Rebranding a municipal enterprise: case Helen Oy

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Rebranding, i.e. renaming and substantially changing the corporate brand, is an arduous branding effort that companies sometimes have to engage in. Most of the research on rebranding, similar to branding research in general, has to this day focused on private sector organizations. Public sector organizations have been mostly neglected so far, even if they mostly operate in industries with a high tendency to rebranding. The increasing number of corporatizations during the last few years, could also suggest an increased focus on branding and marketing in public sector organizations.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, in order to bring new knowledge to branding and rebranding in public sector organizations, and thus closing the research gap on rebranding in a public sector context. Through an in-depth case study on Helen Oy, a Finnish municipally owned corporatized energy company; the ultimate aim is to create implications for public sector organizations considering rebranding their corporate brand.

The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of a literature review of rebranding research within the private sector and corporate branding in public sector organizations. The theoretical framework discusses rebranding as a concept, its drivers, the process and different success factors and pitfalls identified in previous rebranding research.

The empirical part of this thesis consisted of a single critical case study on Helen Oy, using two different sources of information: six in-depth interviews as primary data and archival records (consumer surveys and interview summaries) as secondary data.

Helen’s rebranding can be considered very successful and the company managed to avoid several of the typical rebranding pitfalls. Helen went through a corporatization process conjointly with its rebranding, marking a big change for the organization and affecting the rebranding process. Through a careful brand analysis, the new corporate brand narrative was built on the organization’s existing strengths, resonating well internally, and the introduction of new bold and creative marketing forms in the brand’s promotion contributed to its success.

Based on the analysis of the results, key implications identified for public sector organizations are the need of a justified reason to rebrand, building the new corporate brand from within, starting moderately and adding heat later, using bold external communication, and communicating the meaning of organizational change overall internally.

**Keywords:** rebranding, corporate brand, renaming, municipal enterprise, public sector, public sector branding, energy industry
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1 INTRODUCTION

Most of us would probably find the idea of changing our name as outlandish. Since birth and throughout our lives, we have become known to others by our name. Aspects of ourselves, such as our reputation, personality and achievements are associated to that name, so why would we ever want to change it? The same idea, to an extent, can also be applied to companies and their corporate brands. Brands are one of the few long-lasting competitive advantages for a company and are built through efforts over time (Kapferer 2012; p.10), so why would brands want to invalidate their efforts and in a way start from scratch by renaming their established corporate brand?

Despite this, the popular business press reports of corporate name changes from time to time (De Graaf 2015; Canal 2016; Politi 2016; Stafford & Martin 2016; Steele 2016). While some of these name changes are related to reputational issues, like Finmeccanica because of corruption (Politi 2016) or Avid Media due to bad press through the Ashley Madison website (Steele 2016), even successful brands like Google have gone through name changes (De Graaf 2015). Multiple reasons for name changes exist. A shift in the business areas of a company or entries to new markets and sectors might make an old brand name outdated (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Lomax & Mador 2006). Structural changes within the organization, such as mergers, divestments and acquisitions are also one of the leading drivers for corporate brand name changes (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003). An emerged term, that is usually used in the business press for this phenomenon is rebranding.

Rebranding can be seen as an interesting phenomenon if we place it in the spectrum of traditional branding research. Rebranding at its core goes against the thought of building long-term brand equity. While changes in brand positioning and updates in a brand’s aesthetics are a part of brand management, a radical change with a total revamp is a risky endeavour. While rebranding is something that can become necessary for corporations to evolve, it still puts the corporate brand at risk of losing brand awareness and lessening brand image, and thus affecting a corporation’s market share (Kapferer 2012, p.415). Rebranding is not to be taken lightly and can become a very costly and time-consuming effort for organizations (Lomax & Mador 2006). Despite this, we see an increasing number of organizations rebranding themselves today (Kapferer 2012, p.415).
1.1 Problem statement

The concept of rebranding has existed for years and it has gained some traction in academic literature lately, but is still a surprisingly scarcely researched area within branding (Kapferer 2012, p.415). Rebranding inherently means a significant change to a brand, but some scholars like to reserve the term to at least some extent to processes that constitute a “revolutionary” change, usually including a change of the corporate brand name (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003). What rebranding as a term exactly consists of is up for debate, but the core of the concept is defined in The Cambridge Dictionary as “the act of changing the way that an organization, business company or product appears to the public”.

This thesis will indeed focus on corporate level rebranding. Corporate branding requires a special focus on the internal communication within the organization, and a strong corporate brand requires a commitment through all the hierarchy levels of a corporation (Balmer 2001). Balmer & Grey (2003) stress the importance of the corporate brand in relation to possible product or service brands under it, and Harris & de Chernatony (2001, p.441) note that corporate branding requires “greater focus within the organization” than product and service level branding. This is not to say that product level rebranding is not a demanding effort, but as stated above, rebranding the corporate brand name is a much more arduous endeavour.

Research on rebranding has focused on defining theoretical frameworks for it and identifying phases and elements of the process (e.g. Daly & Moloney 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin 2006), but also through various case studies, presentations and/or analyses on organizations that have gone through a rebranding process (e.g. Kaikati 2003; Daly & Moloney 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012). However, one critical type has been neglected in the case studies so far, namely the rebranding of different public sector organizations or state-owned businesses. Most case studies on rebranding have been done within the private sector, mostly on international or national companies merging (e.g. Daffey & Abratt 2002) or international corporations acquiring local national businesses (e.g. Daly & Moloney 2004). There is a lack of case studies on public sector organizations even though they operate in industries with a higher than average tendency to rebranding, e.g. utilities, healthcare, education or telecommunications (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003).

Furthermore, a liberation of many industries, especially within the European Union has generated new legislation that forces different public organizations, such as state-owned or
municipal enterprises 1 to restructure. Not only legislation, but also other factors, such as need for efficiency has meant new structuring in public sector organizations. A typical and increasingly popular restructure is that of corporatization (McDonald 2014). In 2013, the passing of a bill required a corporatization of all Finnish municipal enterprises that operate on a free market with private competition (Palttala 2013) and a rising number of corporatization processes are possibly on the way via the new upcoming Finnish healthcare reform (Pantsu 2016).

Corporatization, which means transforming public sector businesses/organizations to corporations, often introduces new ways to operate within the organization (Bozec & Breton 2003), in addition to the change in business entity type. While corporatization of state-owned enterprises has gained a fair share of academic attention (e.g. Bozec & Breton 2003; Aivazian, Ge & Qiu 2005; McDonald 2014) with appropriate case studies, most of them have had a focus on financial performance and next to none have focused on the corporatization’s effect on branding and marketing activities. Through corporatization, public sector organizations will most likely be putting new emphasis on marketing and brand management activities, which previously has been nearly frowned upon in public sector management (Laing 2003). I believe that corporatization can become a strong initiator for rebranding in municipal enterprises and other public sector organizations. That was the case for the case company of this thesis, the Finnish energy company Helen Oy (Helen). Formerly named Helsingin Energia, a municipal enterprise owned by the City of Helsinki, Helen went through a rebranding process initiated by a legally required corporatization (Palttala 2013).

By this case study, this thesis strives to close the knowledge gap in rebranding of public sector organizations by examining the rebranding process of a municipal enterprise. At the same time, this thesis tries to bring new light to the general knowledge about branding in public sector organizations and rebranding in general. The increasing number of corporatization cases within the public sector supports the need for research in this area. The amount of research on branding in public sector organizations is also pointed out as scarce (Wæraas 2008; Whelan et al. 2010), which further justifies this study.

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1 For the sake of clarity, the term “municipal enterprise” is from now on used in this thesis to refer to the Finnish business entity form “kunnallinen liikelaitos” in Finnish and “kommunalt affärswerk” in Swedish, and this was the former entity type of Helen Oy, when still under the name Helsingin Energia. Another possible translation for this business entity type would be “municipal public utility”.
1.2 Aim of the study
The aim of this thesis is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, in order to bring new knowledge to branding and rebranding in public sector organizations. This will be done through an in-depth case study on Helen’s rebranding, its elements, process and contributing success factors. The ultimate aim is to create implications for public sector organizations considering rebranding their corporate brand.

1.3 Case company: Helen Oy
The case company for this thesis will be Helen Oy, formerly Helsingin Energia. Helen is a Finnish energy company fully owned by the City of Helsinki, providing products and services in electricity, heating and cooling; with a history of more than 100 years as a city owned electricity company. On the 1st of January 2015, Helen’s business entity changed from a municipal enterprise to a joint-stock company. The corporatization had sparked a rebranding process, resulting in an updated corporate identity and change of the corporate brand name and logo. From 2015 onwards, the corporate brand name has been Helen. (Helen Oy 2017)

1.3.1 Brief recent history of the Finnish electricity industry
Helen is a Finnish energy company and a short description of the Finnish electricity industry will now follow, in order to give the reader a proper industry context. June 1995 marked a big change in the Finnish electricity market when a new law liberated the sales of electricity on the market. Up until that year, the Finnish electricity supply was wholly generated by the state-owned company Imatran Voima (a predecessor to Fortum Oyj), Pohjolan Voima (owned by Finnish national enterprises) and local, often municipal enterprises (that generated about half of the supply). The liberation saw the entry of international companies, such as the Swedish company Vattenfall that through acquisitions of local enterprises gained a strong foothold on the Finnish market. (Willner & Grönblom 2016)

Municipal enterprises were, despite the liberation, still notable actors in local markets. However, in 2013 EU legislation forced municipalities to incorporate municipal enterprises operating in free competitive markets (Palttala 2013). While local energy companies still remained municipally owned, they went through a structural change when becoming joint-stock companies.
1.4 Delimitations
This thesis will focus on one case company, which can be seen to limit the generalizability of the results to some extent. Having one case company from only one industry, can lessen the applicability of this study to public sector organizations operating in other sectors. However, my choice of a single case strategy is appropriate, as the study is exploratory and my access to the case company is on a level that supports an in-depth analysis. Helen is also a critical example of a public sector organization being rebranded, which further justifies this.

It is important to keep in mind that this study has its focus on corporate rebranding. Rebranding at the service and product level and rebranding in relation to the overall brand architecture will not be a focus area of this thesis. It is important to distinguish between these forms of rebranding, which makes this statement of delimitation important. As stated in the problem statement, corporate branding requires a more extensive and comprehensive focus within the whole organization compared to product or service level branding (Balmer 2001; Harris & de Chernatony 2001; Balmer & Grey 2003). This further supports my choice for a single case strategy, as corporate level rebranding is larger in scope.

1.5 Disposition
This thesis is based on a case study on the rebranding of Helen. The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to the subject of rebranding and a description of the research problem this study aims to answer. The aim of the study is presented in this chapter and a short description of the case company is also included. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader an insight to the relevance of the topic of my thesis as well as what is lacking from previous research within the subject area.

The second chapter of this thesis is a literature review of previous research on rebranding, and works as the theoretical framework for my thesis. In this chapter, I will present rebranding terminology and the definition I will use. I will also present elements of a rebranding process and discuss typical factors that contribute to successful rebranding. Lastly I will discuss some special considerations regarding branding in public sector organizations, in order to better answer the aim of my study.

The third chapter presents the methodology of my thesis. I will use a single critical case strategy using Helen’s rebranding as my unit of analysis. In this chapter, I will present the
rationale behind my research design and strategy, and also my data collection and analysis. I will use two different sources of data in my study, semi-structured interviews in my primary data collection and archival records as secondary data. This chapter will also include a discussion about the research quality of this thesis.

The fourth chapter presents the results from the empirical part of my study. Results and findings are presented and analysed, in conjunction with a description of Helen’s rebranding process. As an addition to my own formulations of the results based on the collected data, I will use illustrative quotes and images to better describe the results. I will simultaneously link and discuss the results from the empirical part of my study with my theoretical framework.

The fifth chapter covers an in-depth analysis on the key findings from Helen’s rebranding based on the results. I will also focus more closely on creating implications for public sector organizations, thus answering the aim of my study.

The last chapter presents the concluding implications from my study. They will work as the managerial implications of my thesis, and contributions to rebranding and public sector branding research. I will also include suggestions for further research in this chapter, and discuss the limitations of my study.
2  REBRANDING THE CORPORATE BRAND

This literature review will work as the theoretical framework for this thesis. The aim of my thesis is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, and I will introduce and discuss previous research on rebranding in various subchapters and at the end try to put it in the spectrum of branding in public organizations. I will now present the disposition of this chapter, in order to give the reader a view on the structure of it and my approach to the topic of rebranding.

The first subchapter presents rebranding as a concept and what it comprises. Scholar have mixed views on what amount of change becomes rebranding, but I will reserve the term to always include a change in the corporate brand name. Therefore, different naming strategies will also be discussed in this part of the literature review. The second subchapter introduces different identified drivers and reasons for rebranding, in order to give the reader an outlook to why corporations result in such a drastic and costly branding effort.

The third subchapter will present the rebranding process itself. Key touchpoints and critical factors in rebranding endeavours are introduced and discussed based on previous research within the area of rebranding. I will present two rebranding frameworks in addition to other views on how the process should be carried out in theory.

The fourth subchapter will present factors that contribute to successful rebranding. I will do this by discussing typical identified pitfalls in rebranding and other success factors. I will also present a famous successful rebranding case from the early 2000s, that of Accenture’s, in order to give the reader a better view on how rebranding has been conducted in practice.

The fifth subchapter will be a short look into branding in public sector organizations. As the aim of my study is to investigate the rebranding process of a municipal enterprise, it is important to take into account special considerations for these types of organizations. For an added industry context, I will also include a brief outlook into municipal enterprises in the energy sector.

The last subchapter works as a summary of the literature review where I will summarize the most essential parts covered in this chapter.
2.1 Significant changes to the corporate brand

Brands are often one of the most valuable assets of companies and a strong corporate brand provides a competitive advantage (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Abratt & Kleyn 2012). According to Jo Hatch & Schultz (2003, p.1045) “a successful corporate brand is formed by the interplay between strategic vision, organisational culture and the corporate image held by its stakeholders”. The way stakeholders evaluate brands is complex and as the corporate brand is formed through a company’s resources and actions over time, a corporate brand or even aspects of it, become near impossible to imitate by competitors (Abratt & Kleyn 2012). However, even the most well-known brands in the world today have to make constant efforts, in other words evolve or revitalize, to remain desirable in the eyes of their stakeholders (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003).

As mentioned in the introduction The Cambridge Dictionary defines rebranding as “the act of changing the way that an organization, business company or product appears to the public”. While perhaps lacking theoretical depth, the definition works well as a good layman’s description for the phenomenon, and as a starting point for the discussion of what rebranding consists of. From the examples in the business press articles in the introduction chapter, we find that reasons for rebranding are often to communicate a major change or trying to improve the corporate brand. Organizations strive to improve (or maintain) their corporate brand through various activities and to different extents, so it is important to delineate what level of change can be considered rebranding.

Major changes in corporate brands have gained different conceptual names in branding literature, in addition to the term rebranding. Rindell & Strandvik (2010), in a paper about how brands evolve in consumers’ eyes, use the term “brand renovation” to describe major changes carried out by an organization to reposition in a dynamic market and distinguishing it from “brand building” in static markets. Merrilees (2005) discusses rebranding alongside the term of “brand evolution”. He uses the term to describe how brands should revitalize and change the brand from time to time, though in a purposeful way. Merrilees (2005) suggests that brand evolution is continuous, with certain spikes including bigger changes. According to him, these bigger changes can be seen as major or radical forms of brand evolution deserving special attention. It is worth to note that Rindell & Strandvik (2010) use the term “brand evolution” to describe how the brand image evolves in the eyes of consumers, thus signalling a mixed usage of the term.
However, as I stated in the introduction chapter, rebranding is often used when a change of the brand name occurs because of changes to the corporate brand. Kapferer (2012) uses the term “brand transfers” to denote this, but the term “rebranding” has gained wider traction. Up next, I will discuss the definition of rebranding more in detail.

2.1.1 Defining rebranding

Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) present three different acts or events that traditionally constitute rebranding in business literature: a change of the corporate brand name, change of the brand aesthetics (e.g. brand colours or logo) and/or a repositioning of the brand. They propose, however, that all of these events would have to occur for a process to be considered rebranding and compile these events to the “Rebranding Mix” or the “Four Elements of Rebranding”, which consists of repositioning, renaming, redesign (aesthetics) and the launch of the new corporate brand (relaunch).

In a later article, Stuart & Muzellec (2004) present the elements of corporate rebranding a bit differently. According to them, rebranding should be viewed as a continuum between evolutionary and revolutionary. Evolutionary branding consists of changes in aesthetics and positioning (simplified as logo and slogan), however if the changes in these two are major at the same time, revolutionary rebranding occurs, which usually ultimately warrants a name change as well.

Daly & Moloney (2004) also present rebranding as a similar continuum, and divide the continuum in three sequence-like categories. The first category represents a minor change that is defined to comprise of a change in aesthetics. This is described to be for example an update to the company visuals and brand appearance. The next category comprises intermediate changes that is a bigger repositioning, including changes in brand communication with the goal of making the brand image more favourable. These two categories are similar to and represent the evolutionary rebranding described by Stuart & Muzellec (2004). The last category is that of complete change, which Daly & Moloney (2004) also call as the most comprehensive form of rebranding. The complete change includes a renaming process, which in a way becomes the core of the change. A name change warrants an extensive and integrated communications campaign. Comparing to the rebranding continuum of Stuart & Muzellec (2004) this would be considered as revolutionary rebranding.
Lomax & Mador (2006) present the same “levels” of rebranding presented above with a different terminology. They divide the level of rebranding to be based on the amount of change in desired brand values and attributions when going through a name change. What Stuart & Muzellec (2004) described as evolutionary rebranding is called *re-defining* where the values and attributes of the corporate brand are subject to change, but not the name. If the rebranding includes a name change, Lomax & Mador (2006) propose two different terms based on how much of the brand value and attributions are tried to be changed. These are *re-naming* and *re-starting*. Re-naming is proposed when the biggest subject of change is the corporate brand name, while re-starting means a complete change, with a change of both the name and values and attributions. Lomax & Mador (2006) note that these levels of rebranding are by no means absolute and that the initial objective set for the rebranding, concerning the amount of transformation, are subject to change during the process.

There seems to be some consensus in the literature that rebranding occurs if there is an interplay of changes in positioning and brand aesthetics. Major enough changes ultimately warrant a name change, which would make the process complete and thus eventually become definite rebranding. For conceptual clarity, I would for this thesis like to reserve the term *rebranding* to denote change that always includes a name change, and use *evolutionary rebranding* if the corporate brand name remains unchanged. Merrilees & Miller (2008) argue that the focus on name changes narrows down rebranding, but I would like to clearly distinguish rebranding from “normal” efforts in branding, where the goal is only to revitalize and “update” the brand without a name change. Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) defined rebranding as “the practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors”, which quite well summarizes my view of the concept. Because the name change thus becomes a critical part of rebranding, different naming strategies are worth a closer look.

### 2.1.2 Strategies for changing the corporate brand name

If we use the definition that a complete rebranding process includes, and is led by a change of the corporate brand name, different naming strategies are indeed worth presenting. Daly & Moloney (2004) present four renaming strategies, three of which are based on Kapferer (1992), with the first one being the *interim/dual* strategy. This strategy is typical in acquisitions where a bigger brand acquires a smaller brand. Daly & Moloney (2004) use
Vodafone’s (bigger) acquisition of Eircell (smaller) as an example. The new brand name is at first a “AB-combination” of the two brand names (Eircell-Vodafone), called an interim brand name, before the name eventually transforms to the bigger brand after a period of time. This strategy takes advantage of the brand equity of the old smaller brand and makes the name change subtler and less radical (Daly & Moloney 2004). Kaikati & Kaikati (2003) call this type of strategy “phase-in/phase-out” strategy and Kapferer (2012, p.417) highlights this type of strategy especially when corporations acquire smaller brands in foreign markets.

The second strategy presented, the prefix strategy, is highly similar to the first one and often suitable for two brands merging. In this strategy, neither of the two brand names will be used as the new name and a completely new one is created. The new name will however be used as a prefix to the two existing brand names for a period of time, before becoming the standalone name (Daly & Moloney 2004).

The third strategy presented by Daly & Moloney (2004) is substitution, which quite simply involves removing the old brand name altogether right from the start. Either to a completely new one, or an existing name e.g. in acquisitions where the bigger brand’s name is introduced straight away (Daly & Moloney 2004). There are however also examples of situations where the name of the smaller brand and company has ultimately been used as the new name in mergers and acquisitions (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003). One example of this is that of ValuJet’s purchase of the smaller airline AirTran in the 1990s. ValuJet chose to rebrand using AirTran’s name because of a plane crash and bad reputation associated with its old name (Swanson 2015). No matter if the new name is an existing name or a completely new one, the process is in its nature faster than the other strategies. Making a swift rebranding process might be beneficial in saved resources with no interim face, but the strategy bears risks in the sense that it removes the possible positive attributes the old brand enjoyed (Daly & Moloney 2004).

Daly & Moloney (2004) also propose a fourth strategy, that of brand amalgamation, with PricewaterhouseCoopers as an example. This strategy is similar to the naming practice of the interim/dual one, but with the difference that the combined name becomes the final new name, instead of interim. According to them, this strategy is suitable when two strong brands merge and the new brand can clearly benefit of the brand equity of both. Kaikati & Kaikati (2003), note however that this strategy should be used with caution and perhaps only when the two brands are truly equal in strength. If the new name becomes too long or complicated,
it might create unnecessary confusion and hurt the heritage of both old brands. Amalgamated names can also become very long, something that traditionally is to be avoided (Turley & Moore 1995). Indeed, PricewaterhouseCoopers rebranded itself as “PwC” in 2010, due to the difficulties the long named faced with an international audience (Gyorkos 2010).

Other naming strategies naturally exist as well, and some of the strategies presented above are perhaps most suitable in mergers and acquisitions. While the substitution strategy generally could cover most of the name changes, other strategies are also viable. Kaikati & Kaikati (2003) for example, present the strategy of “retrobranding”, where an old name from the company history is re-introduced as the corporate brand name.

The timetable for introducing a new name and how it is launched can also vary. Kaikati & Kaikati (2003) present two strategies for introducing a name change. One is the “translucent warning strategy” where the new name is presented well in advance of the official name change, through different marketing ploys and communication channels. This strategy, while perhaps more resource consuming, can still gain from the attributions of the old brand name and serves as a transformation phase. The other strategy is called “sudden eradication”, where the new brand name is introduced seemingly overnight. Kaikati & Kaikati (2003) propose this strategy for “dying” brands or corporate brand names with too many negative associations. However, this strategy has also been used by seemingly healthy brands as well, e.g. the recent rebranding of the Finnish mobile network operator Sonera to Telia (Länkinen 2017). The strategy can also be used in order to keep the rebranding secret, in order to avoid external and internal speculation that could e.g. affect the share price of the corporation or its brand image (Lomax & Mador 2006).

### 2.2 Drivers for corporate rebranding

In a pilot study of 166 corporations that had gone through a rebranding process, Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) found mergers and acquisitions to be the most frequent driver of rebranding, followed by company spin-offs. The reasoning behind this was that a major change within the organization that affects its identity and structure, makes rebranding a natural choice. A major change in the organization might render the old brand name confusing, and thus a name change is warranted. Big changes in corporate structure can
make old logos and slogans, along with the very brand name, obsolete, making rebranding a necessary process (Stuart & Muzellec 2004). Kapferer (2012, p.417) also notes that mergers and acquisition can lead to a more global organization and thus perhaps require a name change.

Another leading driver that was found in the pilot study (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003) was the issue of brand image. Rebranding was seen to be fitting if the old corporate name was too connected to a specific aspect of its business, image or identity. The study gave the rebranding of Philip Morris to Altria as a prime example of this. The brand name of Philip Morris was viewed to be too closely connected to tobacco, and the corporate brand Altria was created to identify the company as a general consumer goods producer (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Smith & Malone 2003). The case of Philip Morris was also described as getting rid of “moral baggage” by Stuart & Muzellec (2004), and a wish to distance oneself from possibly questionable (both current and former) corporate offerings and/or activities can become a viable reason for rebranding; especially when corporate social responsibility has become a serious consideration in business. Stuart & Muzellec (2004) note, however, that companies rarely point social responsibility issues as reasons for rebranding. An example without the “moral baggage” aspect in the rebranding decision is that of Scottish Telecom’s rebranding to “Thus”, in order to avoid the too industry and location specific nature of the old name (Lomax & Mador 2006). A too “narrow” of a name, could possibly hurt a corporation’s ventures to new business areas and markets. In Scottish Telecom’s case, the old name was not seen as suitable, as they operated throughout the United Kingdom and provided other services outside downright telecommunications. Similarly, the global catering and supporting services company Gardner rebranded itself as Sodexho, as the old name was too connected to the catering part of the firm’s business (Lomax & Mador 2006). In both cases above, an obvious risk on losing stakeholder recall was apparent, but the new names were believed to give more flexibility and better represent the occupations of each corporation. Rebranding, and changing the corporate brand name, is therefore not only done because of reputational issues, but also to better represent companies as their business activities develop, and provide more flexibility. An old name can even possibly hurt the development of a brand (Kapferer 2012, p.417).

While these were the biggest drivers of rebranding, other reasons were identified as well in the pilot study (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003). Referencing the drivers identified in
the study, Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) categorized them into four different categories depending on if the rebranding was initiated by changes in ownership structure, corporate strategy, competitive position or external environment. Changes in ownership structure included that of previously mentioned mergers and acquisitions, spin-offs and demergers, but also sponsorship and shifts in ownership due to going public. Drivers categorized as changes in corporate strategy where divestments and diversification, as well as internationalization or localization. Kapferer (2012, p.417) does likewise note rebranding as a viable tactic when entering new foreign markets. The category of changes in competitive position consisted of erosion of market position, outdated image and reputation problems (Muzellec & Lambkin 2006). The issue of reputation problems is well apparent in the mentioned case of Philip Morris (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Smith & Malone 2003; Stuart & Muzellec 2004). Changes in the external environment encompassed legal obligations and major crises and catastrophes (Muzellec & Lambkin 2006).

Quite interestingly, Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) conclude that most drivers of corporate rebranding are non-marketing related in the sense that they are based on structural changes in a corporation based on either or both internal and external influences, e.g. mergers, legislation or expansions. However, they also note that because the data was collected based on reports from the Financial Times, there might be a positive bias towards structural and financial drivers due to the newspaper’s nature.

2.2.1 Corporatization

As stated in the introduction, the leading driver for Helen was its legally required corporatization. Thus, the initial driver for Helen’s was, if likening to the categories by Muzellec & Lambkin (2006), external environment. The corporatization was a big change for Helen as an organization. While there was no change in ownership, the change of business entity and structure heavily spared Helen to engage in rebranding its corporate brand.

Corporatization is of interest in the spectrum of rebranding as the utilities industry is notably a sector with strong state-owned enterprises and has evolved a lot through corporatizations and market liberations during the last decade (McDonald 2014). A motive behind corporatization is often the will to create more efficient and transparent organizations, more similar to private sector companies (Grossi & Reichard 2008; McDonald 2014). A great example of corporatization in the electricity industry is that of Vattenfall’s, an energy
company owned by the Swedish government. The corporatization was instrumental in Vattenfall’s internationalization and provided more flexibility and liberty for the organization (Högselius 2009).

Moving towards more private sector like activities, might increase the interest on branding among public sector organizations. As corporatization was a key initiator for Helen’s rebranding, this could also mean a rising number of organizations deciding to rebrand themselves in conjunction with a structural change.

A change in business entity can also have an impact on the whole rebranding process itself and its success. I believe that a corporatization process can have a strong influence on the corporate brand identity and the stakeholder image. Wiedmann (2004 & 2005) brings up the strong local connection that municipal enterprises have, and the strong connection to a municipality, specific area or province can be a key factor in stakeholder image. A corporatization process could affect this image and have an impact on the organization’s brand in addition to the structural changes it warrants. Even if the corporatization process does not include any change in ownership, the structural change could hypothetically alienate stakeholders from the organization, both internal and external.

In a study on rebranding of municipal health care organizations, Hytti et al. (2015) discovered that the change of structure could have an impact on a rebranding process, as personnel felt unsupportive of the structural change because of failed internal rebranding. Differing from Helen, this case included a transformation of the health care providing organization to a municipal enterprise and the level of rebranding carried out was a bit unclear in the study. Nevertheless, it shows that structural change should be an important consideration when rebranding a municipal enterprise or public sector organization. In the following subchapters, I will discuss the rebranding process itself and what should be considered in order for it to be successful.
2.3 The rebranding process

Daly & Moloney (2004) mapped the rebranding process into a “Corporate Rebranding Framework” (Figure 1) based on their case study on the rebranding process of Eircell to Vodafone. Eircell was a local Irish telecommunications company acquired by Vodafone, and went through a rebranding process because of this acquisition. Daly & Moloney (2004) divide the rebranding process in three main phases: analysis, planning and evaluation.

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**Figure 1** Corporate Rebranding Framework (Daly & Moloney 2004)

The new brand identity that the corporation strives to create should be based on a thorough analysis. The analysis phase starts with an overall market analysis, consisting of competitor analysis, determining market size, position and potential; as well as current preferences and attitudes towards the corporate brand and the market in general. A similar analysis should also be conducted internally within the company, where the views of management and
employees on the corporate brand identity are reviewed. Daly & Moloney (2004) mention that the analysis should strive to learn about the “perceptions, attitudes, fears and aspirations” of the personnel. It is unclear whether this refers solely to the corporate brand or if this analysis is also extended to the employees’ views on their own situation within the organization. The latter is perhaps more likely, as big changes (like rebranding) quite naturally create some uncertainty. For an individual employee, a rebranding process might create questions about their future in the organization; do the changes mean a threat to one’s employment or perhaps increased prospects of advancement?

Based on the market and internal analysis, decisions should be made on which important and core brand elements the corporation wants to maintain, both permanently and temporarily, and which elements it wishes to be removed when building the new brand (ibid.). This part of the framework is quite simplified and if I understand the authors correctly, a literal interpretation should not be made. It would be naïve to think that a corporation can just plainly pick and choose which elements of its original brand identity it wants to keep, but rather identify which parts it wishes to have associated to the new rebranded brand. These strong elements could then be incorporated and highlighted in the communication of the new brand, and thus be transferred in the rebranding process. Luck (2012) also highlights the brand research/analysis process during the first phase of rebranding and the need to assess which elements of the old brand should be kept and which should be tried to abandon. She advocates a “flexibility” in this phase, as the corporate brand is complex and the brand image (of say external stakeholders) can vary from the corporate brand identity.

The next phase in the “Corporate Rebranding Framework” is the planning phase. Daly & Moloney (2004) point out the importance of both the external and internal audience when communicating the new brand. This has also been strongly emphasized by Muzellec & Lambkin (2006), who argue that a rebranding process should have a notable effect both externally and internally. Employees and managers (internal) need to be on board with the new brand and committed to the changes that are being made and proposed. This includes training in new company policies and procedures (Daly & Moloney 2004). The employees need to be representative of the new brand in order for the rebranding, and branding activities in general, to be believable and thus successful (Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003; Daly & Moloney 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin 2006).
Choosing the new brand name gets special attention in the planning phase of the framework and draws from the four strategies that Daly & Moloney (2004) previously identified, which I discussed in chapter 2.1.2. What I find interesting is that the naming strategy is categorized to the external portion of the planning phase. I would like to argue that the changing of a brand name is highly relevant for both the external and internal audience. If the goal is to keep the employees committed to the new brand, would not they have to be on board with the new name as well? Daly & Moloney (2004) suggest this between the lines, as they point out that the future name of a brand can be a highly debated subject internally during acquisition and merger deals.

The last part of the planning phase would be the rebranding marketing plan that should be built on the analysis and include different assumptions and scenarios. This part also naturally requires a determination of the company resources available for the campaign. Daly & Moloney (2004) argue that successful rebranding is achieved through careful planning of the process. Kapferer (2012) also notes that in many cases customers are made well known of a rebranding in advance. This is done in order to reassure customers that change is being done to bring them more value. This is similar to the “translucent warning strategy” presented by Kaikati & Kaikati (2003). At the same time, this works as the transition phase, when customer can get familiar with the thought of a new brand name, while still being exposed to the old one. Some brands have also used customer consultation to a varying degree when planning the entire rebranding process (Lomax & Mador 2006).

The last phase in the model is the evaluation. Daly & Moloney (2004) want to stress that evaluation, though presented as the last phase, is something that should be done throughout the rebranding process. The marketing plan can and should be altered if deemed necessary and it is likely that the process needs to be refined at some stage (ibid.). Lomax & Mador (2006) also point out the need for evaluation throughout the process. Daly & Moloney (2004) also propose that a clear final evaluation should be made at the end of the rebranding process. When the rebranding process ends is however a question in itself. My interpretation is that the authors allude to a specific campaign with the goal to communicate the new brand. However, as brands are built through continuous effort over time (Abratt & Kleyn 2012), a more accurate evaluation and campaign results can perhaps only be achievable after a number of years when the dust has settled so to say.
An important aspect that is not taken into consideration in the framework is that the rebranding of the corporate brand is not only affecting the image of consumers (or customers), but other external stakeholders as well, such as investors, suppliers, partners, regulators, local communities and other special interests (Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). The framework by Daly & Moloney (2004) limits the external audience to “customers” and neglects other external stakeholders that have a connection with the brand. This can be problematic, especially if we consider public sector organizations that often have to tailor their activities to different public interests compared to private corporations (Wæraas 2008). Public sector organizations, and particularly municipal organizations, often have strong ties to local communities (Wiedmann 2004 & 2005) and the political dimensions of being state or municipally owned surely have to have some influence on the rebranding process. It is interesting that Daly & Moloney (2004), with their case study on Eircell-Vodafone, only included the customers as an external stakeholder in their framework, while there arguably might have been others. Eircell, though a private company then, had a historic background on being a state-owned brand and one of its key brand attributes was identified to be its “nationality”, i.e. being Irish. A corporation’s, whether public or private, image can vary between stakeholders, which can make rebranding a difficult effort (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). In my view, this should have warranted a broader view and categorization on external audiences in the framework by Daly & Moloney (2004).

Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) present a model (Figure 2) where the communication to external and internal audiences is more intertwined, rather than two separate strategies in the framework by Daly & Moloney (2004). Contrary to Daly & Moloney (2004), Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) present the external dimension encompassing all stakeholders, not only customers.
Figure 2  A Model of the Rebranding Process (Muzellec & Lambkin 2006)

A main difference between these two illustrations is that Daly & Moloney (2004) put emphasis on the analysis and planning phase, whereas Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) include leading drivers (Rebranding factors) in theirs. It is however worth to note that Daly & Moloney (2004) overall did not discuss rebranding drivers in general, and used their case of Eircell-Vodafone as a guide. The model by Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) does not provide a mapping of the process itself and the main insight from it is the balance between external and internal process and the importance of both.

Lomax & Mador (2006) propose that the use of prescribed models for a rebranding process is questionable. Corporations enter a rebranding process through different circumstances and resources. They also note that objectives and goals might change during the rebranding effort. However, I do not view neither of the models presented in this case too prescriptive and they work well in summarizing to an extent the discussion around rebranding overall. The framework by Daly & Moloney (2004) works well as an analysis tool on a rebranding process and I will use it in the empirical part of my thesis to analyse different phases in Helen’s rebranding process.
2.4 Rebranding success factors

The importance of communication to both internal and external stakeholders has already been identified as a key consideration for a rebranding process based on the literature. What makes successful rebranding and how should the rebranding be carried out in order to satisfy or improve the image of some or all stakeholders?

Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007) conducted an exploratory qualitative study on the rebranding process of a leading telecommunications company, where they identified key “pitfalls” and problems preventing successful corporate rebranding. The four pitfalls were disconnecting with the core, stakeholder myopia, emphasis on labels, not meanings, and the challenge of multiple identities.

Disconnecting with the core means that the rebranded brand deviates too much from its old identity. If the changes proposed are too major, there might be an internal resistance from corporate personnel, which hampers the process (ibid.). At times, even a name change itself might create discrepancies. One of the interviewees in the study by Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007) recited a name change involving a change from a name that represented the company’s regional nature to a completely new and unusual name that was met with criticism among stakeholders. This comment is particularly interesting, as the case company for this thesis, Helen, made a similar change when dropping the word “Helsinki” from its name. Even if a bigger organizational change warrants a new identity, it is still important that corporations include some aspects of the core of the firm (ibid.). Merrilees & Miller (2008) make a similar statement that aspects of the corporate history and roots have to be maintained in order for corporate rebranding to be successful.

Being aware of one’s core identity is something that can be traced back to the analysis phase in the Corporate Rebranding Framework by Daly & Moloney (2004). It is important that corporations have a clear view on their corporate identity and external stakeholder image. Unawareness of this can really hurt a corporation even if the rebranding would be evolutionary in nature and not include a name change. Jo Hatch & Schultz (2003) present the infamous case of British Airways that went through an evolutionary rebranding process in the 1990s. In this case, British Airways tried to brand itself as more global, answering to the concerns of being overly British and having traces of colonialism in the image of many international customers (making up a large portion of the customer base). However, the branding effort failed as internal and external British stakeholders of the company viewed
the Britishness as a core attribute of the corporate brand. This example shows also that the image can be very different among stakeholders, which makes a rebranding process even more difficult. Other companies in both the United Kingdom and other countries have faced similar backlash nationally as well, as they have dropped the part of their name that signals nationality in order to gain a more global identity – with Swiss Air’s retracted change to SAir as an example (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003). Dropping a part of the brand name that heavily signals the geographic (and at the same time cultural) roots of the corporate brand can therefore be a risky endeavour, and is a subject of interest considering the case company for this thesis.

The second pitfall identified by Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007) is stakeholder myopia, which implies a too big of a focus on the financial considerations of the company, i.e. making the rebranding process too centred on shareholders and/or the external audience. This can lead to the rebranding process becoming too rushed, without careful consideration of the internal communication. This can render the promised values and attributes in the external communication meaningless, as they do not respond to the real state of the corporation’s internal situation and attitudes. While not meaning to sound like a broken record, this pitfall again illustrates the importance of coherent external and internal communication during a rebranding process. The communication also needs to be a two way street rather than an announcement. Lomax & Mador (2006) present a number of cases where the amount of involvement of the company personnel varied. One of the case companies, HSBC, did not particularly focus on the internal communication and regretted this in hindsight after evaluating their rebranding process. Lomax & Mador (2006) list internal communication and preparation as a critical success factor for rebranding.

The third pitfall, emphasis on labels, not meanings, means that a corporation puts great effort on developing the new brand name, logo and positioning (strategy and values), but these do not translate well enough to the organization. Just showcasing a new identity is not enough, but it should also be established within the organization as the new identity. This would require proper training and education of the personnel, and Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007) argue that the internal communication has to be engaging and not only informing in order to be successful. Merrilees & Miller (2008) also agree to this and note that the new corporate brand has to be properly integrated throughout an organization.
The last pitfall, the challenge of multiple identities, becomes an issue for organizations with different identities and cultures within. A corporation might have different identities to begin with, e.g. between divisions, which can make the rebranding process challenging. There might be different views on the corporate identity to begin with, but also a difference in views about the rebranding and the new proposed brand. Different cultures within the organization needs to be taken into account and the rebranding should not necessarily strive to homogenize the entire corporation. Different cultures need different kind of introduction to the new brand, which raises the importance of middle management in the rebranding process. (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007)

Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova (2014) conducted an integrative review on corporate rebranding literature in order to identify enablers and barriers for rebranding. It is worth to note that the review also included to a high degree evolutionary rebranding cases. Nevertheless, the findings from the review and analysis were quite similar to those already discussed in the literature review so far, with careful consideration of both internal and external communication. The findings also pointed out the importance of good leadership; the process should rely on active consultation with both internal and external stakeholders and quite naturally avoid autocratic measures.

Just like Daly & Moloney (2004), Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova (2014) found the importance of a thorough analysis to be an apparent reason to success in many rebranding cases and inadequacy in this phase would often lead to failure. Lomax & Mador (2006) advocate the need of external help (e.g. agencies) in a rebranding process, both in analysing, planning and evaluation of the process; as a rebranding process is a very complex and resource consuming endeavour. Rebranding can be seen as a rare occurrence in branding, which means that corporations most likely lack knowledge of how to perform such an effort (Lomax & Mador 2006).

2.4.1 The Accenture case

In order to give the reader a practical view on a rebranding process, I have decided to present one successful rebranding case in more detail, and how it relates to existing rebranding research. A famous major rebranding case from private sector in the early 2000s was that of Accenture’s, a global consulting firm that went through a rebranding process after its separation from the now infamous accounting firm Arthur Andersen (Kaikati 2003).
Kaikati’s (2003) case analysis on Accenture’s rebranding, touches many of the identified factors in successful rebranding. One of the key elements of the rebranding process, was the active internal communication within the firm, with dedicated teams worldwide. Being a revolutionary turnaround for the company, much focus was laid on the core elements of rebranding, choosing a new name, logo and positioning. (ibid.)

The new name was a result of an extensive research and brainstorming process, where different suggestions were generated both by Accenture’s own employees as well as an external agency specializing in branding consultancy. After an initial list of almost 5,000 names, the options were stripped down based on an extensive analysis, covering e.g., trademark issues, URL-availability, as well as native pronunciation and cultural considerations. An important goal was to create a new name that worked on a global level.

In introducing its new brand name, Accenture used the phase-in/phase-out strategy, with parallels to the interim/dual strategy presented earlier. The new name was announced a few months before the official rebranding, and the Andersen name was finally dropped altogether a few months after. Accenture first launched a teaser campaign for its new name and when the rebranding became a reality; the company launched a massive advertising campaign, targeting clients, journalists and the general public worldwide. A number of worldwide internal events were organized to get the personnel behind the name, which would be a big part of the new corporate identity. (ibid.)

In addition to the new name and logo, Accenture also repositioned itself on the market in conjunction with the rebranding process. The company wanted to broaden the service provided of a traditional consulting agency. Accenture had had a strong emphasis on IT throughout its existence, which became an important factor when the company divided its services into five main business areas. The company did not only reposition itself, but underwent a substantial restructuring as well, as the company transferred from a partnership to a corporation. The IPO of the company was however fairly limited, as only 12 percent of the company stock became available. (ibid.)

Accenture’s rebranding as a case is very illustrative of what I have discussed in the literature review. The case includes the four elements of rebranding coined by Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003): repositioning, renaming, redesign (aesthetics) and relaunch. The company also had a strong emphasis on internal communication, a key part of successful rebranding.
(e.g. Muzellec & Lambkin 2006 Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). Not only did Accenture involve its employees in the process, it also put special emphasis on talent retention and distributed a portion of the company stock to non-partner employees. The rebranding fitted well with the company’s culture and Accenture managed to avoid typical pitfalls of a rebranding process presented earlier. The strong leadership of Accenture’s management, an important rebranding success factor highlighted by Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova (2014), was credited as a reason to the successful rebranding. (Kaikati 2003)

As said, the Accenture case study is a good illustrative example on successful rebranding and a valuable case analysis in the sense that it illustrates how a multinational company can carry out successful rebranding in a short period of time. However, in my opinion, while the case is arguably an example of an excellent strategic decision with a very favourable outcome, the case presentation itself perhaps glorifies the process to an unnecessary extent. While this part of my literature review is not supposed to be a review of this particular case analysis, I believe that from a research and knowledge bringing perspective, it would have been interesting to bring up more difficulties and problems during certain touchpoints in the process. No matter how successful, a process of this scale surely have to include some mistakes as well, presenting a learning opportunity for the future. It is also worth to note that a big part of the success in this case is connected to the Enron scandal that the accounting branch of Arthur Andersen faced a few years later, ultimately leading to its demise. The lead driver for the rebranding – the decision to split from Arthur Andersen – was perhaps the most important strategic decision in this case, which is something that Kaikati (2003) also acknowledges.

2.5 The corporate brand of public sector organizations and possible effect on rebranding

Branding literature has for the most part focused on private sector organizations and different public sector organizations, such as municipal enterprises have received less attention. It is worth to note that public sector organizations also entail different authorities working with public service and administration, such as tax agencies or other institutions (e.g. KELA – the Finnish Social Insurance Institution). While municipal enterprises operate more like private sector companies than these types of authorities, I believe they still share the same nature compared to private sector corporations. Before its corporatization, Helen
operated as a municipal enterprise and how the characteristics of public organizations in general were applicable to the enterprise will be answered in the empirical part of this thesis. While now operating as a corporation (joint-stock company) Helen is still fully owned by the City of Helsinki, thus making a discussion on branding in public sector organizations justified. As the research on branding of public sector organizations is narrow in general, I will not make a clear distinction on different types of public sector organizations and the discussion in this subchapter will be on a general level. While doing this, it is however important to note that there are indeed many different types of public sector organizations with different levels of private sector-like behaviour, which quite naturally might have an effect on the branding – and rebranding – of such organizations.

Public sector organizations usually have complex array of stakeholders (Hytti et al. 2015), and they often face dilemmas in their corporate activities. While still being organizations that strive to make a profit and use their resources to create new offerings and solutions, they still have to take into account different public interests (Wæraas 2008). Besides financial goals, public organizations are also guided by political goals, which means that a different kind of awareness is needed when it comes to stakeholder needs (Whelan et al. 2010). Wæraas (2008, p.211) notes that public sector organizations in theory need to be “efficient, faithful, impartial, and rule-oriented, but they must also respond to a higher morality by emphasizing equality, justice, honesty, fairness, and the protection of individual rights”. The extent of how Helen is affected by all this is unclear before the empirical part of this thesis, but it is a company solely owned by the City of Helsinki and thus answering to elected political officials.

Corporate branding has traditionally been a subject to include a certain consistency to a high degree, but Wæraas (2008) argues that the “multiple identities” that public organizations often carry, with diversity in professions and functions within the organization, makes this difficult. Of course, this can be the case in any organization, as stated in the typical rebranding pitfalls (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007); but can be seen as specifically apparent in public sector organizations (Wæraas 2008). I can also agree to this, and I believe this can be the case for Helen as well. While Helen is a company solely devoted to the energy sector, it may very well have a challenge of multiple identities. While at the same time promoting renewable energy resources, Helen’s personnel still includes workers at coal power plants, which make an important part of its business. As the corporate brand theoretically should
embrace the whole corporation internally (Balmer 2001), it can be a challenge for Helen to include all of its personnel, from sales to power plant and maintenance workers, under one identity as the core of its brand. However, Wæraas (2008) also argues that an organization can benefit out of multiple identities and use it for a certain flexibility in its branding efforts. Rather than try to fit everything under one, the organization can try to embrace its diversity and communicate multiple identities. I find this argument interesting, as it goes against the traditional thought of the consistent corporate brand throughout the organization, and the risk of failure (pitfall) it poses in a rebranding effort (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). It also touches the suggestion of flexibility in a rebranding process, proposed by Luck (2012). The question that arises is how an organization should consider its multiple identities when rebranding and whether it should try to compile or differentiate them.

In a study on branding in Norwegian hospitals, Sataøen & Wæraas (2015) argue that it can be a disservice to the corporate brand if these identities are “merged” into one. They also note that creating highly differentiated corporate brands is not typically preferred in a public sector context. Instead, the corporate branding should be pragmatic and not shy away from building an identity similar to other actors on the market. One reason for this, according to them (ibid.), is that forming an identity that strives to unite possible multiple identities often becomes clichéd and does not represent the organization well enough. I find the thought of not welcoming differentiation interesting, as it goes against the general goal of creating unique and distinctive brands to differentiate from competitors (Kapferer 2012). While it is true that the corporate brand identity should reflect the organization truthfully and realistically, I do not see why this has to be done at the cost of differentiation. Sataøen & Wæraas (2015) note that this might be specific for the healthcare (and Norwegian) sector, but I still believe that any public organization has a chance to create a unique image it can benefit from, and spar development throughout an industry and public sector organizations in general.

No matter how an organization decides to define its identity, the communication cannot be only external, but the emphasis on internal communication is as important, if not more crucial. This was already heavily stated previously in the literature review, and this should be the case no matter what type of business entity or organization is in question. When Hytti et al. (2015) investigated the rebranding of a health care provider; the problem of too little internal consideration was recognized. While it is unclear what level of rebranding took place
in the case, personnel still commented this issue. The update in brand aesthetics and effort in external communication was acknowledged, but personnel did not adopt a change in the corporate brand, because of a lack of training and introduction to the corporate brand. Just as in Helen’s case, the rebranding was carried out in conjunction with a change in business entity. However, as the rebranding of the health care organization to an extent failed internally, personnel also had trouble finding the benefits of the new structure as well.

Obviously, external communication and marketing is very important, even if a large part of this literature view has pointed out the importance of internal communication. Sharma & Kamalanabhan (2012) note that employees in public organizations take pride in well made marketing and branding efforts towards the external audience, and that this reflects to their image of the corporate brand.

There are also some positive aspects, rather than challenges, for the corporate brands of public organizations. Wæraas (2008) notes that public sector organizations usually have a high brand awareness among consumers. Municipal and state-owned organizations usually have a strong local connection (Wiedmann 2004 & 2005) and state-owned enterprises also gain a sort-of natural top-of-mind status (Wæraas 2008). I find this interesting from a rebranding perspective, as changing the corporate brand name might have a negative effect on this brand awareness.

**2.5.1 Municipal enterprises in the energy sector**

The fairly recent liberation of many energy markets in the world has resulted in significant changes in the sector (Hartmann & Ibáñez 2007; Högselius 2009). When more competitors emerge in the market place, energy companies have been forced to adopt more activities related to branding. Among other things, focus has been laid on service, customer orientation and green energy alternatives, in order to address customer needs (Hartmann & Ibáñez 2007).

Despite increased competition, municipal enterprises still play a vital role in energy markets today (Wiedmann 2004 & 2005). The locality aspect of these companies is significant and as customer loyalty is prevalent in the energy sector (Hartmann & Ibáñez 2007), market penetration is not an easy task for new entrant. Wiedmann (2004 & 2005) conducted a two-part study on the German B2B energy market in the first years of this millennium after the liberation of the EU energy market. Comparable to Finland, Germany also has a large
number of municipal or regional enterprises in the energy industry. Wiedmann (2004 & 2005) laid special focus on these municipal enterprises and what aspects kept them competitive in the newly increased market competition.

When the liberation of the energy market brought new players to the sector, locality emerged as an important competitive advantage for municipal energy companies. Despite not being able to compete with lower prices, many local municipal energy suppliers still managed to maintain competitive. Perceived understanding of the local needs, better-perceived reliability of supply, close proximity to the market, and an overall familiarity within the community made municipal enterprises attractive within their own core markets. I.e. there was both a positive rational (reliability, proximity and local knowledge) and emotional (identity, part of the community, pride) dimension to being a local player. (Wiedmann 2004 & 2005)

However, while a strong local connection certainly helps, Wiedmann (2005) still found that it alone is not enough. Locality should be combined with other aspects such as competence and good customer orientation (good relationships and customer satisfaction focus) in order to be successful. In fact, Wiedmann (2005) found out that in some cases a strong customer orientation and local connection gave the possibility for companies to ask for a 15-20 percent price premium, of course while still acknowledging that other factors such as switching costs and risks might affect this amount. While good customer orientation was found to have a strong link to price perception within the energy industry, Wiedmann (2005) notes that this strategy should not perhaps be the leading one for local municipal enterprises. Being strongly local is often a unique attribute that is impossible for an outsider to truly copy, and this should be used as an advantage.

There is also a challenge for municipal electricity enterprises. Larsen (2014) notes the political restraints that these electricity corporations face. Corporate activities are often affected by political cycles, which hinderes long-term strategy development. Studying branding within the energy sector in Poland and Iceland, he found that some scepticism towards branding was apparent, but the importance of it was finally acknowledged, as market newcomers had adopted more modern marketing principles and found success. Introducing branding to these state or municipally owned organizations also proved tough, as it required adopting a new discipline in business activities, with a whole new level of focus in branding and marketing. (Larsen 2014)
2.6 Summary of the literature review

This subchapter summarizes the literature review, which works as the basis for the empirical part of my study. For this thesis I will use the definition by Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) “the practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors”, to denote rebranding. Rebranding constitutes a major change in the corporate brand, and while some scholars point out that a name change does not have to be included in rebranding (Merrilees & Miller 2008), I will use the term when such a name change has occurred. Nevertheless, rebranding can still be done to a varying degree, based on how much of the brand’s attributes and values are subject to change (Daly & Moloney 2004; Stuart & Muzellec 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006). Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) also presented the four core elements of rebranding, “The Rebranding Mix”, consisting of renaming (corporate brand name), redesign (logo and brand aesthetics), repositioning (new slogan and position) and relaunch (launch of the new corporate brand).

As name changes make a crucial part of rebranding, different naming strategies where also presented. While brands can adopt a completely new name or in mergers and acquisitions use the name of only one of the brands (substitution), other options are also very apparent. In mergers, amalgamated names are common, and in acquisitions corporations might choose a prefix or interim/dual strategy to carry the legacy of the acquired brand for a short period of time (Daly & Moloney 2004). The new corporate brand name will include at first both names, but one of the names will be slowly phased out when time passes, e.g. Eircell-Vodafone ultimately becoming Vodafone. Another interesting tactic is that of retrobranding, when an old brand name is brought back to use (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003).

The timetable for introducing a new name can also vary heavily among cases. Some brands promote their name change extensively beforehand (translucent warning), while others choose to introduce the new name as a “surprise” (sudden eradication). Presenting the new name beforehand and introducing it to different stakeholders, helps in creating familiarity with the new corporate brand, while the more sudden approach can be used to turn around dying brands more quickly. Lomax & Mador (2006) note that this strategy can also be used in order to avoid speculation about the organization, rising from rebranding, that could hurt the brand image. (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003)
Corporate rebranding is not a normal occurrence and there are often major drivers that lead to such a major change in the corporate brand. Mergers and acquisitions are the typical drivers for rebranding (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003), but other drivers exist as well. The current brand image can also be an issue for organizations and is a leading rebranding driver (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Stuart & Muzellec 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012). For example, the old brand name can hurt the development of the brand, or just plainly not be representative of the current business anymore (Lomax & Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012). Reputational issues can also be a reason for rebranding (Stuart & Muzellec 2004). Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) categorized rebranding drivers in four categories:

- **Change in ownership structure**: such as mergers and acquisitions, shift of ownership, corporate spin-offs and demergers.
- **Change in corporate strategy**: such as divestments, diversification and internationalization or localization.
- **Change in competitive position**: often related to reputational problems, an outdated image or erosion of marketing position.
- **Changes in the external environment**: such as new legislation and major external crises and catastrophes that affect the organization.

For public sector organizations, a leading driver could be that of corporatization. Public organizations in the utilities industries, such as energy, have seen an increased number of corporatization cases in the last years (McDonald 2014). Corporatization could induce more branding-like activities in public organizations, and was one of the reasons why Helen initiated a rebranding process.

The rebranding process itself can mainly be divided into three parts: analysis, planning (and evidently execution) and evaluation (Daly & Moloney 2014). A thorough analysis is required at the beginning and should be the base for the decision on the new corporate brand. Favourable and unfavourable attributes should be determined and what parts of them an organization wishes to transfer to the new corporate brand (Daly & Moloney 2004; Luck 2012). The analysis face should also focus on the internal attitude (e.g. personnel) towards the rebranding process (Daly & Moloney 2004).

In the planning phase, the introduction of the new corporate brand is planned and executed both internally and externally. Building an external marketing plan and training internal
personnel are both crucial steps when communicating the new corporate brand (Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003; Daly & Moloney 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin 2006). It is of importance to pay attention to all stakeholders in the communication plan (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007).

Lastly a thorough evaluation of the whole process and the new corporate brand should be done (Daly & Moloney), and the evaluation should be continuous throughout the process (Lomax & Mador 2006). Lomax & Mador (2006) propose that prescriptive models can be hard to generate for a rebranding process, as corporations initiate it with different resources and from different circumstances. Objectives and goals can also change during the process.

Successful rebranding really has an emphasis on a thorough analysis before the process (Daly & Moloney 2004; Luck 2012; Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014). While externally communicating the new corporate brand is important, the importance of internal communication is really apparent in rebranding literature (e.g. Lomax & Mador 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). The personnel should be trained and informed about the new corporate brand, the and communication should function in all directions, from management to personnel and vice versa. This is much alike what has been stated in branding literature in general, internal stakeholders and their image is key when building a corporate brand (Harris & de Chernatony 2001). If the personnel within the organization does not relate to the new corporate brand, the rebranding process will most likely fail. Organizations should avoid making the rebranding process too centred on shareholders and the external audience. New brand aesthetics and extensive marketing will not carry the new corporate brand if the adoption has failed internally (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007).

Organizations might also face difficulties with multiple identities within the organization. Large and complex organizations might have multiple divisions with unique cultures, and this has to be taken into account when introducing the new corporate brand (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). It is also very much of importance that the new corporate brand does not deviate too far from its roots and history. Even if rebranded, the new corporate brand should still embrace its roots in order to not alienate its stakeholders (e.g. Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). Strong leadership is also a highlighted factor in successful rebranding (Kaikati 2003; Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014).
While branding in public organizations has been scarcely researched (Wæraas 2008; Whelan et al. 2010), some notable aspects have still been identified, which could require special attention in a potential rebranding effort. The complex array of stakeholders in public organizations (Hytti et al. 2015), in conjunction with the political and societal characteristic of them, influences the branding and marketing activities in these types of organizations (Wæraas 2008; Whelan et al. 2010). Public organizations also often possess multiple identities (Wæraas 2008) which may make a rebranding process more difficult (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). Hytti et al. (2015) also noted that any changes that a public organization faces, requires thorough internal communication, in order to be successful. Public organizations might also face difficulties in new branding and marketing efforts, as they quite often can be lacking of knowhow and resources in that department (Larsen 2014). However, increased competition and liberation of markets have forced public organizations to take use of new promotional activities.

Sataøen & Wæraas (2015) argue that public organizations should mostly be pragmatic in their branding. Instead of trying to develop a common corporate brand, these organizations should embrace their multiple identities. According to them, it can be hurtful for the public sector to create too private sector like corporate brands through differentiation, as it may result in clichés. This is an interesting opinion and goes against the traditional goal of creating differentiated corporate brands in order to create a unique competitive advantage (Kapferer 2012).

Despite the fact that public organizations might face natural difficulties in branding and subsequently in rebranding, they still carry some notably positive aspects as well. Public and municipal organizations usually benefit strongly from their local nature (Wiedmann 2005) and enjoy a high brand awareness among consumers (Wæraas 2008). The fact that these organizations are also often connected to a “higher moral” than private sector competitors (Wæraas 2008), might also have a positive effect on the brand image among stakeholders.
3 METHOD

This chapter presents the methodology for my thesis. My research strategy consists of a single case study on Helen Oy. At first, I will present and discuss my choice of research strategy and design, including the rationale of using a single critical case in my study.

Next, I will present the methodology used for my data collection. I will use two different sources of data, semi-structured interviews and archival records. My primary data will be the semi-structured interviews and the subchapter on them will present my use of the method, my interview guide and the informants for my study. After that, my use of secondary data (archival records) will be presented; consisting of different consumer surveys and stakeholder interviews conducted by Helen in conjunction with the rebranding of the corporate brand. After presenting my data collection, I will describe my data analysis process.

Lastly, I will discuss the research quality of my study through different quality criteria. The quality will be assessed through the criteria of construct validity, external validity, internal validity and reliability, which has been suggested by Yin (1984, p.36) for case study research. As my study is qualitative, I will discuss the aforementioned criteria conjointly with trustworthiness and authenticity, which have surfaced as alternatives to validity and reliability in qualitative studies (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.400).

3.1 Research design and strategy

In scientific research, there are three main approaches denoting the type of relation between theory and the empirical part of a study; these are deduction, induction and abduction. Deduction means the testing of a developed or existing theory through one’s data collection, often by developing different hypotheses. Induction again, starts with data collection to then generate and build theory. The approach of abduction combines these two, and is often used by business and management researchers. In abduction, the researcher explores a phenomenon to generate new understanding and theory, in a way moving back and forth with data and theory. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, p.143-149)
My study will be of abductive nature, as my aim is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise. As pointed out in the introduction chapter, rebranding research has thus far focused on private sector organizations, but the context of public sector organizations has been neglected. The theory and propositions from existing research on rebranding from the private sector will thus guide my study, and the empirical part of my study strives to generate implications and propositions for the public sector.

In order to answer the aim of my study, I will conduct a case study on Helen Oy. Case studies usually possess a highly qualitative nature, as they usually consist of an in-depth inquiry and intensive analysis, becoming almost like a story about a specific subject (Patton 2015, p.259). Despite the fact that the intense nature of case studies makes them inherently qualitative; the data sources and evidence used can be of both qualitative and quantitative nature, and case studies usually combine different methods (Yin 1984, p.90; Eisenhardt 1989). Case studies can be seen as a viable research method if the researcher strives to gain a rich and in-depth understanding, answering the questions of how, what and why (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, p.179).

Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012, p.179) note that case studies are mostly used in explanatory and exploratory research, but Yin (1984, p.15-16) also notes famous descriptive case studies and suggests that there usually exists an overlap between these three. As I will study rebranding in the scantly researched context of public sector organizations, my study will be exploratory. At the same time, as my aim is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, the study also has a very descriptive nature, as I will describe Helen’s rebranding process using existing frameworks and propositions on rebranding.

In one of the seminal works on case studies as research method, Robert K. Yin (1984, p.14) argues that: “in brief the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events”. Furthermore, he points out that a typical real-life event could be organizational and managerial processes, and I consider the rebranding of Helen to very much fall under this category. The unit of analysis for my study is therefore a particular event, namely Helen’s rebranding, and using one unit of analysis makes my case study holistic (Yin 1984, p.44-45).

Yin (1984, p.44-45) proposes some caution when using a single unit of analysis (holistic design), as it may result in the researcher examining the case on a too abstract level. Another
alternative would be using an embedded design, with multiple units of analysis. However, I have decided to use a holistic design as I feel it to be better suitable for my study. As the aim of my thesis is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, I want to focus on the organizational event and process as a whole. The theoretical framework of my thesis, which has focused on the rebranding process and different factors that affect its success, also supports this. Gummesson (2000, p.86-87) highlights the holistic nature of case studies, as they are able to explore and understand a phenomenon or series of events as a whole. This requires an in-depth focus usually resulting in only using a limited number of cases, and in my case only one. Thus, I will use a single holistic case study as my research strategy. My rationale of using a single case strategy will be covered up next.

3.1.1 A single case study

In case study research design a choice needs to be made on whether the study should be carried out using a single or multiple-case strategy. Both of these have their advantages and disadvantages. The results of a multiple-case study can generally be seen as more potent, as it can be harder to make broader generalizations from a single case study. However, a multiple-case strategy does not automatically mean better or more reliable results. If conducting a multiple-case study, each case studied should have a purpose and specific points of interest, rather than just being examined for the sake of an increased sample size (Yin 1984, p.48). Even if it can be hard to create broad generalizations of a single case, Patton (2015, p.276) notes that the evidence from an in-depth single critical case can well generate logical generalizations. Gummesson (2000, p.88-90) discusses this on a similar note and concludes that a lot rests in the quality of the research and the researcher’s ability to create implications, not the number of cases. Also keeping in mind that this study is a master’s thesis, a single-case strategy can be seen as more suitable, as a thorough multiple-case study often requires extensive resources and time, which can be too much of a workload for an individual researcher (Yin 1984, p.48).

Accordingly, this study is being built on a single case. Yin (1984, p.42-44) identifies three different kinds of rationales for using a single case research design. The first rationale is the critical case, where a single case is used to test a well-formulated theory. A single critical case study can be valuable if the possible case in questions strongly meets the conditions of testing an existing theory, as it gives the means to examine the theory’s propositions in practice. These types of case studies can contribute to theory building and general
knowledge, while possibly also helping to refocus future research within a field. The second rationale is the *extreme or unique case*, where the case itself is so unique that it becomes an interesting research subject and the low number and rare availability of possible cases makes the examination of each one worthwhile. The third rationale is the *revelatory case*, which can surface through the opportunity to research something that has been previously inaccessible.

I would argue that my selection lies in the critical case rationale. As Helen is by no means the only municipal or public sector organization to have rebranded itself, the case cannot be seen as revelatory, extreme or unique. Ergo, the rebranding of Helen can be seen as a typical case of rebranding, with a change in name, logo and slogan; but what makes it even more critical is its relation to my research question, being a bona fide example of a municipal enterprise being rebranded. In order to analyse my critical case I will take use of previous research on rebranding from the private sector and try to build new implications for rebranding in public sector organizations. Thus, I will meet the criteria for the single critical case strategy suggested by Yin (1984, p.42-43); using existing theory to build new knowledge around a field, in this case rebranding.

The choice of Helen as my case is further supported by my access level and Gummesson (2000, p.187) notes access as an important quality criteria in case study research. Patton (2015, p.276) suggests that when using a critical case the choice should fall on a “site that would yield the most information and have the greatest impact on development of knowledge”. Through my professional work experience, I had an established contact with Helen, and was thus able to more easily gain access and support in conducting my study.

### 3.2 Methodology

Yin (1984, p.76) suggests that data for case studies can be collected through six sources: “documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation and, physical artefacts”. I will use two of these different sources in my case study: interviews and archival records.

My primary data will come from semi-structured interviews with informants, consisting of Helen’s personnel and one informant representing a marketing consulting agency that was Helen’s partner agency during the rebranding of the corporate brand.
I will also use secondary data, namely archival records, in my study. This source consists of different consumer surveys conducted by Helen, as well as an analysis and summary of stakeholder interviews conducted in the planning of Helen’s rebranding process.

Yin (1984, p.90) proposes the use of multiple sources in order to take advantage of the strengths case studies as a research method possess; even if case studies on a sole source of information have been conducted through e.g. interviews. Using multiple sources are helpful in increasing the validity as the researcher takes use of multiple sources of evidence. However, Yin (1984, p.91) also notes that the use of multiple sources often can become a burden for a researcher. Using multiple sources requires significant amount of time, and knowledge about the different types of data collection techniques for each source. Again, keeping in mind that this is a master’s thesis, the use of all six sources proposed by Yin (1984, p.76) would not be preferable in my case, both in terms of time and my ability. I therefore decided to use the two data sources I am most familiar with and had the most efficient access to. Through my work experience, I have developed a familiarity in analysing different consumer survey reports, and I have experience in conducting in-depth interviews both during my studies and professional work experience.

Up next, I will present the sources I used for my data collection. I will present my primary data collection first, the semi-structured interviews, before moving on to presenting my secondary data, archival records.

3.3 Semi-structured interviews
Yin (1984, p.82-83) suggests interviews to be one of the most important data sources of information in case studies, and that most case studies resort to the use of open-ended interviews rather than closed surveys. I have decided to use semi-structured interviews as my main research method for the empirical part of my study.

Semi-structured interviews also called the interview guide approach, consists of predetermined topics and themes that a researcher wishes to cover in all interviews conducted for a study. These topics are listed in an interview guide, which works as a checklist for the interviewer, in order to ensure that all predetermined relevant topics and themes are covered. The discussion during semi-structured interviews is however flexible, and leaves room for the researcher to explore new emerging topics and possibly focus on
some topics more in-depth. The level of flexibility can vary when using this method, and is based on the goals and amount of consistency the researcher wishes to employ, e.g. in the order or wording of questions. However, this requires some caution from the researcher to not omit important themes, and the changing sequencing and wording of questions can affect the comparability of responses. (Patton 2015, p.438-439)

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012, p.374-375) recommend being aware of the organizational context, when conducting multiple interviews and possibly omit or reframe questions to make the interview more suitable. As my informants had a varying role in the rebranding process of Helen and/or different job assignments in the organization, I wanted to use a high flexibility in the discussions. The wording of questions had to be somewhat tailored to each informant, so that the question would better suit them and their background. Therefore, my interview guide was more focused on listing important topics and themes that were to be covered in each interview, rather than the wording or order of questions. I felt this approach to be best suitable, as informants had a varying degree of knowledge between topics and were thus able to provide most in-depth answers about the themes closest to their work in Helen’s rebranding.

I viewed the interview guide approach to be very suitable for my research, as its open-endedness provided detailed and rich answers. At the same time, there was a need to be systematic in the data collection by using predefined themes, in order to not stray away from the aim of my study and topics covered in my theoretical framework. Up next, I will first present my interview guide, before moving on to present the informants I interviewed for the empirical part of my study.

### 3.3.1 Interview guide

The interview guide for my primary data collection is displayed in *Appendix 1*. My interview guide is based on the theoretical framework of my thesis and Table 1 illustrates the main topics of it compiled. The left column presents the main topic and the right column works as an explication for each topic. In this subchapter, I will briefly present the relation between my interview guide and the theoretical framework.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Explication:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebranding driver</td>
<td>Corporatization, other reasons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renaming</td>
<td>The new corporate brand name, other alternatives considered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redesign</td>
<td>Change of logo and brand aesthetics, other alternatives considered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repositioning</td>
<td>New positioning, Helen’s organization, current vs. desired brand image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: analysis</td>
<td>Brand and market analysis? What measures were taken?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: planning</td>
<td>Internal and external, launch of the new corporate brand, timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: evaluation</td>
<td>How was the rebranding process evaluated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome (success factors)</td>
<td>Success factors, Helen today, initial reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector considerations</td>
<td>Locality, corporatization, implications for the public sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1  Main topics of the interview guide

The first topic (rebranding drivers) covers the reasons behind Helen’s rebranding. Helen’s corporatization was a key initiator, but other reasons might have existed for Helen’s rebranding as well. Chapter 2.2 in the theoretical framework covered different rebranding drivers, such as issues with brand image, entries to new markets or changes in corporate structure (e.g. Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Lomax Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012).

The following three topics (renaming, redesign and repositioning) cover the “Rebranding Mix” (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003). Informants were asked to describe how and why these elements were subject to change. Different alternatives possibly considered are also a subject of interest. Chapter 2.1.2 covered different naming strategies (e.g. Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Daly & Moloney 2004) and the amount of change to the elements is also an important consideration (e.g. Daly & Moloney 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006). At this stage, informants
were also asked to describe Helen’s organization in order to provide a view on how the company operates.

The next three topics cover Helen’s rebranding process (analysis, planning and evaluation), mostly following the phases of Daly & Moloney’s (2004) “Corporate Rebranding Framework”. The different considerations for internal and external rebranding is of high interest. The launch of the new corporate brand is included in the planning phase.

The following topic (outcome) is the next topic and covers the success or possible shortcomings of Helen’s rebranding. Informants were asked to describe Helen’s brand and organization today and what specific factors were behind the outcome. Chapter 2.4 in the theoretical framework covered different success factors and possible pitfalls when rebranding the corporate brand (e.g. Kaikati 2003; Lomax & Mador 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008).

Branding in public organizations was covered in chapter 2.5 (e.g. Wiedmann 2004 & 2005; Wæraas 2008; Sataoen & Wæraas 2015), and the last topic (public sector considerations) is especially relevant for the aim of this study. Informants were asked to contemplate whether Helen’s status as public sector organization affected the rebranding and what other public sector organizations could learn from it. The impact of the corporatization on Helen’s organization was also an important point of interest.

The order of the topics covered shifted between the interviews and questions were worded differently based on the informant in question. Some informants provided more insights into Helen’s organizational change, while some were more knowledgeable and focused on the rebranding process itself. Nevertheless, each topic was covered in all interviews.

### 3.3.2 Informants

For my primary data collection, I conducted six in-depth interviews with seven informants. One of the interviews included two informants (Cameron Creative and Pat Promotion), working with the same kind of assignment in Helen’s organization. One of the informants (Alex Agency) represented Helen’s partner agency in the rebranding process and the rest of the informants all work for Helen in various positions. I have given the informants aliases with gender-neutral first names in order to keep them anonymous. The surname of each informant alias denotes their nature of work within Helen. The informants in my empirical study and their job duties at Helen are listed in Table 2.
Table 2  Overview of informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant alias:</th>
<th>Job duty at Helen:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair Brand</td>
<td>Communications and brand management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper Human</td>
<td>Human resources / Employer brand image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron Creative &amp; Pat Promotion</td>
<td>Marketing tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murphy Marketing</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Sales</td>
<td>Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Agency</td>
<td>Partner agency representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first interview was conducted with Blair Brand, who worked closely with Helen’s rebranding. After the interview, possible other relevant informants were discussed and proposed, thus creating a snowball or chain sampling strategy in the choice of informants (Patton 2015, p.270). A criterion for informants was that they had been working with or influenced by Helen’s rebranding. The involvement in the rebranding process essentially varied between informants, but all of them had the ability to describe how the rebranding had affected Helen’s organization. Another criterion was to include a variation among the job duties of informants, in order to generate a broad enough view of the rebranding as a whole, while still having a clear connection to the process.

The last informant represented the partner agency in Helen’s rebranding. The agency representative was chosen after a discussion with the partner agency in question. The informant Andy Agency does not work for the partner agency any more, but was seen as a key figure in the rebranding process of Helen and he was mentioned multiple times in the interviews with the informants from Helen.

Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012, p.386-387) suggest that in-depth interviews should be conducted at a location that is convenient and comfortable for the informants. In my case, the interviews were conducted at the work location of each informant, which was suggested by them and thus eliminating any possible impediments from the choice of location. The informants also suggested the scheduling of the interviews, and the interviews were conducted at a time suitable for them, further strengthening the comfort and convenience. All interviews were conducted during the months of April and May 2017. Even if the language of this thesis is English, the interviews were conducted in Finnish, the mother tongue of myself and the informants. This was done in order to get as detailed and rich answers as possible from the informants. All informants agreed to me tape recording the
interview, which was helpful in the data processing and analysis. As I know have presented the data collection of my primary data, I will now move on to presenting my secondary data collection.

### 3.4 Presentation of secondary data

In addition to the interviews, I will also take use of secondary data provided by Helen. The secondary data consists of different market research studies commissioned by Helen and conducted by specialized market research agencies. Parts of the research has been used by Helen as tools in the planning of the rebranding process, but the data also includes brand tracking and campaign surveys after the launch of the new brand name in January 2015. The data consists of reports and summaries of general consumer surveys about the Helen brand and its main competitors as a reference point, from both prior and after the rebranding. The data also includes a name test among consumers from year 2013 (Helsingin Energia vs Helen) and surveys about specific promotional campaigns. Table 3 shows the different consumer survey reports I had access to, and the time period for the data collection of each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of survey/report</th>
<th>Time/period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsingin Energia and Helen: Name test for the new corporate name</td>
<td>Q4/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General consumer survey 2014</td>
<td>Q4/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey on the launch campaign of the new corporate brand and slogan</td>
<td>Q1/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey on the follow-up campaign for the new corporate brand and slogan</td>
<td>Q3-Q4/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General consumer survey 2016</td>
<td>Q1/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign report for Helen’s district heating product/service</td>
<td>Q1/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Helen: Brand tracking” (3 reports: Q2, Q3 and Q4)</td>
<td>Q2-4/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3 Secondary data: consumer survey reports**

Secondary data can be a valuable addition to the primary data gathered by a researcher (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.320). According to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012, p.318) secondary data is very useful in the sense that it can generate comparisons, add context to and increase the validity of one’s primary data. Secondary data can also be used to triangulate one’s findings to an extent (Yin 1984, p.91; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, p.318). By using different sources of information one can compare and make certain of the authenticity and validity of the data collected (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, p.169). In
my case, the secondary data from consumer surveys illustrates the development of Helen’s brand image during the years surrounding the rebranding process and its launch. The data from the market researches is used to confirm and better understand the information gathered from the informants in the collection of my primary data. For example, the effect rebranding has on brand awareness was highlighted by many informants and a recurring topic in the interviews. The secondary data provides statistics and numerical illustrations on some aspects of Helen’s brand development in conjunction with the rebranding. This gives a better insight in the actual effects and success of Helen’s rebranding campaign, especially among external stakeholders, namely consumers.

The data package I received also includes a summary and analysis of stakeholder interviews conducted in October 2014 by Helen’s partner agency. Topics covered in the interviews were the current state of the energy market, Helen’s brand and its upcoming rebranding. Informants for these interviews consisted of a collection of Helen’s B2B-clients, as well as representatives and experts from different organizations: the City of Helsinki, an environmental organization, a media company and two university professors. The different stakeholder interviews are a valuable addition to my primary data. As my interviews consist of internal representatives of Helen, the addition of external stakeholders is welcome. A translated version of the interview guide for these interviews can be found in Appendix 2.

Some issues may also arise with the use of secondary data. Using data gathered by other parties or researchers lessens the control of the data, its quality and how it was collected. This calls for caution in the analysis and evaluation of it (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, p.320; Bryman & Bell 2015, 329). In my case, the data was also provided by the case company itself, which might create an issue of bias, as the case company had the ability to choose which data it was willing to provide. However, I did not feel this to become an issue in my case, as the data was according to me well assembled and presented, consistent and objective. As I know have presented the methodology of my data collection, I will now present my analysis process of the data collected.
3.5 Data analysis

Yin (1984, p.100-103) proposes two general strategies for analysing a case study: *relying on theoretical propositions* or *developing a case description*. The first and, according to him, most preferable one is using theoretical propositions to guide the analysis, which I will use in my analysis. As I have used semi-structured interviews as my primary data collection method, this choice is natural. My interview guide for the interviews is built on the theoretical framework, which helped to organize and guide my case study. Yin (1984, p.101) argues that relying on theoretical propositions helps the researcher in narrowing down the collected data, and to focus attention to the relevant parts. This essentially came to be in my case.

A viable tool in narrowing down and focusing on relevant parts of the data is that of categorization. Categorization initially means that the researcher labels parts of the data, e.g. text passages from the interview data into specific categories (Spiggle 1994). Patton (2002, p.463) describes this type of process as essentially indexing your data under specific topics. Categorization helps the researcher to focus on specific parts of the data when exploring and analysing specific themes. Labelling also helps in reducing the amount of data, which often is quite extensive in qualitative inquiry. The wide amount of data can generate very interesting findings, but categorization helps us to distinguish the parts that are relevant for the research problem and the aim of one’s study. Some parts of the data might also fall under multiple categories, which creates passages between different themes, and also helps in finding patterns in our data. (Spiggle 1994)

As I was using semi-structured interviews as my main data collection method, an initial categorization was already made through the interview guide, which was based on the theoretical framework. This was especially helpful in my case, as my theoretical framework had spawned specific touchpoints and elements in a rebranding process, like renaming, redesign of logo or specific success factors, such as good leadership and involvement of company personnel. Categorizing the data helped to cover all the different or similar opinions and insights of all informants. Analysis tools that spawn from categorization are *abstraction* and *comparison* (Spiggle 1994). Abstraction creates new themes by grouping categories into broader and more general constructs. Comparison means that we actively compare different occurrences in our data. Comparison was an important tool for me, as the different job duties of my informants naturally generated differentiated descriptions on
aspects of Helen’s rebranding. Abstraction also became apparent in my analysis. For example, Helen’s organization was widely commented and described by the informants, thus essentially becoming a new broader theme during my analysis.

In order to better analyse my data I transcribed each interview. Each interview was transcribed to a separate file before commencing the categorization, as suggested by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012, p.550). After an initial categorization, I started to compile and compare the answers by the informants for each topic. I first covered each main topic individually before creating a more holistic view, identifying overlapping aspects and creating passages between themes or topics. Starting, I created a descriptive summary on how Helen’s corporate brand was changed (renaming, redesign and repositioning), in order to get a view of the scope of Helen’s rebranding. In this way, I took use of the other analysis strategy, developing a case description, to an extent, but this was still guided by previous theoretical propositions. After this, I moved on to analyse the rebranding process itself, drivers for it, its phases, the outcome etc. The questions of how, what and why were key in analysing my data.

During my analysis process, I also actively kept notes on emerging ideas, interpretations and possible implications that spawned from my analysis process. According to Patton (2015, p.523) it is important that the researcher actively documents one’s thought process, in order to not forget or lose important trains of thought. Even the smallest idea or insight that an analysis might generate can become valuable in the end.

When analysing my secondary data, I first studied whether the consumer surveys were representative of and similar to the answers provided by my informants. Then I moved on to more closely analyse the development of Helen’s brand image among consumers. The results from the different surveys were presented in a highly similar manner, which made it easy to compare the development of Helen’s brand over time. The survey summaries also included notes and insights by the summary conductor on this development, which I was able to use, after an evaluation of their correctness based on the data presented. The secondary data ultimately became a welcome addition to my primary data, as I was able to triangulate some of the findings in my primary data. The surveys also provided a valuable industry context on the energy market, as they also included Helen’s main competitors as well. After discussing my data analysis, I will now conclude this chapter by discussing the research quality of my study.
3.6 Research quality

Yin (1984, p.36) proposes four criteria for evaluating the quality of case study research: *construct validity, external validity, internal validity* and *reliability*. However, the applicability and relevance of validity and reliability as quality criteria in qualitative research has been questioned. Bryman & Bell (2015, p.400) present alternative quality criteria that have emerged because of this, namely *trustworthiness* and *authenticity*, where trustworthiness can be divided to four criteria: *credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability*. I will discuss these quality criteria collectively as they have some overlapping characteristics and I view them all to be applicable to my study’s quality assessment.

The construct validity initially means that the researcher establishes a correct operational set of measures, which can be seen as challenging in qualitative research. Yin (1984, 37-38) propose the use of multiple sources of evidence, maintaining a chain of evidence and letting the key informants review the case study report, in order to reassure construct validity. Construct validity can be seen to be similar to credibility, which concerns the aspect that a researcher fully understands the accounts of informants and the “social world” in question (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.401). Techniques that can be used are respondent validation and triangulation (ibid.).

I have used multiple sources of evidence in my case study, through conducting the semi-structured interviews and by also using secondary data (archival records) in form of different consumer surveys and a stakeholder interview summary. Using multiple sources of evidence allowed me to triangulate my data, thus increasing its credibility. In maintaining a chain of evidence, the reader of a case study should be able to trace the research process backwards from its conclusions and implications and get a clear picture of what is supporting the conclusions (Yin 1984, p.96). I have done this by linking the different parts of my study together; creating a theoretical framework, using it to guide my data collection, displayed my results using citations and presenting evidence, and finally creating conclusions based on the factual findings of my case. I have also let one of my key informants and main contact person at Helen (Brenda Brand) review my case study report, in order to further enhance the construct validity of my case. The informant review can also be seen as respondent validation, thus also addressing the credibility criteria.
External validity mainly concerns the generalizability of one’s study (Yin 1984, p. 38) and highly parallels the criteria of transferability (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.402). Yin (1984, p.38) notes that external validity is a common problem in case studies and especially when using a single case strategy as I have done. However, case studies rely on analytical generalizations and the researcher should strive to generalize results to a broader theory that can be applied to further research (Yin, 1984, p.39-40). Gummesson (2000, p.90-97) notes that qualitative methods indeed often focus on theory development, which can be further tested and refined using other cases. Bryman & Bell (2015, p.402) note similar requirements for transferability as discussed above.

In my case, I have used existing rebranding research to guide my study that tries to bring new knowledge into rebranding in a public sector context, thus creating conclusions and implications that can be further tested to public sector organizations other than Helen. Using a single case study strategy also makes my research meticulous and rigorous, as I have been able to focus on one case holistically. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012, p.383) note that one well-completed case study can become more valid than if using a multiple case strategy with lesser focus. They also note that relating one’s study to existing research further enhances the generalizability, which I have done by conducting a literature review in Chapter 2 and using the theoretical framework in my analytical process.

Internal validity is important in assessing the quality of explanatory case studies when making causal statements (Yin 1984, p. 38). However, as my case study is of exploratory (and descriptive) nature, this quality criterion does not become relevant for my research.

Reliability is a key quality criterion in research and means that someone who would conduct the same study later on with the same procedures should arrive to more or less the same conclusions and findings (Yin 1984, p.40; Gummesson 2000, p.91). In order to fulfil the requirement of reliability, I have carefully documented and described my research, data collection and analysis process to the best of my ability.

The criteria of dependability works as a parallel to reliability (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.403). Bryman & Bell (ibid.) stress the fact that in order to achieve dependability a researcher should keep thorough records of the research in an accessible way. By depicting my research process throughout my study, and especially in this chapter I believe to have met this criteria. I have also preserved transcripts, audio records and documents used in this study.
for possible future evaluation. This touches the last criteria of trustworthiness, confirmability, which means that the researcher has used as much objectivity in the research process as possible (Bryman & Bell 2015, p.403).

The last criteria presented by Bryman & Bell (2015, p.403) is authenticity. An important criteria for authenticity is fairness, and the research should fairly represent what is studied and include enough viewpoints on the research subject and phenomenon (ibid.). By using informants with varying backgrounds and different job duties at Helen, I believe to have achieved a thorough and fair view of Helen’s rebranding. By also including an informant from Helen’s partner agency, I have managed to incorporate another view as well. My secondary data included consumer surveys and a stakeholder interview summary, which makes my data broader and not only focused on internal viewpoints from Helen’s organization.

In this subchapter, I have evaluated the research quality of my study through different quality assessment criteria. As I now have presented the methodology of my study and discussed its research quality, I will now move on to present the results from the empirical part of my study.
4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter, I will present and analyse the findings of the empirical part of my study. I will present and analyse the data essentially in the same order I covered rebranding as a concept in the theoretical framework. Figure 3 presents the structure and contents of this chapter.

![Diagram showing the structure and content of Chapter 4]

**Figure 3** Structure and content of Chapter 4

First, I will present the rebranding of Helen through the first three elements of the “Rebranding Mix” by Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003), that is renaming, redesign (aesthetics) and repositioning. I will do this in order to give the reader a clear view on what changes were made to the corporate brand and what factors were behind them. Renaming will focus on the decision and considerations of the new corporate brand name of Helen and redesign will encompass the design of the new brand logo and brand aesthetics. Repositioning will cover the new slogan created for Helen and the change in brand narrative...
in connection to it. In this part, I will also present the use of new marketing activities that became crucial in Helen’s new marketing strategy.

Next, I will move to the rebranding process itself. At first I will present the leading driver of Helen’s rebranding, that of corporatization, and what it meant for the corporate brand and company in general. Then I will analyse and map Helen’s rebranding based on the three main stages from the “Corporate Rebranding Framework” developed by Daly & Moloney (2004): analysis, planning and evaluation. This subchapter consequently includes the last element of the “Rebranding Mix” (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003), that of relaunch.

Following, I will present and analyse Helen’s rebranding through the different success factors identified in previous research on rebranding (e.g. Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). This part will also present the opinions of my informants about how well Helen succeeded in its rebranding and what contributed to it. In this part, I will also take a closer look on how Helen’s brand image has developed based on the consumer surveys.

Lastly I will focus on the aspects of Helen’s rebranding process that relate to its status as a public sector organization and how its role as a municipally owned corporation was apparent in the rebranding of the corporate brand. I will also present informant opinions on possible implications for public sector organizations.

I will use illustrative quotes by the informants throughout this chapter. More quotes can be found in Appendix 3, organized subchapter-wise.

4.1 The rebranding of Helen: renaming, redesign and repositioning

This subchapter will present the topic of renaming the corporate brand name and the redesign of brand aesthetics. I will also present the new brand narrative created during the rebranding process that can be seen as a repositioning of the Helen brand. In addition to illustrative quotes, I will also in this subchapter use images to illustrate changes in Helen’s corporate brand, presenting the redesign of brand aesthetics and other material related to the rebranding.
4.1.1 Renaming: from Helsingin Energia to Helen

The old name, Helsingin Energia, was very descriptive about the company's business and similar to many local municipal energy companies in Finland, such as Vantaan Energia, Tampereen Sähkölaitos or Kuopion Energia. Contrary to Helen, a majority of these municipal enterprises opted to keep their old name despite the forced corporatizations in the Finnish energy sector.

The old name gave a clear impression of a local energy company, which was something the company strived to distance itself from. The new name was hoped to improve Helen’s status as a national energy company and was also considered more suitable for a possible internationalization in the future. Quite interestingly, the informants did not view the drop of the word “Helsinki” from the corporate brand name as a negative aspect, but rather wanted to highlight the possibilities the new name gave on a national level.

“We wanted to get rid of the Helsinki-centred association. We wanted to be seen by consumers as a national company that sells to all of Finland. Of course the Helsinki associations do not hurt us at all in our core market, but elsewhere it can become a burden.” – Murphy Marketing

The paragraph above is interesting when relating to Wiedmann’s (2004 & 2005) study on local energy companies. Wiedmann (2004 & 2005) noted that locality should be embraced, as it is something that outsiders cannot straight up copy. However, in Helen’s case there was a need to move away from the overly local association. Of course, Helen’s size and goal of gaining a bigger national market, makes this case harder to compare against the findings of Wiedmann (2004 & 2005). Informants also believed in general that the connection to the local level was on such a strong level, that including it in the name was unnecessary and actually hurt the brand nationally. The informants did not see the Helsinki part of the name as a good selling point outside of the City.

The local support for the new Helen name was also apparent in the name test Helen conducted in 2013. 78 % of respondents in Helsinki were already familiar with the Helen name before the rebranding (the figure for Helsingin Energia was 93 %). However, the name was much less familiar in the neighbouring cities of Espoo and Vantaa, where Helen scored 27 % compared to the familiarity rate of 67 % that the Helsingin Energia name enjoyed. In the rest of Finland only 5 % were familiar with the Helen name, but the familiarity for
Helsingin Energia was also low at 25%. This shows that while there was a clear drop in the awareness from Helsingin Energia to Helen, the new name already had a foothold in the company’s local market before the rebranding, which signalled that a name change would not bear that big of a risk in this sense. People did not really associate any negative attributes to either name. The Helen name actually received slightly less negative associations (8% versus 11%). While the associations for both names were mostly neutral, Helsingin Energia received more of clearly positive associations (35% versus Helen’s 19%).

The key insights from the name test in general were that the Helen name had a good level of awareness in Helsinki, but saw a significant drop elsewhere in Finland. However, the old name did not score well outside of the Capital Area either. People’s initial associations to the new name were more modern, but it did not enjoy the attributes of trust, safety and Finnishness to the same extent as Helsingin Energia. However, this was strongly credited to the low awareness scores outside of Helsinki. An identified risk for the new name was its perception of being something else than an energy company and not benefitting from the descriptive nature of the old name. However, Helen was free of the negative associations connected to Helsingin Energia, described as sluggish and stiff.

Other naming options than Helen (or keeping the name Helsingin Energia) were not really considered seriously during the process. Many informants described a sort of unspoken agreement and feeling within the organization that the name would eventually change to Helen, conjointly with the corporatization. The informant representing the agency, however, was hesitant for the name change at first. The agency considered Helsingin Energia to be a good name, and noted that the public usually reacts to name changes negatively. Especially, if the new name becomes more abstract and less describing.

“Usually people react negatively to name changes, especially if it becomes some sort of pseudo-Latin, like the change of Posti to Itella. It can easily become a target of mocking.”

— Alex Agency

However, as the Helen name spawned somewhat directly from the old name, the risk was not viewed as being too big compared to a total substitution. The fact that the new name also had internal support helped the change. The informants in the stakeholder interviews conducted by Helen before the rebranding did not view the name change as specifically drastic and mostly regarded it as a natural development.
4.1.2 Not on an entirely new name

The Helen name was by no means new for the company. The new corporate brand name had already been in internal use within the company. The customer magazine and e-mail addresses had used the Helen name for quite a while. The new name was a common abbreviation used of Helsingin Energia, and people often spoke about the “Helen concern” when referring to Helsingin Energia and its subsidiaries. The City of Helsinki also actively used abbreviations of its different organizations, Helen being one of them.

“The Helen name was already in internal use, and personnel often identified themselves rather as “heleniläinen” than “helsingin energialainen.” – Blair Brand

This is interesting when reflecting back to the different naming strategies covered in the theoretical framework of this thesis. While the change to Helen can be seen as a substitution, i.e. choosing a new name over the old name from the start (Daly & Moloney 2004), the name still bore a connection to the old name and was not new for the company. In a way, this can be seen as using elements of “retrobranding” presented by Kaikati & Kaikati (2003). While Helen had never used this version as its name, the name still spawned from internal use within the company that had existed for a while.

Many informants pointed out that the new name felt natural throughout most of the organization and that the change was well received. The decision to change the name did not face any notable resistance within the organization. It is also worth to note that Helen had gone through small name changes previously during its history as well (e.g. from “Helsingin kapungin energialaitos” to “Helsingin Energia” in 1995). Informants also stated that the change to Helen created more clarity and there was a feeling that the company was almost like in a trap of two names before the rebranding.

The old name, though descriptive, was also considered quite long, which can be seen as a negative aspect in corporate brand names (Turley & Moore 1995). Similar to the mentioned case of PricewaterhouseCoopers’ rebranding to PwC (Gyorkos 2010), Helen’s new name was believed to have a more national and international appeal.

The new name was also a clear sign that the organization had changed. The old name was that of a municipal enterprise and the new name represented a corporation. The name change was also viewed as moderate in the sense that it preserved the company’s long history and heritage, while at the same time denoting a clear change. It was viewed as a positive
thing that the new name provided an opportunity to start with a clean slate, but still keeping some of the positive aspects of the old one.

The old names is not all gone from the organization and personnel still take active use of the old name in sales. When presenting the company, sales personnel often refer to the old name as well, in order to benefit from the brand awareness the Helsingin Energia name enjoyed. This was not seen as a negative thing, but rather as something positive as it clearly gives a sign of change but also benefits from the old name’s history and awareness.

“We are in a lucky position where the Helen name gives us room to reform and modernize, but where we still can benefit the old name and its reliable reputation.”
– Sam Sales

This means that Helen in a way takes use of the interim/dual strategy (Daly & Moloney 2004). While not actively pursuing this strategy, Helen does not shy away from using the old name in sales situations, even if all promotional and marketing material solely carries the Helen name.

While the new name was seen as largely positive, it also carried some weaknesses. Informants generally cited the obvious loss of brand awareness as the biggest negative consequence, but some practical weaknesses were also apparent. The Helen name was less distinguishable compared to the old name. As Helen is also a popular woman’s name, the new name was less discernible and prompts difficulties, especially on the web in search engines and social media. A consequence of this is Helen’s use of the name “Energia Helen” on Twitter for example.

Informants also commented on the feminine nature of the new name, especially compared to the old name that was perceived as masculine by many of them. This was not seen as a negative thing per se, and informants welcomed the change away from the blunt engineer focus of the old name. The name test from 2013 also revealed that informants linked the Helen name to feminine products and services such as woman’s clothes or beauty parlours, which shows a negative consequence of dropping the descriptive name. However, informants deemed this to be fixable by increasing awareness of the new name.
4.1.3 Redesign: modernization of the brand logo and colour scheme

In terms of redesigning the brand logo, Helen ended up choosing quite a moderate change. Helen had used three lightning bolts as the brand symbol for quite a long time, and it was felt to be an important part of the brand’s visual identity. The lightning bolts were strongly associated to the company both externally and internally, and the logo was well liked. The logo had also further transcended from visual use to promotional texts and concepts, such as the annual “sata salamaa” (Eng. “a hundred lightning bolts”) – recruitment campaign for summer jobs. The lightning bolts as a symbol had also provided a natural connection to the energy industry and electricity.

Instead of a complete redesign, the logo was modernized. At the same time, the new design tried to streamline the logo for easier use in different materials, colours and on different surfaces. An important consideration in the design was its adaptability. Figure 4 below displays the old and new logo of Helsingin Energia/Helen.

![Old logo of Helsingin Energia vs. Helen’s new logo](image)

**Figure 4** Old logo of Helsingin Energia vs. Helen’s new logo

Informants believed that keeping the core of the old logo intact was important for the success of the rebranding campaign. As the corporate brand name had changed, the lightning bolts logo was an important connection to the roots and history of the company. This is very much in line with the discussion in the theoretical framework, namely the importance of not deviating too far from one’s roots when rebranding the corporate brand (e.g. Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008).
“When the brand name and narrative changed, it was important to keep something of the old. A total change would have made the process much more difficult. Rebranding is rarely successful if a working company is cut to pieces and everything is changed.”

– Alex Agency

A big part of the redesign of the logo was indeed its relation to the name change. As the new name was more abstract and less descriptive, it was important that the logo remained recognizable and associable to Helen. It was important that the logo clearly belonged to an energy company and not to any kind of brand.

There were also more radical propositions to the new logo, but they were ultimately abandoned as they were felt to stray away too much from the corporate brand and create unnecessary controversy. The logo itself was not seen as the biggest issue in Helen’s brand aesthetics, which made a mere modernization of the lightning bolts the most natural choice.

Many informants had a feeling that the biggest change in brand aesthetics was the change in the brand’s colour scheme. One of the informants even listed the change in the brand’s colours as one of the biggest changes in the rebranding process as a whole in relation to her work.

The change in the brand’s colour scheme is illustrated in the Figure 5, displaying Helen’s customer magazine from 2012 (before the rebranding) and 2017. The main colour was changed from orange to bright yellow, and brighter and more vibrant colours were added to the scheme, such as pink, bright green and light blue. Informants credited the new colours as an important part of making the brand look more modern, and generally welcomed the change from the old colours that were mostly described as old-fashioned.

The new colour scheme was well met internally, even if some differences in corporate culture were apparent in the adoption of it. Some comments were made about the vibrant colours among Helen’s production and maintenance workers, but these were however mostly light hearted and personnel quickly adapted to the new colours in their everyday work.
Helen’s new colour scheme showcased via customer magazines

The new colour scheme was implemented throughout the entire organization, from working apparel to car prints. This was felt to be important, as it signalled a change even in the production branches of Helen’s organization that were not the most visible for the public, but of great importance to the company’s business.

4.1.4 Repositioning: building a new brand narrative

A big part of Helen’s rebranding was the change in brand narrative and determining which attributes and values the company wished to highlight in its corporate brand. The attributes associated with the old Helsingin Energia brand had mostly been related to its role as a municipal enterprise; overall responsible and reliable but lacking a modern feel and creativity.

The different consumer surveys and stakeholder interviews conducted, showed similar views of the Helen brands as the informants I interviewed. Common describing attributes linked to Helsingin Energia were reliable, stable, decorous and fair. The locality aspect of the company was also strongly highlighted, but was also seen as a negative aspect outside of the
Helsinki region. The main problem with the corporate brand was its perceived cautiousness, prudency and stiffness. Helsingin Energia was seen as a distant and overtly humble. The company was not viewed as innovative, flexible or modern, which was strongly linked to its status as a municipal enterprise.

“We were seen as a reliable and stable company but at the same time we had the image of a sluggish and dusty municipal agency. There was not really any passion connected to us. – Murphy Marketing

A key target for the rebranding campaign was therefore to create a more modern and bolder brand image for Helen, while still keeping the important positive attributes of reliability and responsibility the brand enjoyed. This can be seen as a typical objective and goal that leads to the rebranding of corporate brands, as presented by Daly & Moloney (2004). Even if there are issues in the brand image, the strong parts from the old brand should be tried to be transformed to the new one.

4.1.5 Building the brand narrative around “The world’s best city energy”

An important consideration in building the new brand narrative for Helen was to benchmark outside of the energy sector and not to put a too big of an emphasis on its competitors. Whether other municipally owned energy companies would go through a similar rebranding process was not a big consideration for Helen. The main goal was to find the best ways to communicate the brand’s own strengths and create a desirable brand overall, not just a desirable brand within the energy sector. The energy sector was also seen as quite conservative, which was deemed helpful in creating a differentiated message.

When building the new brand narrative Helen identified three alternatives for the outset it would build its new corporate brand around. The three alternatives were creating an environmental narrative based on sustainable energy production, being the best customer and service oriented company, or building the narrative around its efficient and awarded energy production and innovations.

It was ultimately the efficiency and awarded energy solutions, later labelled as “The world’s best city energy”, that would become the slogan and core of the new brand. Even if Helen was not seen as innovative or a forerunner in energy solutions, the company had received several international awards for its efficient energy production. It became clear during the brand and company analysis that Helen actually possessed many strengths that the company
just had been unnecessary discreet about. Helen’s strengths had been presented in a too matter-of-fact manner and from an engineering standpoint, which had led to the public being mostly unaware of the achievements.

“It felt almost as if Helen was afraid of presenting all the strong aspects of its company even if they were clearly there. It was kind of downplayed and understated internally or at least it was not promoted externally. They probably did not even understand all the strong elements they had.” – Andy Agency

The different outset alternatives were also tested in one of the consumer surveys and the stakeholder interviews, where the “best city energy” approach gained most positive reactions. The environmental narrative lacked interest and creativity, but also credibility, as Helen still based a big portion of its production on coal power. The customer-oriented approach was also of low interest and was viewed to easily become clichéd and unimaginative. The “best city energy” was seen as the most original, and also deemed as the most natural approach for Helen, creating a way to differentiate from its competitors. Many energy companies at the time were actively promoting a “future” aspect in their marketing, but Helen could focus on its current well working solutions and their development. The approach was also credible, thanks to awards, but also because of Helen’s role in building long-term energy and electricity infrastructure for a big city.

Helen also wanted to tailor its message to consumers and lessen the “engineering-based” approach it had employed in promotions before. Figure 6 shows Helen’s advertising of the new brand narrative. A goal was to connect energy production to everyday situations and create interest via this. There was also a notable increase in the use of humans in the imagery of Helen’s ads compared to earlier marketing.
The new brand narrative eventually spawned from the core and strengths of Helen, namely its reliability and stability. The lack of modern and innovative associations were more a consequence of Helen not promoting its efficient energy solutions in an interesting and extensive enough way. The fact that Helen was able to build its new brand narrative by taking advantage of existing, though arguably poorly promoted attributes, was a clear advantage. This way, the new brand was heavily connected to the core of the company, thus in a way avoiding the typical identified pitfall in rebranding, that of not being connected enough to its roots (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). The slogan “The world’s best city energy” was also seen as a great starting point to develop other aspects of the brand in the future.

In my opinion, it sounds perplexing that an organization would shy away from promoting its evident strengths, but there were apparent reasons for this in Helen’s case. Informants credited the lack of promotion and communication about the achievements to the Finnish nature and personality, but also to the status of being a municipal enterprise. There was an evident hesitation on whether Helen could be bold and brave because of its status. The cautiousness of Helen is well in line with Wæraas (2008) statement that public sector...
organizations in theory should strive for impartialness, honesty and fairness. The caution and sluggishness of the organization ultimately created unnecessary second-guessing about the achievements internally. A question was raised, whether a municipally owned company could be aggressive and daring in its marketing activities, and would it fit the brand of a public sector organization.

“Even if all this is based on facts and we can stand behind it, the Finnish humbleness still surfaces. We lacked the ability to praise ourselves, even if we did things extremely well. We were probably thinking whether it was too big of a promise or statement for us to make.” – Cameron Creative

However, Helen realized that in order to connote modern associations to its corporate brand, the company needed to be more active and bolder across the board. At the same time, there was no need for cautiousness as the new brand narrative was truthful.

4.1.6 Utilizing new forms of marketing activities

I discussed in the theoretical framework that corporatization might increase the use of new forms of marketing in public sector organizations, which has also been supported by Laing (2003). Larsen (2014) also pointed out the need for more extensive marketing and branding activities in these types of organizations that act on a competitive market. This became indeed the case for Helen, with an increased focus on new marketing forms and channels. These types of investments naturally increased because of the rebranding campaign, but respondents viewed that the corporatization and rebranding had increased the marketing focus of the company in general. Moving away from being a municipal enterprise, Helen has started to employ more private sector-like behaviour in its branding and marketing. In addition to large advertising investments connected to the rebranding campaign in traditional media, such as television and print, Helen also refurbished its presence in digital channels and revamped its sales strategy.

“The change has demanded us to actively create new things. The old brand was not as flexible and had a very production-related connotation. You can build a lot more around the Helen name.” – Cameron Creative

All respondents also mentioned the company’s venture to content marketing after the rebranding process and campaign, through the fictional comedic character of Yrjö Uusivirta (displayed in Figure 7), played by popular Finnish comedian André Wickström. Built on
satire, the character represented a “stereotypical” engineer working for Helen. The videos created around the character ridiculed the engineering aspect of the energy sector, included at times politically incorrect jokes and touched controversial subjects, such as sexual harassment in the work place.

Figure 7  The Yrjö Uusivirta character

The character and the content around it was at first perceived as a huge risk for Helen. Not only was the form of content marketing new for Helen, but also the style of the videos. Using a character that openly ridiculed the energy industry, added with a twisted humour, was feared to be too drastic to use for a municipally owned company. It strongly deviated from the previous prudency and cautiousness of the organization. However, the videos ultimately became a big success and sparked extremely positive reactions even internationally.

“Yrjö Uusivirta triggered reactions throughout our industry and reached a whole new segment of people. The character in a way made the change in our corporate brand concrete. The public realized that we are a company that is brave and not afraid of trying new things. – Blair Brand

Even if the idea of the character was initially met with, and still carries, some scepticism internally, it eventually became almost like symbol of the new corporate brand. The informants seemed proud with the character and marketing around it, and commented that it was afterwards mostly viewed as a positive endeavour within the organization that contributed to a positive outcome of Helen’s rebranding process. This is much in line with
the findings of Sharma & Kamalanabhan (2012), where employees of public organizations took pride in successful marketing activities by their organizations, which eventually has a positive effect on their brand image.

Even if the informants noted that the Yrjö Uusivirta videos eventually became an important part of the new and “bolder” Helen brand, they mostly believed that the character would never have been greenlighted before the rebranding process or during its initial planning. The character ultimately became suitable and desirable after the corporatization of Helen and the modernization of the corporate brand. It essentially worked as a continuation to the rebranding campaign.

“I do not think that anyone would have expected that kind of marketing from us and it probably would never have been possible say five years ago. Of course it divides people, but I definitely see the character as good thing. It tells people that we are brave, can reform as a company and are able to laugh at ourselves.” – Sam Sales

4.2 Helen’s rebranding process
After discussing the first three elements of the “Rebranding Mix” (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003), I will now focus on the last element, the relaunch. I will present the launch of the new corporate as a part of an analysis of Helen’s rebranding process, mainly through the “Corporate Rebranding Framework” by Daly & Moloney (2004). The three main phases of the framework constitute of analysis, planning and evaluation. Before analysing the process, I will first take a look at the leading driver for Helen’s rebranding, the corporatization of the municipal enterprise. The driver for rebranding, i.e. the rebranding factor, was the first stage of Muzellec & Lambkin’s (2006) “Model of the Rebranding Process”. The corporatization had a wide-ranging impact on Helen’s organization, which makes it crucial to discuss – what it meant for the organization and its relation to the rebranding process.

4.2.1 Corporatization as the driver for Helen’s rebranding
In 2013 EU legislation forced municipal enterprises operating on competitive markets to incorporate. This forced Helsingin Energia and other municipal energy companies to carry out a corporatization with a transition period to the end of 2014 (Palttala 2013). Already
suffering from some issues in its brand image, Helsingin Energia viewed the corporatization as a great opportunity to rebrand itself, and from the beginning of 2015 onwards, the company would be known as Helen Oy.

Many informants credited the corporatization as an important enabler for rebranding. As the corporatization marked a big change for the organization, and essentially started a new chapter in its corporate history, conducting a rebranding effort became a natural consideration. Informants commented that the corporatization gave a good reason for a bigger turnaround in the corporate brand, and led to less resistance of change within the company. Informants noted that while some people eagerly awaited a bigger change in the company, some were very resistant to it. A notable part of Helen’s personnel had worked at the municipal enterprise for years, and many frowned upon big changes. Having a clear justification for the change, made the rebranding easier to implement according to the informants.

“The corporatization was a good reason for the rebranding. Change can certainly be unfavourable for some people, so it is good to have a something that justifies it, especially in the municipal sector. Otherwise people could criticise spending money on something like this.” – Cameron Creative

Informants also pointed out that the corporatization itself created a more modern feel to the organization even without the rebranding. Even if Helen had acted as a private sector-like company for a number of years, the corporatization gave a sort of final touch to the organization. The corporatization was also apparent through sheer practical consequences. The corporatization moved the company under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) of the energy industry, away from the municipal sector. This contributed to the view of Helen as a pure energy company, rather than being strongly equated with the municipal nature. A change in the CBA also meant notable practical changes for the company personnel.

There was still a belief among the informants that a rebranding could have occurred without a corporatization, and Helen had tried to spruce up its brand a few years before the process. However, informants also noted that the corporatization made a more revolutionary change possible, and has helped the brand development after the process. The corporatization in addition to the rebranding, was also believed to have made organizational changes possible, in order to create a more modern and dynamic organization, even if the nature of municipal
ownership still shows in the organization. The corporatization of Helen was believed to have increased the efficiency of the organization, a key goal in many corporatization cases (Grossi & Reichard 2008; McDonald 2014).

“The change enabled, forced and encouraged us to rethink our organizational procedures.” – Sam Sales

The corporatization also marked an important change from a communications standpoint. While Helen had been able to act quite independently from the City of Helsinki before the process, a big part of its communication still went through the City’s officials. Issues and topics related to Helen had often been commented on by the City. Through the corporatization, Helen gained an even more independent role, and was able to communicate more directly and actively in issues regarding the energy sector in general. In short, the corporatization helped Helen become more responsible for its own communication and more active in promoting its own message. The increased liberty is somewhat similar to the earlier presented case of Vattenfall’s corporatization (Högselius 2009). Many informants in the stakeholder interviews, conducted before the rebranding, also saw this as positive outcome of the corporatization.

The corporatization also had a noticeable effect on the rebranding process itself, especially the internal implementation. The organizational changes generated by the corporatization took away attention from the internal implementation of the rebranded corporate brand. This resulted in a strongly external focus in the rebranding. This is of notable interest as the importance of internal involvement in rebranding was heavily highlighted in the theoretical framework (e.g. Lomax & Mador 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008). This issue will be covered more closely in the following subchapter covering the analysis and planning phases of Helen’s rebranding process.

“In a way the corporatization dominated the internal transformation process and the rebranding work came a bit on the side; mostly because of the tight time schedule, which left less time for the internal branding.” – Blair Brand

4.2.2 The analysis phase

The importance of a thorough analysis of the current market situation and corporate brand was emphasized in the theoretical framework (Daly & Moloney 2004; Luck 2012; Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014). Helen initially had started to plan the rebranding process
themselves (e.g. conducting the name test), but quite quickly decided to use external help by enlisting a specialized marketing consultation agency to aid with the process. This is in line with the proposition of Lomax & Mador (2006), as companies rarely possess knowhow on conducting a rebranding process because of its relative rarity. Helen was very thorough in its choice of partner agency and enlisted a specialist outside its organization, to help determine the most suitable partner for them.

After the agency was chosen, the eventual analysis of the corporate brand was conducted. Consumer surveys about the brand and the energy sector in general were conducted in addition to in-depth stakeholder interviews. The analysis also included some internal discussions with company personnel and their opinions about the upcoming change, but not in a very structured manner.

The brand attributes associated to the old corporate brand were quite well known by the company and were further strengthened by the analysis. Helen was seen as a reliable, stable and fair company; but suffered from negative associations such as old-fashioned, distant and cautious. Helen was not seen as a frontrunner in the energy sector, but rather as a sluggish big municipal actor. A main goal was therefore to create a more modern brand image among stakeholders. Helen still wanted to keep the good associations it had as a municipal enterprise and wished to remain responsible and reliable in the eyes of its stakeholders even after a modernization of the corporate brand. The municipal ownership was after all seen as a strength, even if it entailed some of the negative associations Helen had.

The internal brand analysis however, revealed that Helen actually possessed many strengths that contradicted its negative associations, which was mostly a result of too cautious communication. As presented in the subchapter on Helen’s repositioning, the company was a frontrunner in modern and efficient energy solutions, but this had not been transitioned to the corporate brand. This realization, ultimately made the building of the new brand easier, as it became a task of just promoting the company’s strengths in a more attractive and extensive way.

“Through the brand analysis, we actually found a really positive narrative that no one outside of Helen knew about.” – Alex Agency
Helen’s new corporate brand spawned from a thorough analysis and the agency informant highlighted the importance of well-made groundwork when rebranding a corporate brand. The wide range of different stakeholders that public sector organizations usually have (Wæraas 2008), where taken into account. In the stakeholder interviews conducted, Helen tried to involve opinions from all types of stakeholders, even those with negative attitudes towards Helen as a company in general. In terms of a market analysis, Helen did perform one to some extent, but put let emphasis on its competitors and more focus on their own brand message. Overall, Helen did indeed perform a thorough analysis alike to what is suggested by Daly & Moloney (2004); there was a clear decision what brand elements it wanted neutralized and retained.

### 4.2.3 The planning phase

The initial main phase of a rebranding process, is named the planning phase by Daly & Moloney (2004). This includes development of the new proposed corporate brand, internal implementation of it, and the execution of the external marketing plan. In a way, this covers the fourth element of the “Rebranding Max” by Muzellec et al. (2003), the relaunch.

The renaming of Helen was presented in subchapter 4.1.1 and the renaming strategy, receives strong consideration in the “Corporate Rebranding Framework” by Daly & Moloney (2004). In Helen’s case, the renaming was a big decision in itself, but the renaming strategy did not receive that big of an attention. As stated previously, other alternatives were not really considered after the early stages in the process. Compared to the Accenture case presented in theoretical framework (Kaikati 2003), there was no internal name competition organized. The fact that Helen was an abbreviation of the old brand name and widely used internally, also made the change quite moderate. This made a substitution strategy suitable for Helen. Still, as the informants pointed out, the organization does not shy away from its old name and still employ it in sales situations to increase awareness. This means that some form of the interim/dual strategy still takes place.

“We did consider the possibility of a totally new name, but we still viewed that this was not the most relevant alternative for our situation. We felt that the ownership did not really have the interest to do something completely new and weird. We wanted to use the strong basis of the Helsingin Energia name.” – Blair Brand
The next part of the planning phase designates the development of an internal and external communications strategy for the new brand. I previously criticised the framework by Daly & Moloney (2004) for its narrow consideration on different types of stakeholders. We have learned that Helen took the array of stakeholders into account in the analysis phase through e.g. the stakeholder interviews, which were used as a guide in the planning process as well.

A big part of the “mechanical” planning part of Helen’s rebranding process was the required redesign of Helen’s materials for external and internal use, and informants considered the amount of different promotional and informative materials that were affected by the redesign very wide in range. Informants also commented on the short amount of time reserved for the implementation, which led to a prioritizing of the most visible ones. External material, such as bills, forms, envelopes, billboards and car prints, were given first priority. It was of interest to be coherent and consistent in the external material at first, in order to give a clear impression to the public and customers about the rebranding. Fortunately for Helen, the brand had done a refurbishing of its brand aesthetics a few years prior to the rebranding. This was credited to have helped the process, and the new design was easier to implement to existing materials.

“There was perhaps a bit of a miscalculation and sluggishness from the company’s part. It really takes a lot of time to implement the new design to all materials.”

– Pat Promotion

The issue of time was perhaps the biggest challenge that informants commented on regarding the rebranding process. The agency informant commented that in rebranding cases like Helen’s, there is usually at least double the time at disposal for the analysis and planning phases. The main reason for the short time period was that the City of Helsinki made its decision to rebrand Helen quite late. The short amount of time created extra pressure, but the agency’s experience in rebranding work was credited to have helped in the planning.

The issue of time was also partly credited to the sluggishness within the organization. Different processes were not seen as specifically dynamic, which meant that e.g. the procurement of materials, such as work apparel was slow, even though the rebranding created pressure around it. However, answers also differed between the informants to an extent. I suspect the reason behind this was that people looked at the process through their
own work and tasks related to the rebranding. Some informants noted the time pressure more heavily, while others did not perceive it as particularly challenging, even if everyone noted the tight schedule.

“It went quite smoothly actually. Well, we were in a hurry and people were heavily employed, but I still think that the process was well scheduled and planned. I did not feel it to be chaotic in any way. – Murphy Marketing

“Personally I would say that there was too little time reserved. Especially for the physical implementation. Even if we worked frantically, the turn of the year still came too quickly. The hurry definitely showed in some parts. – Cameron Creative

The time consuming nature of rebranding processes has been noted by researchers (Lomax & Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012), and the short amount of time available was an apparent risk in Helen’s rebranding process. Still, informants generally believed that the process ultimately was carried out relatively smoothly and the time pressure could also be seen as a motivational factor in the process.

4.2.4 External communication

The new brand narrative around the slogan “The world’s best city energy” was covered in subchapter 4.1.5 and would become the core of the new communications strategy. Before the launch of the new corporate brand, Helen informed its customers and stakeholders about its upcoming rebranding, very much akin to the translucent warning strategy presented by Kaikati & Kaikati (2003). This was seen as important by Helen, as it wanted to make sure that its clients felt comfortable about the change and point out that it was still the same company, just rebranded. The communication was mainly done through leaflets attached to bills and in the customer magazine. A launch strategy closer to the form of sudden eradication was not seen as favourable for the company, nor did it feel possible considering the resources and structure of the organization.

It was important in terms of continuity, that we informed our clients about the change. It was essential that they feel we are still us, and not some new weird company. We had to communicate in a way that made the transition smooth. The same applied to other stakeholders as well, for example suppliers. Continuity was an important consideration. – Blair Brand
The main external launch of the new corporate brand happened stepwise, mainly because of the time pressure. At first, the external communication was launched in the Helsinki area through print and outdoor advertising. A few months later a national campaign was launched, with more extensive use of media, including television. Helen also actively used its own communication channels throughout the process, such as the customer magazine, web site and social media. Later in the year, the company presented its controversial but successful content marketing surrounding the Yrjö Uusivirta character. Informants noted that the Yrjö Uusivirta character was essential in ultimately communicating the brand’s change. The national television campaign was also credited as a tool in raising the awareness of the brand. Following the rebranding campaign, Helen also started to put a bigger focus on a broader promotion of its employer brand. As stated previously, the new communication strategy also entailed Helen to take a more active role in communicating independently about issues related to the company and the energy sector. This was seen as an important part in strengthening the desired attribute of being bolder and less cautious.

4.2.5 Internal communication

The short amount of time was also affecting the internal part of the rebranding. A smaller core group mostly planned the whole rebranding process, and internal communication was not that extensive throughout it. Personnel were not exactly trained to the new corporate brand and its values, which differs from the suggestion by Daly & Moloney (2004). The importance of internal implementation has been repeatedly stated in rebranding (e.g. Lomax & Mador 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008), but in Helen’s case this received less focus. Informants noted that the corporatization made up a big part of the internal change process, which left less time for the branding aspect. However, there was a belief that as the new corporate brand was de facto so close to the identity, the need for internal rebranding was less crucial. This was also ultimately the case, which is an interesting finding in the sense that it somewhat contradicts previous rebranding research that almost unconditionally points out the need of thorough internal involvement.

“I do not know if the process went according to the best practice, as most of the rebranding work centred on the external part. It however helped that the new brand came from our existing identity and was more of a modernization. I think that a more extensive internal involvement probably would not have brought that much added value.” – Blair Brand
The statements above are not to say that there was not any internal consideration in Helen’s rebranding process. The planning involved personnel from different branches from the organization and it was seen that the rebranding was carried out throughout the organization. The rebranding included among other things new work apparel for workers in Helen’s production facilities, which made the change visible throughout the organization. There were also some discussions conducted with the staff within the organization, about their possible insecurities and questions about the upcoming change in the organization. In this way, the importance of internal integration (e.g. Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003; Daly & Moloney 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin 2006) also became apparent in Helen’s rebranding. Internally, the new brand was launched and presented at a company event, with an unveiling of the new brand aesthetics and a presentation of the new brand narrative. The “physical” launch of the new brand internally happened stepwise, similar to the external launch, with people receiving new work equipment on a small delay during the first year of the new corporate brand. There were also efforts made to keep personnel somewhat up to speed with the rebranding to keep people well aware of the change.

“We probably have not traditionally been that good in internal communication, so we did focus on it more this time. Whether it was enough, I cannot say.” – Sam Sales

“I think that we managed to get everybody along. The change can be seen in many tools and things people use in their everyday work.” – Harper Human

Wæraas (2008) argued that the issue of multiple identities is especially apparent in public sector organizations. This what someone seen as the case for Helen as well, with many informants stating the difference between production workers and people working at the company’s headquarters, with tasks such as marketing and sales. These differences were tried to be taken into account by Helen, and it was important that the change showed in all parts of the organization. Informants also believed in general that the new corporate brand well represented the organization as a whole. Perhaps a bigger identified difference between identities in the company was between people and their attitude towards changes in general. A big part of the personnel had worked for the company for years and appreciated the old culture, with some objection towards modernization and changes in general. This was not connected to any particular division, but was apparent throughout the organization. There also existed people within the staff that had hoped for an even bigger change through the
corporatization and rebranding. Even if some of these identity differences still exist, the new corporate brand and internal modernization has received mostly a positive welcome.

“There was some resistance towards change and still is. We have so many people in this organization that have been working here for ages, so they like to preserve parts of that old culture. On the other hand, some people hoped for a bigger change and still think that we have remained pretty much the same.” – Pat Promotion

4.2.6 The evaluation phase

The importance of evaluating the rebranding endeavour throughout the process was acknowledged in the theoretical framework (Daly & Moloney 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006). An identified difficulty in Helen’s rebranding process was the issue of time. This meant that the rebranding was moving quite fast, but also stepwise, which was credited as a good thing. The informants did not specifically point out that a structured ongoing evaluation was carried out during the process, but the stepwise approach did give room to evaluate different phases of the rebranding process.

Daly & Moloney (2004) propose a clear final evaluation at the end of a rebranding process. According to the informants, Helen did not conduct any structured evaluation internally, even if the process was reflected back on in some form. There was a feeling that the brand had been adopted well both externally and internally, which probably made a thorough official evaluation unnecessary. Consumer surveys about the launch campaign for the new corporate brand were conducted, covering the external dimension.

“It was evaluated in some way, but I cannot recall that we would have made that extensive of an analysis about it.” – Murphy Marketing

The lack of a structured final evaluation might in my view also be a natural cause of the success of Helen’s rebranding. While a clear evaluation might have been absent, I believe it is still in the interest of any company to constantly evaluate their corporate brand, which is something that Helen also has done and does. Informant generally believed that Helen today has successfully transformed to its new corporate brand, even if usage of the old brand name still surfaces. The organization was seen to have entered a new chapter in its history, after a transition phase of a year or so, to the new corporate brand. The success of Helen’s rebranding campaign and informant opinions about the process will be the subject of the next subchapter.
4.3 The success of Helen’s rebranding

Helen’s rebranding process was generally seen as successful by the informants, and this can also be supported by the consumer surveys. In this subchapter I will first present the outcome of Helen’s rebranding through the different consumer surveys (secondary data) I had access to. Then I will move on to present the informant views on the outcome and analyse them in relation to the identified success factors from the theoretical framework.

4.3.1 Results from the consumer surveys

A survey and analysis of Helen’s launch campaign (Q1 2015) identified that there was a clear sign of improvement in the spontaneous awareness level of the new corporate brand during the first three months. In the Helsinki area, the awareness of Helen’s name change was on a rather good level already in the first months, while the awareness was still low nationally.

The launch campaign’s marketing gained a positive reaction among consumers and was seen as different from the usual advertising in the energy sector. The leading associations generated by the campaign were city-centred, environmentally friendly and innovative. One of the main issues of Helen’s brand image was the association of the company not being particularly innovative. There was a clear improvement in this association thanks to the launch campaign, but approximately half of the respondents nationally still did not view Helen as an industry pioneer. However, in the Helsinki area, Helen was still viewed as more innovative than its main competitors.

A survey conducted later in the year of the launch (Q4 2015), did however not show a significant improvement in the awareness of Helen’s brand or desired image associations. The results of the continuation campaign suggested that the stage of introduction of the new corporate brand was now more a maintaining than increasing one, in terms of awareness and brand attributions. The brand narrative of “The world’s best city energy” still struggled to get a foothold outside of the Helsinki area, which meant that one of the goals, increasing national awareness and positive associations, was still not met during the first year. There was also a small drop in the association of innovativeness in general, but Helen was now seen nationally as more innovative than its competitors. Quite interestingly, this view had somewhat dropped in the Helsinki area during the year.

The brand tracking during the last three quarters of year 2016, however show a strong improvement in the awareness of Helen’s new corporate brand. The spontaneous awareness
of Helen was 58 % in Q4 2016 in the Helsinki area, well over Helen’s target of 40 % and the awareness level in Q4 of 2015, 33 %. The level of aided awareness also saw a big increase during 2016, being 58 % nationally, surpassing the target of 45 %. The aided awareness increased outside the Helsinki area from 33 % to 41 % between Q2 and Q4 of 2016 and the spontaneous awareness in municipalities close to Helsinki had almost doubled during the year. This signals a positive shift in the desired introduction of the Helen brand nationally. There was also a visible positive trend in acquiring new customers outside of Helsinki. In addition to an increased awareness nationally, Helen was the leader in top of mind awareness in Helsinki during 2016. Helen was also still seen as more innovative than its competitors in general.

The surveys show that Helen indeed has been able to increase its customer base through the rebranding and increase sales to an extent. Much of this was credited to the revision of Helen’s sales organization and procedures that the rebranding process partially enabled. The informant that specializes in sales argued that the price is still a definite deciding factor on the electricity market, even if branding activities have increased within the sector. Even though he viewed price as clearly the biggest consumer decision factor, he pointed out the importance of the corporate brand in the local core market. This shows some similarity with Wiedmann’s (2004 & 2005) findings on the advantages local energy companies enjoy in their core markets.

A key conclusion from the consumer surveys is the good awareness level of Helen’s new corporate brand. The awareness level at the end of 2016, notably exceeded the target levels of Helen, denoting a successful rebranding campaign in this sense. The loss of brand awareness is an apparent risk in rebranding endeavours, but Helen managed to transform awareness to its new corporate brand quite successfully. Based on the consumer surveys, Helen also managed to keep its positive image associations through the process. While Helen perhaps is not yet viewed as the innovative and modern company it desires to be, it still managed to increase associations connected to innovativeness, at least in relation to its competitors. Consumers also generally felt positive about Helen’s new marketing and brand narrative and widely saw Helen’s advertising as different compared to its competitors.

4.3.2 Rebranding success: avoiding the rebranding pitfalls
Perhaps the biggest factor for Helen’s successful rebranding was essentially the building of the new corporate brand from existing strengths of the organization. The new brand
narrative better highlighted these strengths in the company’s marketing communication. Informants noted that the new brand well represented the existing organization, which made the internal reception positive, despite not having that strong of a focus on internal rebranding. The new brand name spawned from internal use and felt natural for both company personnel and was eventually also well received among external stakeholders. Keeping the spirit and general look of the old logo intact also created a feel of modernization, but not a total deviation. Helen managed to keep enough elements of its old corporate brands, and its positive attributes are still associated with the new corporate brand. The change was eventually quite moderate, but still big enough to create attention and send a clear signal of change.

“It certainly helped that the rebranding of Helen spawned from our very own identity. The new Helen was eventually more like a fresher and modern version of Helsingin Energia.” – Blair Brand

This means that Helen clearly managed to avoid the first pitfall in rebranding processes, namely disconnecting with the core (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). The core of Helen still maintained, and was in a way even strengthened with the new brand narrative. The importance of honouring corporate history and roots (Merrilees & Miller 2008) was a key factor in Helen’s case. The new name was well representative of the company, even if becoming more abstract. The brand aesthetics went through a modernization but the long-time symbol of the lightning bolts remained. I speculated in the theoretical framework that dropping the Helsinki name from the corporate brand name, could hurt Helen on a regional level, similar to Swiss Air (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003) or British Airways (Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003), but this was not ultimately the case. The new name has been adopted well regionally and has resulted in a bigger awareness nationally.

Even if Helen did not focus on the internal communication and implementation of the new corporate brand to the same extent as proposed by previous rebranding research (e.g. Lomax & Mador 2006; Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007; Merrilees & Miller 2008), the internal adoption was still believed to be on a good level in Helen’s case. This was mostly thanks to the connection to Helen’s core, and keeping the change moderate enough. Therefore, Helen managed to avoid the pitfalls of stakeholder myopia and focus on labels not meanings (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). Informants pointed out the importance of structural and procedural changes made within the organization as a reason for success. These were felt to have made
the rebranding more credible and wholesome, as the internal organization also changed to a more modern one in conjunction with the corporate brand. Helen’s change was therefore not only superficial, but also organizational, thus becoming more wholesome for the company. The new brand also represented the new organization. The organizational changes were sparked from the corporatization of Helen, and as stated earlier, the corporatization was also believed to be a key aspect in the rebranding, as it provided a justified reason for rebranding. Having a clear reason for the rebranding was seen as a helpful part in the internal rebranding process, and eventually its success.

“It feels like the corporatization speeded up the internal rebranding. I see that the corporatization and rebranding supported each other strongly, and this was visible in internal and external reactions.” – Blair Brand

The issue of multiple identities within an organization was the last rebranding pitfall identified by Gotsi & Andripoulos (2007) and informants noted that there was some cultural differences between different divisions within Helen’s organization. However, there was a belief that the new corporate brand well encompassed the whole organization. The change is visible throughout the organization and different divisions received special considerations. The bigger issue in Helen’s case was perhaps the difference in attitudes towards change in general. While some people considered, and to some extent still view the old organization as better, the new corporate brand was generally welcomed. Controversial marketing strategies, like the Yrjö Uusivirta character still divides people, but the issue is more opinion-related than straight up connected to multiple identities. Multiple identities and cultures still exist within the organization and there are discussions in Helen how the culture could perhaps become more unified. However, informants also regarded diversity within the organization as a richness and the multiple identities did not essentially become a problem in the rebranding process.

4.3.3 Rebranding success: other success factors
Helen thus managed to avoid the typical pitfalls of rebranding, but other success factors existed as well. The stepwise approach to the launch of the new corporate brand was also credited to have contributed to the success. Helen did not do too much at once and informants believed that a steady development of the new corporate brand made the process more manageable and coherent. The timing of introducing new elements and marketing to the corporate brand was therefore credited as an important success factor.
“It helped that we moved stepwise in a way. I do not think that Helen would have been ready and greenlighted Yrjö before the launch of the new corporate brand.”

– Alex Agency

“The change was quite moderate in a way, but it enabled a more revolutionary change later on. This is one way to put it and it was one of the reasons for our success.”

– Murphy Marketing

Another key factor that was commented on was courage. If Helen had not been bold enough in employing new marketing forms and taken a more independent stance, many informants believed that the rebranding could have become much less successful. If Helen wanted to distance itself from its cautious and sluggish image, it needed to take some risks as well, with the Yrjö character highlighted by many as one.

Strong leadership, from Helen’s CEO to other company executives, was credited as a contributing success factor in the theoretical framework (Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014; Kaikati 2003) and some informants in Helen’s case highlighted this as well. The good co-operation and relationship with the agency partner was also an important contributor related to this. Trust and teamwork were emphasized as key aspects. A thorough analysis and groundwork was also deemed as crucial, as well as a broad stakeholder consideration and consultation, previously identified by Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova (2014).

While Helen’s rebranding can be seen as very successful overall. Some challenges still surfaced. The issue of too little time was already presented earlier and some shortcomings existed. A future challenge for Helen will be to keep its brand invigorated. The new more “modern and dynamic” brand requires continuous work and a bigger focus on marketing than before. This means also internal brand building. One informant noted that while the level of associations regarding modernity and innovativeness have increased to some extent externally, the internal brand image might not have developed in the same way. It was also seen as important that Helen in the future continues to keep in mind its whole organization. Even if Helen actively promotes new things, it should not forget its core strengths, starting from the efficient energy production in its power plants.

“A challenge has been to promote modernity as a brand attribute internally. It still scores low when we conduct internal tests. I think our external brand image is more modern that the internal one.” – Harper Human
4.4 Considerations when rebranding a municipal enterprise

A company’s strategy and goals naturally affects its rebranding process. Wiedmann (2004 & 2005) argued that local electricity companies should embrace locality; but what was interesting in Helen’s case, was the company’s desire to lessen the locality attribute of its brand. Helen wanted to move away from its municipal nature, as the company was seen as quite labelled as a local actor. Through the rebranding, Helen wished to strengthen its role as a national and possibly international actor.

However, one of Helen’s goals was still to retain the positive aspects the municipal ownership generated for its brand. Helen’s reputation as a reliable and responsible organization was indeed influenced by its status as a public sector organization. Helen primarily wanted to retain the positive associations from the corporate brand and add a more modern feel to the organization. This was a key consideration, and public sector organizations should embrace the positive aspects their nature bring.

“I think we have a fun mix right now. We are known as a municipal actor but we have managed to bring more modern attributes and associations to our corporate brand. It has been a really successful process in that sense.” – Murphy Marketing

Informants did not believe that Helen’s rebranding process itself initially had any special considerations because of its status as a municipal enterprise. Informants believed that the inherent goal is to create an attractive corporate brand and organization, no matter what type it is.

“I am not sure if it really differs from the private sector, because every company has its special characteristics that need to be considered, no matter what the ownership looks like.” – Alex Agency

However, the municipal ownership was seen to have influenced the characteristics of the organization. Not only had the municipal ownership affected the brand image of Helen, but informants also commented on certain aspects of the municipal nature that became important considerations in the rebranding. This is somewhat contradicting with the statement in the paragraph above, as some factors were eventually identified by the informants.
Wæraas (2008) noted the “higher morality” that public sector organizations theoretically have to apply to, and this dimension was visible for Helen as well. Multiple informants described Helen as a “blameless knight”, and even if the goal was to create a braver and more modern organization, this characteristic still needed to apply to an extent. After all, Helen is still a public sector organization. The responsibility and ethical conduct was still something that needed to be heavily considered, and was a reason why the use of somewhat controversial marketing was heavily discussed internally.

“Previously, we really did not want to offend anyone and wanted to act as a blameless knight. Now, we are at a point where we dare to sell as well. However, we are still careful in not being too aggressive. We cannot really have complaints coming in.”

– Sam Sales

However, the possible political influence that public sector organization face (Whelan et al. 2010; Larsen 2014) was not as apparent in Helen’s case. The company had operated quite independently from the City of Helsinki and the corporatization further strengthened this. Informants commented that the corporatization also meant that Helen needed a bigger focus on its brand building and brand identity. The company needed to be displayed clearly as an energy company and not a municipal enterprise. A key aspect of the corporatization and rebranding was also the transformation of Helen taking a bolder and more independent role in its communication, and this was seen as a positive thing.

“There was previously probably not the same need to have a clear identity externally, it was enough that we looked like a municipal enterprise or a governmental agency.”

– Cameron Creative

Another consideration that can affect the rebranding of municipal enterprises and other public organizations is the high bureaucracy and stiffness of these types of organizations. While Helen’s rebranding went quite smoothly overall, informants still noted some sluggishness. The process might not always move as swiftly as it should, and things like procurement processes can be slow. Municipal organizations usually have long relationships with personnel, which means a special consideration on the internal rebranding, as it may take time for people to change their routines and adopt new procedures.

“With many employees and a long history, people still might be in different stages on the scale of change.” – Sam Sales
“There is the classic attitude that we are working for the City.” – Pat Promotion

Informants noted that when it comes to rebranding, public sector organizations need a justifiable reason to rebrand and just a pure modernization is not always seen as a viable reason. Informants noted that there was a clear need to modernize the corporate brand in Helen’s case and they generally believed that the rebranding would have been possible in theory even without the corporatization. However, the corporatization still gave a distinct and justified reason to rebrand, which heavily helped both the external and internal process.

“It could have been done certainly (without the corporatization). However, it (the corporatization) gave a strong argument for the rebranding and a bigger change. It could have been questioned much more without it.” – Murphy Marketing

4.4.1 What can other public sector organizations learn from Helen’s case?

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the rebranding of a municipal enterprise. A goal is to identify special considerations that public sector organizations should be aware of, if deciding to rebrand their corporate brand. What can the public sector learn from Helen’s case?

Informants pointed out the need to be bold in the rebranding. The new corporate brand should strive to make an impact. Rebranding inherently signals a big change, and thus if a corporation decides to change its corporate brand name, the change has to be significant. Even if public sector organizations need to employ some cautiousness because of their nature, they still need to be daring and actively look for new ways to promote themselves. The change should mark an improvement.

“Maybe the fact that it really pays of to be brave; it has been a benefit for us. If you change, you need to improve, not just maintain the good aspects.” – Murphy Marketing

At the same time, the change has to be moderate enough, in order to avoid the typical rebranding pitfall of deviating too much from the organization’s identity. The stepwise introduction was seen as beneficial in Helen’s case. Informants viewed the change initially as quite moderate, but the constant additions of new marketing forms and brand building ultimately led to a bigger transformation.

The agency informant really stressed the importance of good leadership in a public sector context. He also noted that the complex and wide array of stakeholders that public
organizations have, needs to be taken into account in the planning process. Even, and especially those that might have a negative view of the company in question. The importance of choosing a fitting and skilful partner agency was also highlighted by informants, and the decision making process on this should be done with great care.

“The commitment of upper management to the change is really essential within the public sector.” – Alex Agency

Informants also pointed out that if the new positioning (or brand narrative) indeed can be built from the existing brand strengths, the internal rebranding process can become much easier to implement. Public sector organizations should not shy away from their strengths and create daring communication. It is okay for public sector organizations to praise themselves. At the same time informants also commented that the internal procedures need to change, in order for the rebranding to have full effect. It is hard to create a modern image if the internal organization does not adhere to it. This relates to the importance of connection and consistency between the external and internal brand image that has been highlighted in the theoretical framework (e.g. Muzellec & Lambkin 2006; Daly & Moloney 2004; Jo Hatch & Schultz 2003).

“We did not bring anything new and weird, the core (of the new brand narrative) could be already found in the organization.” – Blair Brand

“What can also be learned from this is that if an opportunity like this arises, you should also think about and then implement new procedures.” – Sam Sales

I have now presented and analysed the results of the empirical part of my study, in accordance with my theoretical framework. In the next chapters, I will move on to analyse the key findings of my study, and ultimately create implications for other public sector organizations considering rebranding. The next chapter consists of an in-depth analysis of my findings, and my main implications will be summarized and presented in the last chapter of my thesis.
5 ANALYSIS

As we learned in the previous chapter, many aspects of Helen’s rebranding process are highly linked to previous rebranding research within the private sector. Helen’s successful rebranding effort managed to avoid the typical pitfalls of rebranding, and was characterized by some of the identified success factors, such as strong leadership and thorough analysis.

However, I believe some aspects of Helen’s rebranding process to be of special interest for public sector organizations. After describing and analysing Helen’s rebranding process, I will now in this chapter discuss its most interesting aspects in my view, and possible implications from it in relation to my study’s ultimate aim, i.e. what other public sector organizations could learn from Helen’s case.

At first, I will put Helen’s rebranding in the scope of rebranding terminology, in order to connect Helen’s rebranding to existing definitions of rebranding. Then, I will move on to discuss factors from Helen’s rebranding process that contributed to its success. The fact that Helen managed to build its new corporate brand from existing strengths was a key factor, as well as the stepwise and bold enough approach to marketing and promotion. How Helen’s corporatization affected the rebranding is also a key point of interest. Despite Helen’s rebranding being very successful in the end, some minor deficiencies were still apparent in the process, which I will discuss in the last subchapter.

5.1 Helen’s rebranding in the scope of rebranding terminology

The rebranding of Helen can be seen as a typical example of rebranding, including a change of the corporate brand name, brand aesthetics and its positioning, by building a new brand narrative around the slogan “The world’s best city energy”. Because of the inclusion of a name change, Helen’s rebranding can be seen as revolutionary (Stuart & Muzellec 2004) and complete (Daly & Moloney 2004). The level of rebranding that occurred in Helen’s case, if put in the spectrum of the terminology developed by Lomax & Mador (2006), is up for discussion. Lomax & Mador (2006) proposed two different terms for rebranding that includes a name change, re-naming and re-starting. Re-starting is to denote a bigger change than just the name, where brand values and attributes also face transformation. While Helen
built its new brand narrative (positioning) on the existing strengths of the company, without expressly changing its values, I still consider Helen’s case to fall more under re-starting. Helen’s corporatization, in addition to bolder marketing communication, eventually led to a bigger transformation of the company and its brand.

Still, in my view, the change can still be seen as quite moderate. The new corporate brand name spawned from internal use and was a common abbreviation of the old name. The logo change was a modernization but kept the core intact. Despite the arguably moderate change, it was still big enough of a turnaround for the brand to fall under the category of re-starting. The brand narrative changed and Helen took a bolder and more noticeable stance in its communication, added with new organizational procedures. Table 4 summarizes how Helen’s case relates to the rebranding terminology presented in the theoretical framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Applied to Helen’s case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stuart &amp; Muzellec (2004)</td>
<td>Continuum between evolutionary or revolutionary</td>
<td>Helen’s rebranding was revolutionary: big changes including a name change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daly &amp; Moloney (2004)</td>
<td>Continuum with minor, intermediate or complete change</td>
<td>Helen’s rebranding was complete: changes to aesthetics, brand communication and name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lomax &amp; Mador (2006)</td>
<td>Typology in rebranding: re-defining, re-naming, re-starting</td>
<td>Helen’s rebranding included a name change and the level of change ultimately denoted re-starting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Helen’s rebranding in the scope of rebranding terminology

It is clear that Helen’s rebranding falls quite well under the definition by Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) used for this thesis, where rebranding is “the practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors”. The level of change in Helen’s corporate brand and organization ultimately became the most profound form of rebranding found in the presented terminology, even if the changes in Helen’s case had a noticeable connection to the old brand and resulted in a measured outcome. Just as Lomax & Mador (2006) noted, defining the levels of rebranding rarely becomes absolute, which is apparent in this case. Nevertheless, Helen’s case can still be seen as an example of comprehensive rebranding.

The moderate, but still substantial change in name and logo is an interesting implication for public sector organizations. Some informants commented on the widely regarded
shortcoming of the Finnish postal service Posti’s rebranding to Itella, which shows that the decision on a new name should not be taken lightly in the public sector. Descriptive names can be seen as a norm in the public sector, and locality is often highlighted, especially in municipal enterprises and municipally owned corporations. These too descriptive names can however become a burden for organizations and make names that are more abstract preferable, similar to the few private sector examples in the theoretical framework (Lomax & Mador 2006). Even if the new corporate brand name needs to be more abstract, organizations could try to develop a new name in a way that keeps a connection to the old name. The possibility of abbreviations or other versions of the old name could be used.

A similar notion could be applied to a change in brand aesthetics. As public sector organizations usually have a high brand awareness (Wæraas 2008) and in many cases a long history, a moderate change similar to Helen’s could be a better option. Keeping a similar logo or other brand symbols intact can become valuable, if the corporate brand name changes. The balance between renaming and redesign should be an important consideration when rebranding.

5.2 The new positioning and brand narrative as a key success factor
The fact that Helen was able to build its new positioning and narrative from an existing strength in its corporate brand and organization, can in my opinion, be seen as very fortunate. Thanks to this, Helen managed to avoid several typical pitfalls in a rebranding process presented by Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007). Helen was able to be true to its core and history, at the same time as the company was able to promote a credible and attractive message to its stakeholders. Building the new corporate brand from the foundation of “The world’s best city energy”, Helen also eliminated the threat of the new brand not resonating internally. Even if there was some internal scepticism and cautiousness about the new brand promise, it was still truthful and well grounded. Furthermore, the developed message also quite naturally encompassed the whole organization and worked as a core identity throughout the company, even if separate cultures between different divisions might have existed. The chosen positioning and brand narrative also differed from Helen’s competitors.

The finding above contradicts to a notable extent the proposition of Sataøen & Wæraas (2015) that public sector organizations should not necessarily strive to create their brand
around one common identity and not too meticulously aim for a differentiating positioning. Through a careful and thorough brand analysis, Helen was able to find a solution that ultimately gave them both a differentiated brand narrative and a common identity. However, it is good to keep in mind that not all organizations possess such a “hidden strength” as Helen did, but I strongly believe that it would be unwise for public sector organizations to avoid seeking creative ways to promote themselves. Just as the agency informant commented, in accordance with Sataøen & Wæraas (2015), the corporate brand should not be built on clichés just because of getting one common identity; but this does not mean that public sector organizations should shy away from finding one. Of course, we can only theorize whether “The world’s best city energy” actually was the best possible choice of brand narrative and core brand identity for Helen. Nevertheless, it still generated a positive outcome and contributed to the successful rebranding of Helen.

The way Helen built its new corporate brand also notably eased the rebranding process itself. As the new corporate brand spawned from Helen’s existing strengths, the internal implementation eventually required less focus than the external. Helen did not conduct any specific personnel training or extensive internal communication, as suggested by e.g. Daly & Moloney (2004) or Lomax & Mador (2006). This left more room for the external dimension of Helen’s planning process, as the internal implementation did not require that extensive efforts. To conclude, if the corporate brand can be built on existing strengths, the pressure of thorough internal implementation is most likely lessened. Obviously, this can be seen as being close to a best case scenario, but in Helen’s case this choice only became apparent after a thorough brand analysis.

The importance of a thorough analysis when rebranding is really highlighted in Helen’s case, and shows how crucial the analysis phase is in a rebranding process (Daly & Moloney 2004; Luck 2012; Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014). An implication from this is that public sector organizations should carefully evaluate and analyse the current strengths of not only their brand, but also their overall organization and procedures, which can be used in developing the new corporate brand. Just as Sataøen & Wæraas (2015) argue, the corporate brand of public sector organizations can indeed be very pragmatic in that sense, but I do not believe in their suggestion of avoiding differentiation. Public sector organizations should not be afraid of promoting their strengths in a creative or assertive way. Of course, public sector organizations should strive for a certain higher morality or responsibility, which can be seen
as one of their strengths. Nevertheless, this does not mean that marketing or the corporate brand has to be bland and the communication cautious. Being bold ultimately became one of Helen’s key success factors, even if some decisions in terms of marketing created hesitation.

5.3 Road to success: moderate change added with daring marketing

A key success factor in Helen’s case was indeed its braver communication and marketing that was adopted in conjunction with the rebranding. Many informants noted the Yrjö Uusivirta character and use of content marketing as symbolic of the new rebranded corporate brand. While the initial change of renaming, redesign and repositioning eventually was quite moderate, the use of new and bolder marketing activities eventually made the ultimate change much bigger. As Wæraas (2008) noted that public sector organizations usually possess a high brand awareness, moderate changes in the elements of brand name and logo might be best suitable in the rebranding of these organizations. It could be a better solution for public sector organizations to focus instead on their positioning, brand narrative and overall marketing instead. We can also learn from Helen’s case that public sector organizations can and should take use of creative and even audacious marketing and promotional tactics.

In Helen’s case, informants credited the “stepwise” launch of the new corporate brand to have contributed to the rebranding success. Starting moderately, but adding heat as the new corporate brand was forming. Drawing from this, it might be of interest to public sector organizations to start moderately with the launch of the new corporate brand. Public sector organizations can be seen as quite conservative and cautious, but also enjoy positive attributes such as reliability and trustworthiness that may indirectly translate from this. A sudden increase in marketing efforts and a change in the corporate brand, might therefore be deemed unsuitable by internal and external stakeholders, as it deviates too much from the traditional actions of the organization in question. Instead, these efforts could be launched stepwise, in order to create a familiarity among stakeholders about the new active communication. The initial launch of the new corporate brand should strive to awake attention, but not necessarily heavy reactions. The sequencing in the relaunch of the new corporate brand thus becomes a key consideration in the planning phase of a rebranding
process, thus becoming an important part of the marketing plan in the framework by Daly & Moloney (2004).

However, an interesting thought that also rises from this, is whether the external rebranding process could actually be easier for public sector organizations. As these organizations traditionally have had a lesser focus on marketing and branding (Larsen 2014), it might be easier to create a fresher brand image and denote change. Even if public sector organizations might have a deeply rooted and sluggish brand identity, the bland and distant image among external stakeholders, could hypothetically make it easier to start from a clean slate.

No matter how an organization decides to launch its new corporate brand, the work should not stop there. A continuous effort should be done after the rebranding itself, and an organization should actively employ new forms of marketing after it. While a rebranding campaign requires special attention in the moment, an organization has to be committed to its new corporate brand and ready to promote it. A continuation of active promotion after the rebranding process, could also possibly lessen internal change resistance. As Sharma & Kamalanabhan (2012) noted, public sector employees are affected by the level of organizations’ external visibility; which means that if the outwards marketing is continuously active, a spirit of change could be distributed throughout the organization.

Of course amidst all these external considerations one should not forget the importance of internal implementation. A big reason for Helen’s success was still the fact that the new corporate brand resonated well internally. No matter what tricks an organization might use on an external level, the corporate brand has to be well adopted internally.

5.4 Corporatization as an opportunity to rebrand
Even if the analysis and planning stages (Daly & Moloney 2004) of Helen’s rebranding process were highly successful, the very driver for it (corporatization) eventually became a crucial success factor as well. Many informants commented that the corporatization provided a justified reason for the rebranding of Helen’s corporate brand. They also noted that having a well-grounded reason ultimately became an important success factor. This was the case for both internal and external audiences. Informants felt that the corporatization provided a good opportunity to rebrand the corporate brand. They also commented that having a justified reason for rebranding is particularly important in a public sector context,
where resource-consuming endeavours are under special scrutiny. I find this to be an important implication of my study. Even if different rebranding drivers have been identified (e.g. Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin 2003; Lomax & Mador 2006; Kapferer 2012, p.417) and categorized (Muzellec & Lambkin 2006) in previous research, the driver’s impact on rebranding success has not been attended to the same extent. Having a justified reason to rebrand in the eyes of stakeholders was a very important success factor in Helen’s case.

In Helen’s case, the corporatization dominated the internal change process, rather than the rebranding. In this sense, corporatization could possibly further help the internal rebranding. Performing rebranding in conjunction with corporatization might make the internal adoption of a new corporate brand easier, as the organization already is facing a structural change. However, just as some informants noted, rebranding and corporatization have to work hand-in-hand and support each other. Hytti et al. (2015) noted that a failed rebranding effort could also render a structural change adverse in the eyes of internal stakeholders. Through corporatization, public sector organizations could employ new organizational procedures that also support the new corporate brand, if conducting rebranding at the same time, or vice versa.

Of course, conducting a rebranding in conjunction with a corporatization bears obvious risks as well. Corporatization is a significant process in its own right, and companies should evaluate whether it is worthwhile to carry out two time and resource consuming processes simultaneously. While there are clear benefits in doing so, based on Helen’s case, a careful consideration is still very much needed.

5.5 The issue of resistance to change
As we learned in chapter 4, Helen eventually managed to avoid the four rebranding pitfalls by Gotsi & Andriopoulos (2007) and the biggest challenge ultimately was the relatively short time reserved for the rebranding. Helen’s case highlighted the previously noted time consuming nature of a rebranding process. Even if the outcome eventually was a success, informants still noted that the tight schedule was an obvious risk.

It is worth some consideration whether the tight time schedule had some negative consequences for Helen. In hindsight, one could ask if more time could have left room for a more thorough internal process. Even if the internal implementation of Helen’s brand
eventually went well without that much effort, some problems regarding it still emerged. Informants widely commented on the resistance to change apparent within the organization. While there has not been any directly negative consequences of this passive resistance, a more thorough internal process could perhaps have addressed this issue. In addition, a part of Helen’s personnel was hoping for a bigger change than the eventual rebranding, which also signals that some small discrepancies exist. This shows that we can find some connection to the pitfall of multiple identities (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007), even if it was not connected to the corporate brand and identity per se.

An implication could be that not only should organizations focus on communicating the new corporate brand, but also address the issue of change in general. We learned from Helen’s case that it could be seen as quite typical for municipal enterprises (and most likely other public sector organizations) that staff might have long-ranging careers within the organization. This means that resistance to change in general is likely to exist, even if the new corporate brand itself is well received.

Despite the issue of resistance to change, Helen’s rebranding can be seen as a successful endeavour with overall important learning points for future rebranding cases within the public sector. In the next and last chapter of my thesis, I will summarize the discussion in this chapter and create the main implications of my study. I will also discuss the possible limitations and also provide suggestions for further research.
6 IMPLICATIONS

In this final chapter of my thesis, I will summarize the main implications of my study. I will also include suggestions for further research and discuss the limitations of my study.

Many of the previously identified success factors in rebranding also apply in Helen’s case, and the process of Helen’s rebranding bore many similarities with previous private sector case studies. However, based on the empirical part of my study and my discussion in the previous chapter, I believe to have created new insights to corporate rebranding and especially in a public sector context, which will be now presented. I have met the aim of my study by analysing the rebranding of a municipal enterprise, and created implications for organizations in the public sector considering a rebranding process. While these implications are primarily targeted towards public sector organizations, they are by no means exclusive to them and include aspects that could be applicable to all types of organizations and corporate brands facing rebranding. Based on my results and analysis, I will now conclude my thesis with key implications that should receive special consideration in public sector organizations considering rebranding.

There needs to be a justified reason to rebrand, e.g. corporatization. Public sector organizations might face special scrutiny if conducting a resource consuming rebranding effort, compared to private sector counterparts. Based on Helen’s case, rebranding in the public sector strongly requires a justified reason, and can become an important success factor. Corporatization has been identified as such and it also works well as a conjoint process with rebranding, possibly providing more flexibility in the planning of the new corporate brand, as it gives room for a bigger organizational change that could eventually affect the corporate brand as well.

The new corporate brand should be built from within. In order to avoid typical rebranding pitfalls, the new corporate brand should heavily rely on the existing strengths of an organization. Helen’s case further indicates that a coherent and in-depth analysis of the brand and organization is crucial in the beginning of a rebranding process. Instead of trying to create an all-encompassing and creative brand narrative from scratch, an organization should build it on its existing true strengths and focus on creative communication of them. Obviously, this is easier said than done, but creating the new corporate brand from existing
strengths and even the very core of the organization, avoids many typical rebranding pitfalls. The results from this case study reveal that doing so can also result in a much easier implementation of the new corporate brand internally, which is heavily stressed in corporate level rebranding.

** Organizations should start moderately and add heat later. ** Helen’s case suggests that using a moderate approach at first might be a better fit for public sector organizations. In both renaming and redesign, these organizations should perhaps use moderate changes to the most visible elements, the corporate brand name and logo. Renaming could focus on abbreviations or at least keeping a clear connection to the old name. As public sector organizations might lack branding and marketing knowledge, it might be of interest to launch the new corporate brand stepwise. This leaves room to evaluate different steps, and to add more bolder promotion after the public has become accustomed to the new brand. The typical cautious nature of public organizations might actually make it easier to start from a clean slate and get extra attention from external stakeholders. It is important that the branding effort continues or even increases after a rebranding process.

**External communication should be bold.** Helen’s case reveals that public sector organizations should not shy away from using creative forms of marketing and boldly promote their corporate brand. They should actively seek expertise in new ways to market themselves. It needs to be clear within the organizations that positive attributes such as honesty, reliability and fairness, do not always span from cautiousness and prudency, but from evidence of work well done. Public organizations are allowed to stand up for themselves and create innovative communication. Without bold and noticeable communication, a rebranding effort can easily fall flat and possibly significantly hurt brand awareness.

**Change in general needs to be communicated internally.** The results from this case suggest that internal communication and implementation during a rebranding process should not only focus on the corporate brand itself. Personnel in public sector organizations can have considerably longstanding careers at the same organization, with deeply rooted habits and working culture. This means that personnel might not object the new corporate brand itself, but just the proposition of organizational change. Communication should therefore focus also on addressing employee questions and insecurities about change in general, not only the new corporate brand and rebranding.
I have generated these implications based on my analysis of Helen’s rebranding and a review of previous rebranding research. Of course being an exploratory study, this thesis presents a single critical case of rebranding in the public sector, which might induce some limitations and calls for further research in this area. This matter will be covered in the two final subchapters of my thesis.

6.1 Limitations
The implications of this study are based on a single critical case study, which might limit the generalizability of its findings. It is worth to note that Helen as a company operates in a highly competitive market and industry. Many public organizations operate as a monopoly or with a monopoly-like status, which naturally might affect a rebranding process. The array of different public sector organizations is also wide, not only including companies like Helen, but also different governmental or municipal agencies and institutions with distinct corporate brands. It is also worth to note that Helen is a fairly big company with a desire for a bigger national status, which might make it less comparable with other municipal enterprises or municipally-owned companies that want to keep a strong local focus.

Helen’s status, size and industry of operation might have influenced the findings and implications of this thesis, but I still deem them valuable due to the scarce research on rebranding in the public sector. The in-depth nature of my case study, makes in my opinion my main implications logical, which Patton (2015, p.276) has previously recognized as a strength of single case studies. As Gummesson (2000, p.90-97) points out, qualitative research is often theory building, and I encourage and hope for further research in order to test the implications of my study.

6.2 Suggestions for further research
In order to create further generalizations of rebranding in a public sector context, I would suggest further research to focus on other types of public sector organizations, such as governmental agencies or municipally owned companies in less competitive markets. As Helen’s rebranding can arguably be seen as very successful, it could also be of interest to analyse a rebranding process with a less favourable outcome. It would also be of interest to
study public sector organizations in another type of country than Finland, as the Finnish public sector is very large in scope. I also welcome other research designs than case studies, possibly employing quantitative methods comparing and analysing public sector rebranding between different markets and industries.

I also believe that all type of branding research in a public sector context would be welcome. As scholars have pointed out, research in this field is scarce (Wæraas 2008; Whelan et al. 2010), even if we see an increase in corporatizations (McDonald 2014) and thus consequently private-sector like interest in branding and marketing.

Public sector organizations should not be overlooked in branding research and I think that they make formidable research subjects. The municipal or governmental ownership can make access easier for researchers and these organizations still make an important portion of our economy and society. Corporate brands are by no means exclusive to the private sector and I strongly encourage for more research in a municipal and public sector context. It can generate interesting implications beneficial to overall rebranding and branding knowledge, across all types of organizations.
SVENSK SAMMANFATTNING

INLEDNING

De flesta av oss har säkert aldrig på allvar funderat över att byta våra namn. Sedan födseln och genom våra liv, har vi blivit kända för andra genom våra namn. Vår personlighet, vårt rykte och vad vi åstadkommit är kopplat till det, så varför skulle vi vilja ändra på det? Samma tanke gäller till en hög grad även företag och deras varumärke (eng. corporate brand). Varumärken hör till de få långvariga konkurrensfördelar som företag innehar och har byggt upp genom insatser under företagets hela existens (Kapferer 2012, s.10). Frågan är varför företag i så fall skulle vilja ogiltigförklara dessa insatser och börja från noll, genom att döpa om sitt etablerade företagsvarumärke.


Problemområde

Ommprofilering som koncept har existerat länge, men fenomenet har fått rätt lite uppmärksamhet i varumärkesforskning (Kapferer 2012, s.415). I grund och botten betyder

Liberaliseringen av flera industrier, speciellt inom EU, har dessutom skapat ny lagstiftning som kräver en omstrukturering av statligt eller kommunalt ägda organisationer. En vanlig typ av omstrukturering är bolagisering, som blivit allt vanligare de senaste åren (McDonald 2014). Bolagisering betyder ofta att organisationer börjar agera mer likt den privata sektorn (Bozec & Breton 2003; McDonald 2014), vilket kunde i teorin betyda en ökad fokus på marknadsföring och byggande av varumärken inom dessa organisationer. Trots att bolagisering har behandlats inom forskning tidigare (t.ex. Bozec & Breton 2003; Aivazian et al. 2005; McDonald 2014) har dessa inte behandlat effekten av bolagisering på marknadsföring och varumärken.

Denna avhandling strävar att skapa ny kunskap om omprofilering inom den offentliga sektorn, genom att undersöka om profilering av ett kommunalt affärsverk, nämligen Helen Oy (tidigare Helsingin Energia). Jag anser detta befogat, eftersom det finns en stigande trend av bolagiserings (McDonald 2014) och samtidigt är mängden forskning om varumärken inom den offentliga sektorn knapp (Wæraas 2008; Whelan et al. 2010).

**Syfte**

Avhandlingens syfte är att analysera omprofileringen av ett kommunalt affärsverk. Målet är att beskriva och analysera Helens omprofileringsprocess, samt skapa implikationer som andra företag inom den offentliga sektorn kan dra nytta av.
Case-företag: Helen Oy

Avhandlingens bygger på en fallstudie, närmare sagt omprofileringen av Helen Oy (tidigare Helsingin Energia). Helen är ett över 100 år gammalt företag som ägs av Helsingfors stad. Från och med början av år 2015 ändrade Helens företagsform från kommunalt affärsverk till ett aktiebolag och i samband med detta genomgick företaget ett namnbyte och en omprofilering.

TEORI


Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin (2003) presenterar fyra element som traditionellt utgör omprofilering, nytt namn (renaming), ny visuell design (redesign), ny positionering (repositioning) och lanseringen av det nya företagsvarumärket (relaunch). Graden av omprofilering kan naturligtvis ändra från fall till fall, beroende på hur stor del av ett varumärkes attribut och värden räkar ut för en ändring (Daly & Moloney 2004; Stuart & Muzellec 2004; Lomax & Mador 2006).

• Ändringar i ägarstruktur, såsom företagsförvärv och sammanslagningar
• Ändringar i strategi, såsom diversifiering, internationalisering eller avyttringar
• Ändringar i positionering, ofta relaterat till ryktesmässiga problem, föråldrad varumärkesbild eller minskad marknadsandel
• Ändringar i den externa omgivningen, såsom ny lagstiftning eller kriser och katastrofer som påverkar företaget.

För Helen och andra offentliga organisationer kan bolagisering bli en ledande orsak för omprofilering. Mängden bolagiseringar har ökat märkbart under de senaste åren (McDonald 2014), och kan leda till en naturlig ökning av fokus på marknadsföring, mer likt den privata sektorn.


lagt för stor fokus på den externa bilden av företaget och inte sett till att det nya varumärket är tillräckligt fastrotat i organisationen (Gotsi & Andriopoulos 2007). Andra typiska fallgropar i omprofilering är att företaget avviker för mycket från sina rötter eller inte lyckas beakta de olika kulturer och identiteter som existerar i företaget (ibid.) Fastän företaget strävar till att omprofilera sig, bör man ändå vara trogen till varumärkets historia och kärna, samt försöka få det nya varumärket att tilltala hela organisationen. En noggrann analys på företaget och starkt ledarskap är faktorer som anses hjälpa företag att genomgå en lyckad omprofilering och undvika dessa fallgropar (Kaikati 2003; Miller, Merrilees & Yakimova 2014).

**Varumärken inom den offentliga sektorn**

METOD


Insamling av data

Yin (1984, s.90) föreslår att fallstudier skall bygga på en data insamlad från flera olika källor för att utnyttja styrkorna som fallstudien som forskningsmetod innehar. Datatyper för fallstudier är enligt honom dokument, arkivdata, intervjuer, observationer, deltagande observationer och fysiska artefakt (Yin 1984, s.76). En användning av olika typer av källor hjälper forskaren att hitta nya insikter, jämföra data och stärka validiteten på studien (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, s.169; Yin 1984, s.91). I val av källor, bör forskaren vara medveten om sina egna resurser. Både tillgänglig tid och kunskapsnivå påverkar valet och forskaren bör använda de källor han anser sig behärskas (Yin 1984, s.91). I mitt fall har jag bestämt mig för att använda semi-strukturerade intervjuer som källa för primärdatal, samt använda arkivdata som sekundärdatal. Jag baserade mitt val på min tidigare kunskap i användningen av dessa datakällor, samt tillgången till information.

Mina primärdatal bygger på semi-strukturerade intervjuer med sex representanter från Helen, samt en intervju med en representant från marknadsföringsbyrån som fungerade som Helens partner i omprofileringprocessen. Informanterna från Helen jobbar med olika arbetsuppgifter inom företaget och målet var att få en så bred bild av omprofileringen som möjligt och hur den påverkat företaget. Informanternas arbetsuppgifter varierade från marknadsföring till personalresurser och försäljning.


**Analyser av data**

Yin (1984, s.100-103) föreslår två strategier till analys av data i fallstudier. Antingen kan forskaren förlita sig till teoretiska propositioner eller utveckla en beskrivning av fallstudien. Enligt honom är användningen av teoretiska propositioner att föredra, då det ofta hjälper forskaren att begränsa datamängden och fokusera på det relevanta. I mitt fall var valet av teoretiska propositioner naturligt, då insamlingen av mina primärdatal byggde på semi-strukturerade intervjuer, där intervjuguiden baserade sig på en teoretisk referensram.

I analys av mina primärdatal har jag använt mig av kategorisering. Kategorisering betyder att forskaren betecknar delar av data enligt kategorier bestämda på förhand. I mitt fall i stora grad enligt de teman och ämnen jag ville behandla utgående från min intervjuguide.
Kategorisering hjälper i att minska datamängden och stöder forskaren i att fokusera på de delar som är relevanta för undersökningens syfte. Via kategorisering kan forskaren sedan använda tekniker såsom abstraktion och jämförelse; för att bygga upp bredare teman genom att gruppera data, samt jämföra skillnader och likheter i vår insamlade data. (Spiggle 1994)

Analysen av mitt sekundärdatal byggde på jämförelser med delar av mitt primärdatal, men även en noggrann analys på hur varumärkesbilderna på Helen har utvecklats bland konsumenter. Mitt sekundärdatal gav också en möjlighet att jämföra Helens varumärke med dess största konkurrenter.

**Forskningskvalitet**

Yin (1984, s.36) föreslår fyra stycken bedömningskriterier på fallstudiers forskningskvalitet: begreppssäkerhet (eng. construct validity), externt validitet (eng. external validity), intern validitet (eng. internal validity) och reliabilitet. Av dessa är intern validitet inte tillämpbart för min studie, då det används endast för explanativa fallstudier. Användning av validitet och reliabilitet som mått på forskningskvalitet i kvalitativa studier har dock ifrågasatts, och därmed har alternativa kriterier såsom tillförlitlighet och äkthet Bryman & Bell (2015, s.400). Tillförlitlighet kan delas in i fyra delkriterier: trovärdighet, överförbarhet, pålitlighet och bekräftelsebarhet, medan äkthet menar hur uvida forskningen ger en rättvis bild om vad som skett (ibid.).

Genom att använda olika källor av information i form av både primärtall och sekundärdatal, redovisat mina empiriska resultat tydligt, samt klart kopplat samman de olika delarna i min avhandling, har jag mött kriterierna begreppssäkerhet och trovärdighet (Yin 1984, s.96; Bryman & Bell 2015, s.401). Extern validitet, likt överförbarhet behandlar generaliserbarheten av ens studie (Yin 1984, s.38; Bryman & Bell 2015, s.402). Jag har nått detta genom en ingående fallstudie, med tydlig koppling till tidigare forskning.

Reliabilitet, liknande pålitlighet, kräver att en forskare så tydligt som möjligt beskriver sin forskningsprocess, vilket jag gjort i metodkapitlet av denna avhandling. Vidare har jag även sparat transkriberingar, ljudinspelningar och andra dokument för möjlig framtida evaluering. Detta tangerar även det sista delkriteriet i tillförlitlighet, nämligen bekräftelsebarhet. Äktheten av min studie har stärkts genom att inkludera informanter från olika avdelningar i Helens organisation, samt en utanför. Samtidigt har även användning av sekundärdatal bidragit till en mer heltäckande bild om Helens omprofilering.
RESULTATREDOVISNING


I den nya visuella designen uppdaterades Helens logotyp och färganvändningen i varumärkets kommunikation och promotionsmaterial blev färggrannare. Helen hade redan länge använt tre blixtar som varumärkets symbol och logotypen var väl omtyttet inom företaget. Därmed bestämde sig företaget att inte helt och hållet byta logotyp, utan snarare modernisera designen på den. Det ansågs att genom att hålla kvar blixtarna lyckades Helen hålla kvar en viktig anknytning till sitt gamla varumärke och hålla en bra balans i omprofileringen.


Helens omprofilering ansågs slutligen vara väldigt lyckad och företaget har nått bra resultat i konsumentundersökningar speciellt utanför Helsingfors. Innanför Helsingfors har introdutionen av det nya varumärket även skett smärtfritt och Helen har i överlag inte


Orsaker bakom Helens framgång ansågs vara ett starkt ledarskap, en stegvis lansering och att företaget vågade vara modig i sin kommunikation. Dessa ansågs vara speciellt viktiga inom den offentliga sektorn. En annan viktig aspekt var att Helen genom bolagiseringen hade en bra orsak att genomgå en omprofilering. Enligt informanterna kan det vara svårt att motivera omprofileringar inom den offentliga sektorn, där det ofta förväntas en tungt berättigad orsak. Detta ansågs ha hjälpt både den interna och externa processen.
DISKUSSION OCH IMPLIKATIONER

Helens omprofilering kan ses som mycket typisk, då det klart ingick ett namnbyte, ny visuell design och ny positionering. Dock var ändringen i varumärket tämligen måttlig, vilket tillslut ledde till ett lyckat slutresultat. En implikation för företag som funderar över ett namnbyte kunde vara att försöka skapa det nya namnet från något existerande inom företaget.


En annan bidragande faktor var en djärvare kommunikation. Offentliga organisationer kan bra ta till användning mångsidigare former av marknadsföring, såsom Helen gjorde med karaktären Yrjö Uusivirta. Kreativa och nytänkande former ger en klar signal på en förändrad organisation. För offentliga organisationer kan det t.o.m. tänkas vara lättare att utmärka sig, då publiken kanske inte är van vid sådan typ av marknadsföring från dem. Så länge det finns kunskap och resurser borde inte den offentliga sektorn vara blyg i att använda sig av denna typer marknadsföring. Trots att en modig kommunikation är att föredra, kan det vara av nytta för offentliga organisationer att lansera sitt nya varumärke stevvis. En stegvis lansering ger möjlighet att evaluera processen kontinuerligt, vilket kan vara värdefullt, då offentliga organisationer ofta kan sakna kunskap inom varumärkesförvaltning och marknadsföring (Larsen 2014). En organisation måste även vara färdig att kontinuerligt investera i sitt nya varumärke efter lanseringen och den offentliga sektorn kan väl dra nytta av kreativa marknadsföringsformer för att senare förstärka bilden av förändring.
Trots att planeringen och analysfasen av Helens omprofilering var väldigt lyckad, hade ändå bolagiseringen en viktig roll som själva orsaken till Helens lyckade omprofilering. Genom en berättigad orsak blir en omprofilering lättare att implementera både internt och externt. Det kan därmed vara fördelaktigt att utföra en bolagisering och omprofilering samtidigt, då det på basis av Helens fall väl stöder varandra. Dock bör man uppmärksamma att bolagisering är en krävande process redan i sig själv, och man bör noga utväga ifall man har resurser att utföra en omprofilering samtidigt.

Trots en väldigt lyckad process, fanns det även små problempunkter i Helens omprofilering, närmast det passiva motståndet gentemot förändring bland personalen. Detta tyder på att organisationer borde satsa på en tydlig kommunikation om förändring i sig, och inte bara gällande det nya varumärket. Personal inom den offentliga sektorn kan ha väldigt långa karriärer inom samma organisation med inrotade vanor och arbetskulturer. Detta betyder att fastän själva nya varumärket skulle skapa positiva reaktioner, kan det finnas ett motstånd mot förändring på ett allmänt plan.

**Implikationer**

På basis av den empiriska delens resultat och analysdiskussionen kan denna avhandlings implikationer sammanfattas följande:

*En berättigad orsak krävs för omprofilering.* Ett beslut att genomgå en omprofilering kan kritiseras mera inom den offentliga sektorn både internt och externt, ifall det inte finns en berättigad orsak.

*Försök skapa det nya varumärket ur existerande styrkor.* Genom att skapa det nya varumärket ur existerande styrkor efter en noggrann analys, kan en organisation undvika flera av de typiska fallgroparna i omprofilering och skapa ett varumärke som väl motsvarar organisationen. Detta stöder även den interna implementeringen av det nya varumärket.

*Börja med mätta och öka takten senare.* En stegvis lansering av det nya varumärket är att föredra. Offentliga organisationer kunde sträva till måttliga förändringar i både visuell design och varumärkesnamn. Varumärket skall hellre utvecklas kontinuerligt istället för att genomföra en allt för stor ändring genast.
**Var modig i den externa kommunikationen.** Offentliga organisationer skall modigt använda sig av nya marknadsföringsformer för att skapa uppmärksamhet kring förändringen och omprofileringen.

**Kommunicera allmänt om förändring intern.** Den interna kommunikationen bör även ha fokus på att kommunicera förändring på ett allmänt plan och inte endast det nya varumärket.

**Förslag på fortsatt forskning och avgränsningar**

Huruvida Helens fall kan tillämpas på offentliga sektorn som helhet går att diskutera. Helen agerar på en kraftigt konkurrerad marknad, där detta fallets förfarande kanske fungerar bättre än för andra typer av offentlig organisationer, t.ex. olika statliga eller kommunala myndigheter. Samtidigt är Helen också ett rätt stort företag, vilket kanske inte gör detta fall helt tillämpbart till mindre lokala kommunala företag. Därmed vore det av intresse att studera andra typer av offentliga organisationer och även inkludera fallstudier utanför Finland. För en bredare bild kunde det även vara intressant att i motsats till Helen studera ett misslyckat fall av omprofilering inom den offentliga sektorn.

För övrigt förespråkar jag starkt mera forskning i marknadsföring och varumärken inom den offentliga sektorn. Offentliga sektorn har en stor roll i vår ekonomi och varumärken hör inte exklusivt till den privata sektorn.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW GUIDE

Rebranding drivers
Corporatization, other reasons?
Why a name change?

Name
How was the new name chosen?
What was considered?
Positive and negative aspects of the old and the new name?
Were other alternatives considered?

Logo and brand aesthetics
In what way were the brand aesthetics changed?
What was considered?
What were the reasons behind the final decision?
Were other alternatives considered?

Positioning and brand image
Describe Helen’s organization, old and new.
What were the main positive and negative associations connected to the old corporate brand?
What were the most important ones?
What kind of associations wished Helen to connect to its new corporate brand? 
What were the most important ones? 
How did the new positioning/brand come to life? 
Were other alternatives considered? 
How was Helen’s market (energy/electricity) considered or apparent? 

**Process**

What outside help/consultation in the process did Helen use? 
How was the current situation (of the old brand) analysed? 
What elements of the corporate brand did Helen wish to retain, remove and add? 
What other things were considered? 
What goals and targets were set for the process? 
How was the process planned? 
What was the timetable for the process? 
Describe the rebranding process. 
What was done internally during the process? 
What was done externally during the process? 
How was the new corporate brand launched (internally and externally)? 
Was there an evaluation of the process? 
What types of promotional activities were used in conjunction with the rebranding? 
Were there some changes to Helen’s organization in conjunction with the rebranding? 
What challenges were there during the process?
**Outcome**

How did the corporatization affect Helen?*

How did the process turn out?

Reactions internally and externally?

Were targets and goals met and achieved?

What associations are connected to Helen’s brand today?

Describe Helen’s position on the market today

Describe Helen’s organization today.

Key factors behind the outcome?

What could have been done better?

**Public sector organization**

How did the corporatization affect Helen?*

Relation between the corporatization and the rebranding?

How did Helen’s status as a public sector organization affect the process?

How involved was the City of Helsinki in the process?

How important was the local connection to Helsinki?

What could other public sector organizations or municipal enterprises learn from Helen’s process?
APPENDIX 2  TRANSLATED INTERVIEW GUIDE FROM THE STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

1.  Respondent background
   1.1 How are you involved with Helsingin Energia?
   1.2 What is the

2.  The energy market/sector: current state
   2.1 How would you describe the current state of the general discussion regarding energy? What are its characteristics and what goes wrong?
   2.2 How does Helsingin Energia relate to other actors on the market?

3.  Changes in the energy industry
   3.1 How do you see the current market changing?
   3.2 What topics/issues do you see as the most important in these changes?
   3.3 What needs to be taken into account now when Helsingin Energia is changing/reforming? What about long-term considerations?

4.  The new Helen: The municipal enterprise Helsingin Energia will become Helen Oy starting from 1.1.2015
   4.1 What is the most important in this change/reform?
   4.2 What would be the best starting point for Helen’s brand identity?
      a) Environmental narrative (coal neutrality in 2050 and sustainability)
      b) The narrative of providing the best and most effective energy production in the world (Helen has received international recognition and prizes for this)
      c) Thorough customer-orientation (building the best customer service and experience in the energy sector)
   4.3 In relation to your own view on the subject, how would you wish Helen to promote itself and act in the future?
APPENDIX 3  INFORMANT QUOTES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

4.1.2 Not an entirely new name

“It was a perhaps a bit illogical that we in a way were using two names.”
– Cameron Creative

“Even if it’s a new name, it also continues our long history. There is something new and something familiar.” – Cameron Creative

“If someone still called it Helsingin Energia, it did not really matter. The story associated to the old name transformed well to the modernization.” – Alex Agency

“From a practical point of view there are some challenges (with the new name). It is harder to find and less distinguishable as the name of an energy company.”
– Blair Brand

4.1.3 Redesign: modernization of the brand logo and colour scheme

“The lightning bolts had been a well-functioning and cool symbol for Helsingin Energia. That is why a modernization of the old logo was a natural choice for Helen.”
– Blair Brand

“The lightning bolts naturally provided a connection to the energy sector. We did not want to make a logo that could belong to any brand in any business.” – Alex Agency

4.1.5 Building the new brand narrative around “The world’s best city energy”

When we tried to move along with the service-oriented approach, we quickly realized that it took attention away from the brilliant energy production, which was the main strength and core of Helen. It (the service-oriented approach) could also easily have become clichéd and too abstract. – Alex Agency

“In reality our environmental friendliness was not as bad as perceived, as the energy efficiency was so strongly developed. Our view was that better communication about our core strengths could benefit all aspects of our business and brand associations.”
– Blair Brand
“We did not put a lot of emphasis on our competitors. After all, the energy sector is quite conservative, so it is easy to differentiate with a well devised message and execution.”

– Blair Brand

4.1.6 Utilizing new forms of marketing activities

“We are still quite moderate in marketing activities compared to our competitors, but the rebranding has really increased the level of our media visibility and advertising investments. – Blair Brand

“There had developed a sort of coded pattern in the marketing in our industry, when you break this, people notice even the smallest of details. Our newest marketing films have alternate endings, which I believe will create attention. Yrjö Uusivirta has ultimately become a marketing production totally unheard of, both within and outside of our company.” – Pat Promotion

4.2.1 Corporatization as the driver for Helen’s rebranding

“I see the corporatization as something that was awaited in the organization, people were generally hoping for a change. Differing opinions certainly existed, but I think that was the general feel within the organization.” – Harper Human

“It shows kind of mentally that we are now a joint-stock company and try to act as a so called real corporation.” – Murphy Marketing

“Helen was able to take a more active role in the general energy discussion, thanks to the corporatization. Communications were directed straight to Helen, instead of the City. We wanted Helen to take a bigger responsibility in all communications related to the company.” – Alex Agency

4.2.2 The analysis phase

“It is important to have discussions with all stakeholders, even with them that might have straight up negative views about the brand. Their opinions are also valuable in the process.” – Alex Agency
4.2.3 The planning phase

“There was an unspoken agreement that the name will be Helen. There was no naming competition or bigger discussions if I recall correctly.” – Sam Sales

“A big part was being aware of all the different materials we have. The amount that needed updating was so vast, that we needed to prioritize the most visible ones.”

– Cameron Creative

“The time pressure was big, because we had to launch at the turn of the year. Usually, much more time is reserved for a process of this scale. There was some scepticism whether we can pull through.” – Alex Agency

4.2.5 Internal Communication

“I would say that the welcome has been positive. I do not think that people really yearn after the former times of Helsingin Energia, at least brand wise. – Blair Brand

4.3.1 Results from the consumer surveys

“The electricity market is very price-based. I cannot think of any other market on the spot where price would have a bigger influence.” – Sam Sales

“The brand has a much bigger influence on the local core market than outside of it.”

– Sam Sales

4.3.2 Rebranding success: avoiding the pitfalls

“When the name and narrative changes, it is good that something (the logo) remains.”

– Alex Agency

“If we think about the whole process, Helen moved light years forward towards more modern organizational procedures.” – Sam Sales

“I have not noticed that the new brand would have faced criticism. Quite the contrary actually, people have seen its strength and the success of the process. I do not think that anyone misses the old name or version of the logo for example.” – Murphy Marketing
4.3.3 Rebranding success: other success factors

“The courage to do brisk things is one thing that leads to success. You need to trust the change starting from the early stages.” – Alex Agency

“One of the reasons why the outcome was so good, was perhaps that our Head of Communications and Brand Management was a relatively new person in our organization. She came from the right world to manage this project. The decision process on our agency partner was also thorough and ultimately went really well.” – Sam Sales

“I have to say that the Chief Executive Officer was a real backbone in the whole effort. He had the ability to listen and support things that normally would have been hard to pull through.” – Alex Agency

4.4 Considerations when rebranding a municipal enterprise

“Helen as a name gives us much more room to act in the future and fits a national actor better and why not as an international in the future. The new name gives us more opportunities.” – Blair Brand

“The typical positive aspects that usually are attributed to municipal or governmental actors were associated to Helsingin Energia, and are still associated to Helen.”

– Harper Human

“I would compare it to any type of company that thinks about rebranding. I think the same considerations applies to all companies.” – Blair Brand

“I still feel that I work for the City and belong to all the good that the City does. I have always said that it is wonderful to work here and for a greater good. I see this as an ethical workplace compared to our competitors with a broader ownership base.”

– Pat Promotion

“A main thing was to create a braver culture starting from the upper management. Helen had to take communicate bolder and take responsibility of itself.” – Sandy Agency

“We got a new logo and name in 1995, when the energy market was liberalized. There are historic parallels and points where bigger changes become natural. Especially in the municipal sector. Then it is justified.” – Cameron Creative