stands way behind in the process of going from blog to business.

We can not be sure of the reasons why Alexandra is still having her blog as her main chore, though a guess from our side is the way she has been networking. Since Alexandra has written negative things about other bloggers and also different companies, we think few bloggers and companies have been interested in collaborating with her which has given her difficulties with taking her blog further to some kind of business, even though she in theory would have the conditions to proceed in her process in going from blog to business regarding her amount of readers. If we compare to Emelie, Alexandra has a significant higher amount of readers than her which should provide a great platform, however we think her failure in her networking has limited her possibilities of making a business out of her blog.

For us, this shows the importance of networking, which the authors of *Bloggskolan* (Lidström, Nyberg, & Ramstedt, 2012) are emphasizing. An important aspect to mention is that Kissie has built her blog on provoking and both Emelie and Sanna have taken distance from provoking, after they both tried it and realized this did not fit their blogs. Both of them want to have a positive atmosphere surrounding their blogs and provoking does not boost that atmosphere. Even though Kissie did not succeed to build a positive loaded name with the provoking attitude, Isabella has and still is provoking her readers, but not taking any harm. Maybe one can call it provoking in a gentle way though she does not make it so obvious or brutal like Kissie, but still, this is a way of getting reactions on her blog, causing people to read and react.

5.1.2 The blog as a CV

In *Bloggskolan*, the authors mention how a blog can be seen as a kind of CV. Emelie mentioned in her interview that every single blog post she writes is very well planned and she consequently has a business and brand thinking. Here you can clearly see how the blog works as a CV for Emelie, since you really think through everything you put in a CV. A CV does not contain much material compared to a blog and here you can see how the blog provides a highly detailed CV. For Sanna, the blog is also a kind of CV, but more for showing her capabilities and her work. Sometimes when you apply for jobs within more creative fields, you must attach a lot of different samples of your work in your application and in Sanna's

case; this is exactly what she does in her CV, her blog. She shows her designs she has sold to customers, her own and old ones, to those who want to read. And through the blog, she gets job opportunities such as designing a website for someone or similar.

A mutual factor for the bloggers we have interviewed and the bloggers whose blogs we have studied are the fact they have all gotten job opportunities, business opportunities, as a result of their blog. Kenza mentions she is so thankful for the possibilities her blog has given her and that the blog provides a great marketing channel for her projects, Emelie mentions that everything she is working with today is a product of her blog and Nellie also emphasizes how her blog has been crucial for her entrepreneurship. Also the successful *Blondinbella*, Isabella, has gotten opportunities from blogging. As she started to blog and it grew to be even bigger and bigger, companies started to notice her and saw a possibility to reach out to a lot of potential customers. On behalf of this, they started to address Isabella with different kind of offers about different projects, making it possible for her to engage in projects she wanted to. This, in return, would be seen on her blog and attract other companies, who wanted her to work with them instead. From this, we can make the conclusion that the blog has worked as a CV for all of these bloggers, since all opportunities they have gotten has been a result of their blog. Emelie, Isabella and Sanna are emphasizing how the blog is the platform for future business, the platform which gives opportunities and therefore you want to create a stable platform to benefit the process of going from blog to business. An advantage of having a blog is that everything you choose to write about or publish, like different jobs or projects, will be available on the internet for everyone to see. This means it basically is a virtual CV, you do not even have to send it to people, and they can have a look without you even knowing about it.

5.2 The entrepreneurial mindset

The theories about the entrepreneurial mindset (Cowdrey, 2012) focus on the qualities required becoming a successful entrepreneur and after our interviews and studies we can draw clear parallels between the the qualities from this theory and the qualities seen in the bloggers we have studied. The most distinct attribute we found in the bloggers was their willingness to work really hard in order to achieve their goals. Many people tend to think that bloggers are living a comfortable life, sometimes posting a blog post about what they are up to at the moment. What people do not realize, a lot of effort has been made, and a lot of hours per day

are invested in writing the blog, setting up a kind of strategy, organizing the different blog posts in a day. In the following paragraphs we will see if we can find any similarities between what attributes the theory say an entrepreneur need, and what attributes the bloggers say is required by them. We will divide this section into sub headlines, on basis of the attributes Cowdrey (2012) find important.

Clear and achievable visions and a vision where resources may not be in their control

One common factor between the bloggers has been there clear visions about the future of their blog and business. Both Emelie and Isabella have several times told their readers and us about all the ideas they have just waiting to be turned in to reality. It seems like they have so many visions and dreams for their blogs and businesses, it can sometimes become too much, and it is a fact that both Emelie and Isabella has had a burnout due to their hard work and all their projects and ideas going on simultaneously. Also Kenza seems to be determined with what she wants to achieve. We can not know this for sure, but regarding her work and projects with different labels, releasing different fashion corporations, it seems that her vision has been to work in the fashion industry. Today, at the time of writing, we are only a few days away from the release of Kenza's own fashion label, where she is the creative director and the designer of the clothes. It seems like that she had this vision or dream for a long time and through several smaller fashion projects she has gained experience and knowledge about how the industry works. And now, finally, she can start her own label.

Despite all of this goal-oriented thinking about different visions and business goals, which almost every blogger in our thesis tend to have, another thought hit us. A total of three of the five blogs studied started pretty early, between the years 2005 and 2006, at a time where the blogging phenomenon was not as big as it is today. The point we make from this is that none of the early bloggers; Isabella, Kenza or Emelie probably could have had a plan or vision of what they wanted to achieve with the blogging back then, since no one even knew what impact and what importance blogs would have in the future. Therefore it is an interesting contrast comparing the different visions.

The two bloggers who started blogging later, Sanna and Nellie are more likely to have thought of their blogging as a career and with a vision since they had seen the earlier blogs emerge and gain popularity. In the interview, Sanna mentioned what her vision was with the blog when she started in 2007. Back then she wanted to become the new Blondinbella, which

was a well oriented goal for her blogging career. Also Nellie said she got inspiration from other bloggers to start a blog, because she found it exciting and her vision may have been to do something exciting and cool, to share her thoughts around her biggest hobby.

The theory is also claiming that there is a lack of certainty for what kind of resources are going to exist in the future. It is emphasized that it is necessary for the entrepreneur to taking this uncertainty into account when planning or creating a vision. We do interpret this part of the theory in the way that entrepreneurs have to be flexible when it comes to change of plans. When analyzing our bloggers behaviors and actions, we could not really find any actions referring to this part of the theory. Since most of the bloggers tell us about their ideas or new collaborations when it is close to the release date or time for introduction, it is hard to know how the vision looked like from the beginning and judge if they have been flexible in their vision.

To summarize this part, a difference can be found regarding when the bloggers started to blog, since this has influenced their visions about blogging as a career. Maybe the young girls who start blogging today and have clear visions for their blogs are more likely to make a business out of their blog in the end, assuming they have the right qualifications needed. Or, the blog era is over and no bloggers will be as huge as the early bloggers Isabella and Kenza.

Willingness to listen to others

In order to succeed, our theory (Cowdrey, 2012) is claiming you need a network of people who supports you or your ideas and a network which sometimes guides you into the right direction. Here we also find a connection to *Bloggskolan* (2012) which also is emphasizing that networking is an important part to the puzzle. In the part of the analysis about networking, we have already emphasized that we also think networking is an important matter. Networking does not necessarily have to be the same as listening to others, but we do think that there is a connection between those two that we want to present in this section.

The most distinct similarity between all our bloggers and the ability to listen to others regarding your business ideas or visions is the fact that none of our bloggers have any kind of education in what they are doing. Surely they have a lot of experience and engagement put into their projects, but in a many cases when they have decided to start some kind of business or going all in with an emerging idea, they have not had the knowledge you need in order to

start a company or run a business. In order to fulfill their dreams or visions they had to receive help from professionals who know how the market or industry of interest is working. Without them it would have been really difficult to succeed with some of the projects.

A very interesting aspect of this entrepreneurship theory with all the attributes is that we in some way are trying to find and apply the different attributes on our bloggers in our study. We see all kind of parallels. The difficulty is that one of our interviewees only is 13 years old. Can a 13 year old be called an entrepreneur? How much of the things she does is *her*, or how much are her parents or other adults included in those decisions? Since she legally does not even have the right to decide everything, a lot of her work and projects probably are being managed through her parents or a manager. Here it is even more obvious and a more brutal way of willingness to listen to others, since she may not always have a choice.

Willingness to take calculated risks

In the future, anything could happen. As an entrepreneur you do not know if the idea you are planning to convert into reality is going to be profitable or successful. There is no certainty in the future which assures you that you are going out of a project with more money than before. The risk you take making your vision reality includes money, resources and time. These are scarce resources, but sometimes this risk has to be taken. Both Emelie and Isabella have taken risks in their career. They both started and published a magazine, niched on photography in Emelie's case and on young women's career for Isabella. Some would say starting a magazine in paper form in a time when technology is taking over more and more is foolish or risky. And probably it was risky since we do not think the market for magazines in paper form is growing, it may rather be decreasing. Despite this, Isabella and Emelie took their chances and succeeded to publish their own magazines, though the destiny for the two magazines were different. Isabella managed her magazine *Egoboost* for about one year before selling it without any profit or loss, whilst Emelie managed to publish three issues of her magazine *Shoot* before she had to close it down, due to lack of financiers. The conclusion we make from this is that even though you are willing to take risks, you have to be prepared for the consequences. That is something we would like to add to this attribute, being able to take the consequences though as an entrepreneur, you tend to fail a lot of times in order to succeed.

Lack of fear for failure

Another quality mutual for the bloggers in our study is their lack of fear and failure. Not all of their projects have been successful. Emelie's and Isabella's magazines are two examples of this. Even though Emelie's magazine did not last for long, it was surely a beneficial experience for Emelie and something she probably has learned from, and she can use this experience in the future when starting similar or other projects. As we see it, benefits can arise both from the successful and less successful projects. Sometimes you have to close a door in order to get a new one to open. Regarding Isabella's magazine *Egoboost*, it may not have been as successful as she claimed it to be, but anyway, she surely learned from her mistakes and could use this for future projects. All the bloggers we have studied have believed in their projects, either they succeeded or failed, but this is probably also an important key success factor.

This hard working spirit, believing and producing a lot of different projects is a common attribute for all the bloggers we have studied, however it sometimes come with a downside. Like we mentioned before, both Emelie and Isabella has been open with the fact they have become burnout due to trying to do everything perfect at the same time. Even though this is horrible, it shows how they focus on working hard towards their visions and they show no fear of failure. If they believe in an idea, they go for it.

Willingness to work hard

From our study objects we can however see a clear common attribute, which they all possess; their willingness to work hard. Engaging in business activities takes a lot of time and requires hard work. Isabella, *Blondinbella*, is since the beginning of her blogging career emphasizing that all her work and achievements are products of her hard work. Also Kenza has written on her blog that the success of her blog is due to her own ability and qualifications. Here, a point has to be made that it may be a part of being an entrepreneur, to point out that you individually are responsible for your success. The view on an entrepreneur is mostly positive, and that entrepreneurs are self-going and driven, and sometimes you may forget there are people standing behind every entrepreneur as well.

During our interview, Emelie said it is important to be able to handle higher tempo and stress to be an entrepreneur and we think this matches the attribute of being willing to work hard, since working hard quite often involves stress and high tempo. When looking at smaller

bloggers, like Sanna, you can see even though she has not gained a lot of success with a lot of money etc. she is working really hard, spending a lot of hours in order to create her web- or blog designs for her customers. Not only do the business activities take time, in order to stay on top of the blog lists a blogger has to be active, publish many blog posts, take beautiful pictures in order to gain attention and make people stay on your blog. There is also a lot of planning and a strategy behind each blog post, which both Emelie and Sanna emphasizes. Blog readers, in general, do not like or visit blogs which are only being updated a few times per week. In order to keep readers at their blog, bloggers have to update their blog frequently, posting pictures and interesting thoughts and comments. Sanna, Emelie and Nellie told us they sometimes feel a pressure to blog, and to keep their readers satisfied they need to have regular updates.

The majority of our bloggers have also marked that one has to be a very driven person in order to succeed and added this as a key factor to take your blog to business, both for themselves and others. Though it takes a lot of time and effort to succeed in the blogging business and with any kind of business, it is necessary to be driven, determined and really interested and engaged in what you are doing.

However, an interesting point to remember from this is that working hard means different things to people. A miner may say his work is really hard, both physically and mentally. Comparing to the miners' work, it is hard to emphasize that writing some blog posts is a hard job. The meaning of these words is different depending on who is asked and in what perspective the situation is put. It is different to define something as working hard, and we think that it is important to remember this when discussing something like this.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is said to be important for an entrepreneur (Cowdrey, 2012). It is important to understand what ones capabilities are, but also what limitations one is possessing, as also Sanna emphasized during our interview. The attribute self-awareness is pretty hard to estimate if a blogger is possessing or not. It is a personal attribute and the only thing we can do is to guess, make conclusions based upon different actions we have noticed. We have to say that we think that there is a fine line taking this attribute into account when talking about entrepreneurship. Of course it is really necessary to understand the limitations, the things you

can not handle yourself. But still it is important to try things and especially dare to do different things, even if you at first do not think you can do it.

Confidence and Motivate oneself

Two other attributes which are important in order to succeed as an entrepreneur are to have confidence and be able to motivate oneself (Cowdrey, 2012). In this analysis we put these two attributes under the same headline since we think they overlap each other.

These are also two very personal qualifications, very hard to measure and sometimes the people who have these attributes do not even know they possess them. Therefore, it is hard for us to say whether or not any of the bloggers in our study have these attributes or not. Though, we see tendencies to that some bloggers in the study may possess these attributes. It seems like many bloggers, not only the ones we have studied, tend to have periods in their blogging career where there is a lack of motivation for creating blog posts. Sometimes they write about their lack of motivation to blog, calling it *bloggtorka* (in English freely translated to *blog drought*). Often this feeling occurs when the blog writers have a pretty large amount of blog readers, which then are expecting daily updates and funny blog posts. When the blogging is becoming a job rather than a funny thing for the bloggers, they seem to lose interest in blogging, making it a dilemma because part of their job actually *is* to blog. The lack of motivation has been part of almost every of our bloggers daily lives. It is not unusual for a visitor on the blog to read a post about the difficulties about finding something to write about. Also in very busy times, with other kind of work, the motivation for blogging seems to decline.

In contrast to the lack of motivation regarding the blogging career, many of our bloggers have a very large amount of motivation when it comes to their different projects. When studying for example Isabella's or Emelie's blogs, we do not for once think about lack of motivation. What we see are young female entrepreneurs who fight hard in a world dominated by male entrepreneurs. Their stubbornness and engagement is leading them towards their goal. To be able to do all of their projects, there has to be a large motivational power in their mind, telling them to keep fighting and keep trying. They have the confidence to keep working on their ideas, in order for them to happen. Emelie emphasize how important it is to be stubborn and both Nellie and Sanna highlight how important it is to believe in yourself and your ideas to be able to take your blog further. Isabella has also mentioned several times that she never got

anything from her parents financially. She earned everything by herself, working hard for it, claiming that she never wanted to depend on someone else. Maybe this is the motivational power behind Isabella, not having to be dependent on someone and this is the reason she works so hard. Also Emelie learned that everything in life can change very fast and that nothing is for granted. Losing her sister, she told us, made her realize that nothing in life is constant and you have to fight for your own good.

Conclusion

We have noticed a lot of the attributes, mentioned in the theory, in our bloggers' behavior which we have studied. Either if you have a smaller blog, a large blog or if you are at a very early stage of your possible blogging career and future business opportunities, a few common patterns in qualifications have appeared. The most important similarities between the bloggers in regard to our theory about the entrepreneurial mindset are the attributes of hard work, no fear for failure and motivation.

Listing up these attributes, an interesting observation is that none of these qualities an entrepreneur should have does mean that he has to be well-educated. An entrepreneur does not have to have a master's degree in economics, or possessing any special skills, he basically could be a normal person, with a vision, ready to fight for it. This makes it really interesting with our case, the bloggers who all are growing up in this western world of ours. They all are young independent women who have paved their way through a world full of successful men, achieving something extraordinary even though barely any of them has any kind of higher education. They are all self-taught and have gotten sageness from their own life and experiences, nevertheless are they all young, dedicated women and promising entrepreneurs.

5.3 Causation & Effectuation

To introduce this part of our analysis, we want to refresh our readers' memory about what causation and effectuation are, and remind the readers these two processes are two ways of making decisions.

“Causation processes take a particular effect as given and focus on selecting between means to create that effect.” (Sarasvathy, 2001:251)

“Effectuation processes take a set of means as given and focus on selecting between possible effects that can be created with that set of means.” (Sarasvathy, 2001:251)

If we look at how these two decision-making processes have been used over time, we would say there may be a shift towards a more causation-oriented process today within the blogosphere.

When going from blog to business, bloggers have to take decisions and we think the decision-making has changed in parallel with how the blog phenomenon has grown. When the blogs entered the Swedish internet world with *Blondinbella* as one of the first-wave bloggers, there was not a path before them of how bloggers before had done to go from blog to business. Therefore, *Blondinbella* and her blogging companions, like Kenza, used the means they were given and from this they selected between the possible effects or outcomes their set of means could create. When we refer to means in this context, we refer to opportunities such as interview-requests, requests to model in a photo shoot, requests to hold lectures and requests to start collaborations. The possibilities they were given were their means, their platform, to create effects for the future. This shows an example of effectuation processes, which we think was the most common used process for decision-making in the beginning of the blog phenomenon in Sweden. Since they did not know exactly in what direction they wanted to go with their blog, and neither did they know how large the blogosphere would be, they tried many things and saw what effect it had on their blog and their brand.

Today, on the other hand, we see a causation process as the decision-making process which is used the most. The newer and younger bloggers of today, such as Nellie, have seen how many bloggers before them have been able to make businesses out of their blogs. In this way, the

present-wave of bloggers have role models, and in some way they have gotten instructions, for how to go from blog to business. Also *Bloggskolan* which was used as a theory in this thesis gives us a hint of the emerging business which was created out of the demand for learning how to make business out of your blog.

Because of this increasing knowledge and popularity of making your blog to business, this new generation of bloggers has seen what certain means can lead to and they are getting influenced by this. The bloggers have been able to see which means and which possibilities have given the bloggers most success and help regarding their businesses. Today you can find high amounts of recipes of how you take your blog further besides *Bloggskolan*, such as other bloggers' stories and books. Bloggers today use the same means which has been successful before, which can be referred to as a decision-making process more inspired by a causation process. The effect which is strived after is having a successful blog which can be used as a platform for their businesses. The means needed in order to get there are the possibilities in the surrounding world. To create this effect, they choose between means, and which ones they choose depends on what means have worked before for other bloggers.

In our theory, we referred to an example made by Sarasvathy (2001) about causation and effectuation processes. The example was cooking a meal, and the vision was having a finished meal in front of you. If you apply a causation process, you would choose a recipe, buy all the groceries required and then strictly follow the recipe. If you on the other hand apply an effectuation process you would first look at what groceries you already have at home, and with these existing products you would make a meal. If we take this example one step further, it would be possible to make or plant the groceries yourself, which could refer to a slightly different process. Both Kenza and Nellie emphasize how they, themselves, are the creators of their blogs and therefore they have also created the possibilities they have been given by themselves. This means they are emphasizing that the qualities behind the blogger is more important than different opportunities or possibilities which everyone could create. If we make a parallel to the example with the meal, they plant or make their own groceries, which they later use to make a meal, or make a business out of their blog.

Sarasvathy (2001) proposes that the process of effectuation is the dominant decision model for the future, which is something we both agree and disagree with. For our case, going from

blog to business, we think the causation decision model will be the dominant one in the future, though the effectuation decision model will also be used.

Today, many bloggers who have blogged for several years can be seen as role models for how to take your blog to business. If you for example look at Kenza's and Isabella's blogging stories, many young girls are getting inspiration and guidance from how Kenza and Isabella succeeded with their blogs and businesses and the young girls are trying to apply this on their own blogs. In this way, new bloggers can follow patterns which have been proved successful. With this said, a reservation has to be made that even if one pattern with certain milestones led to success for someone, it does not mean this will work for everyone. We believe that a lot of opportunities and possibilities emerge on basis of *when* you are in time. At the time when the largest blogs arose, the blogosphere and the possibilities within this area was new and unexplored. There had not been anything like that before. Today, we already have a *Blondinbella* and a *Kenza*. Do we have room for new big bloggers? However, we admit that bloggers today can be inspired by earlier and more successful bloggers, maybe even using some of the methods and possibilities which have worked for bloggers before them. But in contrast to previous development, maybe something else is being achieved instead?

6. Discussion

6.1 Conclusions

To introduce our discussion, we will give a summary of our conclusions after doing this study and in regard to our purpose and research questions.

First of all, networking seems to be one of the key success factors when going from blog to business, both built on our literature and our empirical material. Networking, and how you network, has been proved an important factor for reaching out with your blog, which makes it easier to take your blog further. Another important factor is to be aware of the fact that your blog is a kind of CV, and depending on what you write, you create an image, a brand, of yourself, which also is important for being able to go from blog to business.

When looking at the theory about the entrepreneurial mindset, we found three qualities or attributes which seemed to be of higher importance for bloggers to possess if they aim for

going from blog to business. These three are hardworking, no fear of failure and motivation. We may not be able to say these attributes are required, however we have seen they have been important for the bloggers we have studied.

When doing the interviews and analyzing the blogs, we quite quickly found out there are certain means which are used on the way from blog to business, and therefore certain patterns. All of the bloggers who have been a part of our study started writing a blog and after a while companies or other bloggers contacted them, suggesting collaborations of different kinds. These collaborations can also be referred to as means, and common used means are things such as receiving products and be asked to review them, performing interviews, doing photo shoots and being acknowledged by other bloggers. These means have been used by the majority of the bloggers in our study and we think we see a common pattern here. Opportunities arise in the outside world, though the bloggers themselves work hard to create this, as Nellie mentioned in her interview, and as Kenza has written on her blog.

The pattern when going from blog to business is not identical, however there are similarities and certain means are used, maybe not in exactly the same order, but regardless of the order they are used, a common pattern can be found. Below, we will give you a short summary of our conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS		
Bloggskolan	The Entrepreneurial Mindset	Causation & Effectuation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking is crucial. • "Co-workers" instead of competition. • Mutual exchange. • Networking within a niche. • Blog as a virtual CV. • Opportunities through the blog. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most common attributes are willingness to work hard, no fear for failure and motivation. • Success has nothing to do with how well-educated you are. • Stubborn, driven and engaged women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "original" bloggers have used a effectuation process when developing their businesses. • The new generation of bloggers are trying to copy the success-stories making it more of a causation process.

6.2 Critical approach of the blogging success stories

After writing this thesis, and after we had collected all of the information from blogs and interviews, we noticed many things we read in blogs are represented in a strongly positive angled way and as we said in the method, we wanted to avoid using only one angle to look at the information. Overall, bloggers tend to only show the best sides of their lives on their blog, and as mentioned before, the information they give can be very selective. This is something we have to keep in mind when studying blogs, since there are many sides of a blogger we are not invited to see. All that is shown is the success stories and this creates a picture of blogs being a simple way to gain money and success, although this may not be the fact.

At an event, Nellie and her blogging comrades, were called the future leaders and this statement is something we both agree and disagree with. We think the power the blogosphere holds is enormous, and this means the bloggers themselves possess power, the power to affect people's minds and to share their opinions. To say that young bloggers are the future leaders may seem a bit extreme, since the term future leader is a loaded and strong term, though we definitely think bloggers will enter the business world more and more in the future. However, bloggers are not the only ones being able to become future leaders, and in all success stories you may think blogging is the best way to create a business, and this is something we do not agree with, even if the blogosphere has potential. Blogging may only be a hype and we have to keep this in mind when looking at the blogosphere which is filled with positivity around the blogging phenomenon.

Most bloggers only show one side of the coin and this means we need to be critical and try to see the other side of the coin which they have tried to hide under their castle of success.

6.3 Implications

The blogging phenomenon has taken a hold on Sweden. When the first wave of bloggers in Sweden came, people was amazed over how private the bloggers were and how they shared every little detail of their life. Historically, people's private life has been open only for themselves and perhaps their closest family. With this as the norm, blogs are a breakthrough in opening up and showing your private life. Today, more and more people blog, which mean

and increasing amount of people open up their lives to the society. However, do the bloggers send out a “true” picture? Or do you edit your life on your blog, and only show the good parts?

If you run a blog, everyone has the possibility to know everything about you. Some people may not think about the consequences which could come from opening up your whole life, especially the younger bloggers probably do not think through what they publish on their blog. As mentioned in the analysis, a blog is a type of CV and many bloggers seem to not understand how their blogs can have an impact on their future careers. Some think it is enough to get a popular blog, and then the opportunities will flow, while they do not think about the dark side of blogging. If you as a blogger write about, or do something, people do not approve of, they will certainly remember it and since a blog is open, a future employer can google your name and find out about everything you have done, both the negative and the positive things.

Another interesting aspect of how the world of blogging is changing is how blogs are getting more and more interlinked with businesses. It may have started as something as simple as an open diary, however a blog stands for so much more today. Previously we have had organizations and businesses which have been managed by people, and today we have businesses which *are* people. Or people who are businesses. Bloggers are walking brands, which also mean they are walking businesses. Their whole businesses are built on their blog, which stand for themselves, and this way the bloggers become some kind of commodities, which shows us how products are made of something which have not been products before. This refers to the process of commodification. The bloggers sell themselves, their brand and this shift is an interesting aspect of how the blogosphere is changing.

As mentioned in the beginning, the opinions about the blogging phenomenon and about bloggers differ, though we think a shift in attitude for the ones who are negative to blogging would be an advantage for them. The blogosphere seem to be increasing and the power of blogs is increasing as well.

6.4 Further research

To conclude our discussion, we have to highlight the fact that our study comes with some restraints since it is not a broad study in regard to the number of interviews we have done and the number of blogs we have looked at. If this study would have involved more blogs and bloggers you could have drawn more general conclusions and you would probably have seen clearer similarities and differences, though we did not have the time to do a broader study. This thesis can be seen more as a short introduction to the subject of making business out of a blog. Since we had difficulties finding earlier research within the area, this shows that even if our study is small, it is of high importance and touches a subject of the future. The interest around this subject is increasing and especially companies are starting to understand the power of blogs, which is why we think the research within this area will increase markedly in the future.

Both Emelie and Sanna think the blogs in the future will be more niched and also that other social media as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter will get more and more popular. It would be interesting to see if their predictions will be turned into reality.

To conclude our thesis, it will be exciting to see how the blogosphere will develop in the future, and if a world will come where almost everyone is blogging. We will see what happens, and for the last sentence of our thesis we want to say; *Do not underestimate the power of blogs.*

8. Bibliography

- Alvesson, M. (2003). Beyond neopositivists, romantics and localists: a reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research. *The Academy of Management Review*, 28, 13-33.
- Cowdrey, R. (2012). *Creating an Entrepreneurial Mindset: Failing IS an Option* (1 ed.). Ventur Publishing ApS.
- Dictionary.com, LCC. (2013). Retrieved 05 18, 2013, from Dictionary.com:
<https://www.iis.se/docs/SOI2012.pdf>
- Findahl, O. (2012). *Svenskarna och Internet 2012*. Ödeshög: Danagårds LiTHO.
- Gunelius, S. (2013). *Making Sense of Blog Traffic Statistics*. Retrieved 04 14, 2013, from About.com: <http://weblogs.about.com/od/addonsandplugins/p/BlogTrafficStat.htm>
- Internetworld. (2013). *Om Webbdagarna*. Retrieved 04 30, 2013, from Webbdagarna:
<http://webbdagarna.se/sida/om-webbdagarna>
- Lidström, C., Nyberg, A., & Ramstedt, F. (2012). Bloggskolan. Retrieved 05 04, 2013, from <http://bloggskolan.natkurs.se/>
- Löwengrip, I. (2013). Retrieved 2013, from Blondinbella: www.blondinbella.se
- Microsoft. (2013). *How to make money from your blog: 5 tips*. Retrieved 04 13, 2013, from Microsoft Business Hub:
http://www.microsoftbusinesshub.com/news_and_updates/make_money_from_your_blog
- Nationalencyklopedin. (2013). *Blogg*. Retrieved 04 06, 2013, from Nationalencyklopedin:
http://www.ne.se/blogg?i_whole_article=true
- Nyberg, A. (2012). *Digitalt Entreprenörskap*. Studentlitteratur AB.
- Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001, 04). Causation and Effectuation: Toward a Theoretical Shift from Economic Inevitability to Entrepreneurial Contingency. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26, 243-263.
- Sjöstedt, T. (2012). *Från blogg till business - min väg från noll till 500 000 läsare och Style by Tyra*. Lind&Co.
- Stiftelsen för internetinfrastruktur. (2013). *Svenskarna och internet 2012*. Retrieved 04 04, 2013, from Internetstatistik: <http://www.internetstatistik.se/soi2012/>
- Tailsweep AB. (2013). *Officiella Bloggtoppen* . Retrieved 04 19, 2013, from Tailsweep:
<http://bloggtoppen.tailsweep.se/>
- Våge, L., Stattin, E., & Nygren, G. (2005). *Bloggtider*. Mediestudier.

Zouiten, K. (2012, 01 10). *Hur många läsare har jag?* Retrieved 05 02, 2013, from Kenzas.se:
<http://kenzas.se/2012/01/10/hur-manga-lasare-har-jag/>

Zouiten, K. (2013). Retrieved 2013, from Kenza: www.kenzas.se

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1

Interview Guide

1. Tell us about the journey you have done with your blog!
 - Why did you start blogging?
 - Have you taken any certain steps during your blog career?
 - Do you make money out of blogging?
 - When did you start to get offers on advertisement on your blog / when did you start making money? Are you economically dependent of your blog?
 - Did you ever feel that you had to blog? Is it more of a liability than a hobby?
2. Entrepreneurship
 - What does entrepreneurship mean to you?
 - Do you run any kind of entrepreneurship?
 - Do you see yourself as an entrepreneur?
 - Have you had an active business thinking or did it "just happen"?
 - How much time do you put into your "business/blog"?
 - Is this something you can see yourself doing in the future?
 - What is important when you run a business?
3. The importance of the blog
 - How important has your blog been for your business-activities?
 - Have possibilities and opportunities been given as a result of your blog?
 - Is it anything you have created on your own? (Possibilities..)
 - Do you think you would have been as active with your business thinking if you would not have had the blog? Would you have had the motivation/drive regardless of the blog?
4. Attributes/Qualities
 - Are certain qualities/attributes required?
 - Why did YOU succeed with your blog? What makes you special?
5. The future of blogs
 - Do you think blogs will be used the same way as it is today in the future? To reach people?
 - Do you think you will continue blogging for a long time? What happens next?