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SUCCESS FACTORS FOR ON-DEMAND PLATFORMS - A CASE STUDY OF ONLINE LABOR PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this Master's Thesis is to identify the success factors for on-demand platforms in the online labor platform setting by studying two case companies that facilitate on-demand work. On-demand platforms are facilitators of services that can be ordered when the customer perceives a need varying from a car ride to workforce. These platforms have revolutionized traditional industries such as staffing, taxi services and food delivery with their superior speed and efficiency. One of the most well-known on-demand platforms is Uber that facilitates on-demand taxi services. Even though it is getting more common to order services through platforms, there are still a quantity of on-demand platform companies struggling to succeed. Therefore, studying what leads to the success of two of the most successful on-demand platforms facilitating work, provides a viable topic to study further. As online labor platforms are becoming globally significant providers of work, they serve as an interesting research setting for the study. Nonetheless, this study will provide assembled information for on-demand platforms on how to succeed. The study was conducted by first forming a literature review. After this, an empirical qualitative multiple case study was conducted by gathering online data of two case companies. The case companies were Coople and Jobandtalent, successful European online labor platforms that share a similar path to growth inside the same industry and can be characterized more specifically as on-demand staffing platforms, that facilitate work on-demand. According to the study, there are eight different success factor categories, each consisting of steps to achieve success inside the category. The overall success for on-demand platform derives from being successful in various categories and having a solid technical base supporting the growth in other areas. The study proposes comprehensive framework for on-demand platforms to succeed.

Keywords: Platform, Sharing economy, On-demand platform, Online Labor Platform, Success factor

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Tämän pro gradu -tutkielman tavoitteena on tunnistaa tilausalustojen menestystekijät henkilöstönvuokrausalustojen kontekstissa tutkimalla kahta case-organisaatiota, jotka toimivat tilauksesta tapahtuvan työn mahdollistajina. Tilausalustat mahdollistavat palveluiden tilaamisen tarvittaessa nopealla aikataululla, kun asiakas kokee tarvetta. Nämä palvelut voivat vaihdella taksipalveluista henkilöstönvuokrauspalveluihin. Tilausalustat ovat mullistaneet perinteiset alat kuten edellä mainitut taksi- ja henkilöstövuokrauspalvelut ylivoimaisella nopeudellaan ja tehokkuudellaan. Yksi tunnetuimpia tällaisia alustapalveluita on Uber, joka mahdollistaa taksipalveluiden tarjoamisen tilausalustaa hyödyntämällä. Vaikka palveluiden tilaaminen sovellusten kautta on yleistynyt, valtaosa alustojen tarjoajista kohtaa haasteita yrittäessään menestyä. Tästä syystä menestystekijöiden tunnistaminen on toteuttamiskelpoinen aihe tutkia. Tämä tutkimus tarjoaa koottua informaatiota tilausalustojen palveluntarjoajille siitä, kuinka menestyä. Tutkimus tehtiin muodostamalla ensin kirjallisuuskatsaus. Tämän jälkeen toteutettiin empiirinen kvalitatiivinen monitapaustutkimus keräämällä case-organisaatioista tietoa verkkolähteistä. Case-organisaatioita olivat Coople ja Jobandtalent, jotka ovat menestyviä eurooppalaisia verkkotyöalustoja. Organisaatioilla on samalainen kasvupolku samalla toimialalla ja niitä voidaan luonnehtia tarkemmin tilaushenkilöstöalustoiksi, jotka fasilitoivat tilauksesta tapahtuvaa työtä. Tutkimuksessa tunnistettiin kahdeksan erilaista menestystekijäkategoriaa, joista jokainen koostuu vaiheista menestyksen saavuttamiseksi kategorian sisällä. Tilausalustan yleinen menestys johtuu onnistumisesta useassa näistä kategorioista ja hyvästä teknisestä pohjasta, joka tukee kasvua muilla osa-alueilla. Tutkimus ehdottaa kattavaa viitekehystä tilausalustojen menestykselle.

Asiasanat: Jakamistalous, jakamisalusta, tilausalusta, verkkotyöalusta, menestystekijä

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1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

Platform markets are growing fast and taking a large share of the global economy (Eisenmann, Parker & Van Alstyne, 2011). They play an important role in today's economy as more and more businesses can be characterized as platform companies, such as Uber, Airbnb and Amazon that are truly challenging traditional incumbents (McIntyre & Srinivasan, 2017). Uber has disrupted the traditional taxi industry in many countries with their platform-based business model. The model relies on technology and not owning expensive assets such as the cars themselves (Teece, 2018). Airbnb has challenged the hospitality industry by providing a platform for individuals to rent their houses or rooms for tourism accommodation (Guttentag, 2015). Amazon started by disrupting the bookstore industry and continued to revolutionize the whole retail industry (Ritala, Golnamm & Wegmann, 2014). One of the rising platform industries is online labor platforms that are moving towards disrupting the traditional way of working and needs further attention.

The nature of work is undergoing a transformation as digitalization enables new work arrangements in addition to which requirements for work and workers are evolving. This provides platform companies a good opportunity to form new ways for working and interesting labor related opportunities for organizations around the world (Pesole, Urzí Brancati, Fernández-Macías, Biagi, González Vázquez, 2018; Drahokoupil & Jepsen, 2017), one of which is on-demand platforms. Platform markets are thriving, providing fast, efficient and scalable services that allow users to fulfil their needs on demand. Perceiving a need, for example a car ride or immediate staffing need, can be fulfilled in a matter of minutes with on-demand platforms. (Frenken & Schor, 2017; Hagiu 2014). These platforms are often linked to a sharing economy in the literature (Knote & Blohm, 2016), and more precisely to its definition of a user ordering a service via platform when perceiving a need and being sensitive for delays, whereas a sharing economy is the overall sharing of goods and services via platforms (Taylor, 2018). The definitions of on-demand and sharing economy platforms have not yet reached a common consensus in the academic world (Knote & Blohm, 2016). Due to the interpretation of the overlapping terms, lit-

erature related to both on-demand and sharing economy platforms will be utilized in this study.

Despite the novelty of the on-demand and sharing economy platform phenomenon, it has gained a lot of attention in various study fields including information systems (Knote & Blohm, 2016). The sharing economy started to rise in 2011, when U.S faced the financial crisis and Internet-enabled peer-to-peer sharing began to appeal to people seeking for more economical and ecological alternatives to traditional consumption (Schor, 2014). Nowadays the sharing economy is creating enormous amounts of wealth (Frenken & Schor, 2017) and it is estimated to be $335 billion by the year 2025 (Tabcum, 2019). Businesses and academics are addressing a lot of interests towards sharing platforms because of their significant success (Chasin, Hoffen, Hoffmeister & Becken, 2018), while still trying to uncover the factors that lead to their success. Even though the platform markets are significant, there is still a little understanding of how sharing platforms manage to succeed (Constantiou, Marton & Tuunainen, 2017). Earlier research has not identified a single theoretical lens to assess successful sharing nor on-demand platform, despite the variety of findings made in various research areas (Constantiou, Eaton & Tuunainen, 2016). The goal of this study is to fill this gap by reviewing and validating existing research and by expanding it with findings generated in this study. Therefore, the study aims to increase understanding of the success factors for on-demand platforms by answering two research questions: (1) What are the success factors for on-demand platforms, and (2) what are the steps for on-demand platforms in achieving their success factors?

On-demand platforms typically have various actors on the platform, such as workers and businesses, so they can be characterized as multi-sided platforms. Multi-sided markets are facilitators between two or more sides on the platform, usually producers and users (Evans, 2003). This study will be utilizing insights from multi-sided platform literature (Evans 2003; Eisenmann, Parker & Van Alstyne 2006; Hagiu 2014) and sharing economy literature (Constantiou et al., 2016; Constantiou, et al., 2017; Frenken & Schor, 2017; Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018) to understand the on-demand platform phenomenon and to identify the factors leading to success in prior literature.

This study focuses on specific context of online labor platforms. Platforms, overall, provide all sorts of jobs and therefore on-demand platforms are often referred to as a "gig economy" or "Uber-economy" (Essalama, 2017). There are platforms that focus on facilitating staffing to a large variety of industries in general and helping companies to fill their staffing needs on-demand. In Europe alone, it is estimated that nearly 10% of the population has used online platforms to perform some type of work and the number is increasing (Pesole et al., 2018). The motivation to study on-demand staffing platforms in the context of information systems is that the work life and the way that we work is changing (Pesole et al., 2018). Studying the phenomenon and these platforms from the perspective of information systems and from platform centric perspective may give a deeper understanding to researchers from other fields. Two successful

European online labor platforms, Jobandtalent and Coople, were selected as case companies for this study. They are both operating in the staffing industry and can be characterized as on-demand staffing platforms.

This Master's thesis will be conducted as a qualitative multi-case study by analyzing two case companies in the on-demand platform field. The goal is to gain more understanding about the success factors and the steps leading on-demand platforms to success in online labor platform setting. The study consists of four parts: literature review, an empirical research, discussion and conclusion. At first, the topic will be based on the most significant literature on the field and is conducted by adapting Okoli & Schabram's (2010) literature review methodology. Google Scholar and AIS Electronic Library were the online libraries utilized in the literature review to seek information. The following keywords and their combinations were used to find references: "on-demand platform", "sharing economy", "multi-sided platform", "platforms success", "platform growth" and "online labor platform". A framework was formed based on the existing literature to study success factors arising from the case data.

The empirical research was conducted by using a qualitative multiple case study utilizing grounded theory as a basis for analysis. Two on-demand staffing case organizations were selected to study the on-demand success factor phenomenon. Case data was gathered from publicly available online sources. TechCrunch and Google search engine were used to gather the data about the case companies, using the company names as keywords. The data was analyzed by using the three-step analysis method by Romano, Donovan, Chen and Nunamaker (2003), which includes elicitation, reduction and visualization of data. The discussion part was formed by comparing the results of research framework and the suggested framework. The research framework was drawn from current data of multi-sided platforms, focusing primarily on on-demand and sharing economy platforms, and the suggested framework unites findings from theory and case data. Utilizing the prior literature and studying the case companies the goal was to draw a rich description of the success factors for on-demand platforms and steps to gain success in each success factor category.

In the following chapter, the study will go through the literature review, which will serve as a base for the empirical research. The review is followed by the empirical research, which will go through the methods, and study results derived from case data regarding success factors. In the discussion part, the results are compared with the literature following the limitation of the study, discussion of contributions and suggestions for future research. In the final chapter, the study will be concluded with a summary of the results.

2 CONCEPTUALIZING PLATFORMS

According to a study made in January 2020, the world's seven top-ranked companies are platform-based, and they represent more than 6,3 trillion dollars in market value (Cusumano, 2020). Platformization is a thriving trend in the digital world enabling scalability, modularity and internationalization (Thomas, Autio & Gann, 2014; Brouthers, Geisser & Rothlauf, 2016). In an information system context, platforms are used to conceptualize how single companies structure their internal IS landscape to make business thrive in the digital world, whereas technological engineering conceptualizes platforms as technological architectures that drive platform innovation and economic literature studies platforms as two-sided markets. (Törmer & Henningsson, 2020). The focus of this thesis is on two-sided digital platforms that connect users in order to provide services to each other or to give access to under-utilized assets. These digital platforms connect consumers to a service or commodity through the use of a mobile application or a website (Ding, 2018). More specifically this thesis studies on-demand platforms that are two-sided in nature. There is a variation of definitions that are describing the same phenomenon, such as "access-based consumption", "collaborative consumption", "sharing economy", "on-demand economy", "gig-economy", "Uber-economy" and several other definitions. The ambiguity of the term is thriving from the increasing amount of such platforms that operate in different sectors. (Essalama, 2017). As the definitions can vary significantly, a more specific description of the characteristics of these platforms will be provided in this chapter. The chapter focuses on describing these emerging platforms to form an understanding of the terms in the context of this thesis. The main focus in this thesis is on on-demand platforms. Since the term on-demand platform will be too restrictive, literature related to sharing economy platforms have been utilized to explain on-demand economy as well.

2.1 Platforms

This subchapter provides basics for understanding platforms and how they are generally considered in information system context. The classification of Thomas et al., (2014) is utilized to generate basic knowledge on platforms and how the platforms of this study position compared to other kinds of platforms.

A platform is an architecture that supports the design of products and services while facilitating network users' interactions. Platforms typically have a set of rules such as protocols, rights and pricing terms governing the transactions. (Eisenmann, et al., 2006). To shed a light on platform diversity some examples of platforms are bar codes, credit cards, instant messaging, online dating services, travel reservation systems, video games and Web search services (Eisenmann et al., 2011). They exist in variety of industries but especially in technology-driven industries (Gawer & Cusumano, 2014). Here the term platform refers to platforms that appear in digital forms. The major difference between a non-digital and digital platform is mainly in the openness of the platform. Digital platforms differ in a sense that they are open for other technologies, such as APIs and software development kits. In addition, in contrast to non-digital platforms, digital platforms contain components on different levels of technical architecture. Digital platforms are purely technical artefacts where the platform is an extensible codebase to which third-party modules can be added. The whole modularity of platforms associates organizational processes and standards. (Reuver, Sorensen & Bascole, 2018).

Platform markets cover a large and rapidly growing share of the global economy, where network effects and high switching costs have a focal role (Eisenmann et al., 2011). Already in 2010, Cusumano predicted that platforms are likely to play a crucial role as their amount is increasing and they will be more common than ever by saying that many future modern technologies are likely to be platforms (Cusumano, 2010), and now, ten years later the world's most valuable companies are built on digital platforms (Cusumano et al., 2020). Platforms are changing the way businesses operate and communicate as well as the overall information system landscape (Reuver et al., 2018). Traditional businesses have shifted towards digital transformation and are discovering the opportunities brought by platforms as interacting with digital platform services is increasing in all life areas (Ojala, Evers & Rialp, 2018).

Although digital platforms undoubtedly play an important and emerging role in today's economy, literature has drawn relatively little attention to platforms and the distinction of the various forms of platforms (Thomas et al., 2014). Thomas et al., (2014) organize platforms into four streams (table 1) that help to classify different kinds of platforms and to proceed to categorizing on-demand platforms and further the case companies.

TABLE 1 Four Platform Streams (adapted from Thomas et al., 2014, p. 2013)

Stream	Definition	Example
Organizational	Platform stores the organizational capability	Consulting, outsourcing, computing, biotechnology
Product family	Platforms is the enabler of product families and supports the development of product variants	Automotive, machine tools, consumer electronics, FMCG
Market intermediary	Platform is the intermediary between two or more market participants	Online auctions, price comparison, credit cards, telecoms, online advertising
Platform ecosystem	Platform is a system or architecture that supports complementary assets	Information technology, Internet

The four streams presented in table 1 are organizational, product family, market intermediary and platform ecosystem. In the first stream, the platform is a storage for organization's resources and capabilities. In the second stream, the role of a platform is to enable product families and to be a supporter of effective development of product variants to address different market niches. The essentials in product family stream are mass customization and operational efficiency that are enabled by flexible product features. In the third stream, market intermediary stream, platform is a marketplace facilitating connection of supply and demand for two-sided or multi-sided market and this is the most essential stream considering this study as the focus of this study is on multi-sided, sharing and on-demand platforms that are strongly related to this stream. (Thomas et al., 2014). In this stream, platforms are facilitators of product exchange such as goods, services and social currency that rely heavily on information technologies (Korhonen et al., 2017). They operate as intermediaries between two or more market participants. These platforms are also related to the next stream. Platform ecosystem stream treats platforms as a set of shared core technologies and technology standards supporting value co-creation. Platform is seen as a hub or central point of control in digital business system. The platform ecosystem stream is drawn from literature of both product family and market intermediary streams and unlike other streams, it does not have clear platform description but rather focuses on the combination of platform influences. (Thomas et al., 2014). This highlights that these streams are not completely distinct as some platforms can possess features from multiple streams, for example, platforms in this study can be described as market intermediaries, but they possess some features of platform ecosystem stream, such as modularity and market facilitation. Both streams consider platform as a facilitator and a coordinator of the efforts of buyers and sellers emphasizing the theoretical logics of market dominance and power (Thomas et al., 2014), which is the core of the platforms in this study and multi-sided platforms that are dealt in the next subchapter.

Now that the focal platform streams are identified for this study, multi-sided platforms will be discussed in more detail. They serve as a theory base for platforms that consist of various actors or sides which are the focus of this study. After forming an understanding of multi-sided platforms and their dynamics, sharing economy platforms and on-demand platforms and their relation to each other will be discussed. They both are multi-sided in their nature and closely linked to each other and literature from both is utilized to high extent to form wider understanding on the subject. Finally, online labor platforms will be introduced to put the case organizations into context and to better understand them.

2.2 Multi-sided Platforms

A multi-sided platform can be defined as an intermediary between two or more market participants owned by a platform owner or an organization. They represent a link or a facilitator between two or more sides, usually producers and users. (Thomas, et al., 2014). Multi-sided markets are matchmakers matching resources that are otherwise difficult to reach, which is why they make it efficient for parties of the platform to connect (Korhonen et al., 2017). In case the digital platform provider is not the one creating the content, they need to operate in multi-sided or two-sided markets so that the attending parties can bring content to the platform. For example, Netflix needs movies and Uber needs drivers to have content on their platforms. (Ojala, et al., 2018). These platforms are optimal for facilitating interaction between supply and demand sides (Constantiou et al., 2017).

The nature of multi-sided platforms of facilitators of interactions on each side is what differentiates them from software and e-commerce companies that operate in a traditional left-to-right value chain (Ojala et al., 2018). To the left of a company is costs and to the right is revenue. Whereas multi-sided networks have distinct groups on each side and both cost and revenue are to the left and right, meaning that the revenue can be collected from either or both sides, but usually multi-sided platforms consist of a subsidy side and money side. Regarding the sides, one of the most important decisions for the multi-sided platforms is pricing and if the revenue should be collected from both sides or if the platform owners should subsidize the other side. Costs come from serving both sides and revenue can be collected either from both sides or only from the other, but usually the other side is the subsidized one. (Eisenmann, 2006).

As the whole idea of multi-sided platforms is based on facilitating a marketplace for two or more distinctive groups, it is quite essential to have the target groups joining the platform. This is where network effects step in. Network effects means that a platform brings together two distinct groups to a relationship where the value for one or both groups increases as the number of participants in the other group increases (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006; Constantiou et al., 2017). The network effects are important for multi-sided plat-

forms: a platform with a greater userbase will generate greater value and positive feedback induced by network effects will fuel future success and growth (Eisenmann et al., 2011). So, the network effects are positive feedback loops that have a potential to grow exponentially increasing rates as adoption of the platform and the benefits for all participants increase. Network effects can be direct or indirect. Direct network effect is between the platform and a user. An example of a direct network effect is when the attraction of a platform derives from attracting friends of users and friends of friends of users. Indirect network effect occurs between distinct user groups, for example, when an advertiser becomes attracted to Facebook as a marketing venue because of the large userbase. (Gawer & Cusumano, 2014).

Network effects are critical for a multi-sided platform to succeed, but it can be hard to build network effects in the beginning as it requires a critical mass of users (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). The chicken-and-egg problem is a classical problem standing in the way of attracting users. (Korhonen et al., 2017). According to Hagiu (2014) the chicken-and-egg problem means that attracting both sides at the same time can be difficult, because if one side is missing it is hard to attract the other one as well. Therefore, network effects are so important for multi-sided platforms. Tackling the chicken-and-egg problem and gaining a critical mass of users are the most vital challenges for multi-sided platforms to solve. To do so they need to get the potential users to adopt their service. (Hagiu, 2014).

Another fundamental question for multi-sided platforms is how to manage winner-take-all dynamics as many multi-sided platform industries have a single dominant platform. In classic situation, platform providers should make a decision whether to share its platform with rivals or to compete with them. (Eisenmann et al., 2006). However, as the multi-sided platform industry has evolved, in some cases an installed userbase does not always mean having the winner-take-all situation. For example, in bigger cities there is room for more than one similar platform. For instance, Uber and Lyft that are rival platforms share their userbase in some areas because there are enough users for both to maintain critical mass. (Teece, 2018). An important part of the decision-making process for platform providers is to identify whether their market can be served by one or multiple similar platforms (Eisenmann, 2006).

Pricing, network effects and winner-take-all dynamics are some of the most classical examples of the dynamics related to multi-sided platforms, that serve as the most important base for decision making (Constantiou et al., 2017). Among this, there are various aspects to consider in order to succeed. The field of multi-sided platforms is wide and transforming all the time, as many forms of digital platforms that can be categorized as multi-sided platforms emerge (Cusumano, 2010). These include sharing economy and on-demand platforms and they have their own subcategories, one of which is online labor platforms, which is discussed in subchapter 2.5 in more detail. Table 2 summarizes the platform types relevant for this study, aiming to clarify the types of platforms. In the following subchapter, sharing economy platforms will be discussed. Af-

ter gaining an understanding on the sharing economy dynamics, on-demand platforms will be discussed and compared to sharing economy in order to understand their relationship. Finally, online labor platforms will be linked to this study and more specifically to on-demand platforms.

2.3 Sharing Economy Platforms

The research on the sharing economy is quite new and it has truly emerged in the last few years. Majority of the research has been published after 2013. Sharing economy has been studied in a variety of research areas but especially as a business and economic model. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). Sharing economy has been generalized in the literature to Uber and Airbnb and they are commonly used as examples of sharing economy business models, which other businesses are compared against. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). A Commonly used definition for a sharing economy follows the definition provided by Frenken, Meelen, Arets & Van de Glind (2015): consumers granting each other temporary access to under-utilized physical assets, usually for money (Frenken et al., 2015). Kumar, Lahiri and Dogan (2018) provide another more precise definition: "the monetization of underutilized assets that are owned by service providers (firms or individuals) through short-term rental". In this study, sharing economy platforms refer to a combination of these definitions and can be considered as platforms, that enable short-term rental of underutilized physical assets that are owned by firms or individuals, and are temporarily exchanged for money.

In various studies, sharing economy is used as an umbrella term for various other platform types that are not completely characterized as sharing platforms according to its typical definition. According to Belk (2014), the term sharing economy is used in an all-inclusive manner and is not only about sharing anymore, but more about access-based consumption, which is different from pure sharing since it is not always prosocial (Belk, 2014). Therefore, there are other definitions arising that are usually linked to sharing economy and rather seen as subcategories but cannot be directly defined as sharing economies. Frenken and Schor (2017), Taylor (2018) and Essalama (2017) link on-demand platforms heavily to sharing economy, which are discussed further in subchapter 2.4.

Attention around all kinds of sharing economy platforms derives from the traditional businesses and ownership relationships being in transformation (Belk, 2014). Sharing economy platforms bring people together with services and products and allows everyone to join making them highly sociotechnical (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). As it is typical for multi-sided platforms, sharing economy platforms too rely heavily on network effects as their value, attraction and success are based on large userbases, because the more people use the platform the more new people will join in (Constantiou et a., 2017; Parente, Geleilate & Rong, 2018). These platforms are gaining more awareness among masses

as the individuals are drawn to them and a number of companies that can be identified as sharing economies is growing (Belk, 2014).

Although the sudden success of these platforms might indicate them being revolutionary, they are not; sharing economy platforms are innovative only in the way they use old mechanisms in new and "platformed" ways, meaning that sharing economy platforms do not gain their competitive advantages because of what they are doing but by how they are doing it. The competitive advantage of sharing economy companies is based on an innovative way of combining organizational and market mechanisms. (Constantiou et al., 2017). The platform is needed to scale a large network and the presence of a coordinating digital platforms is the facilitator of sharing economy. The platform is a matchmaker, that based on attributes, matches users across a large network and this is what differs sharing economy from their traditional competitors. Automated matching lowers transaction costs and removes institutional bureaucracy, which allows real time connecting and facilitating large volumes of users. Sorting and matching are just few of the many benefits of sharing economy. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). To mention other aspects of sharing economy, that can be considered as benefits, there are the three key attributes of sharing economy according to Constantiou et al. (2017) and they are 1) access of ownership, 2) peer-to-peer and 3) allocation of idle resources. Access of ownership describes people shifting from buying goods to buying an access to goods, for example instead of buying their own car, consumers rather rely on Uber. Peer-to-peer refers to trust-based transactions mediated by platforms. Allocation of idle resources means relying on privately owned resources, that would otherwise stay idle, for example workers, that might want to work but are not able to find work matching their needs. (Constantiou et al., 2017).

Sharing goods and services and ordering them via applications have become easier and more common and the phenomenon requires attention in various research areas. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). Knote and Blohm (2016) recognize that there is a need for more contribution of information system research to sharing economy. They provide conceptualization and suggestions for more information system-oriented approach. Some suggestions are studying role of IT in different aspects of sharing platforms such as pricing, sharing exchange, review systems, user behavior and technological possibilities and limitations all the while considering multi-sided market mechanisms. Although IT is the enabler of the whole sharing economy phenomenon, the sharing economy research is scarce in the context of information systems as the focus has mostly been on consumer research and describing the phenomenon itself and how it is challenging current economic mechanisms. Purely technical aspects and interconnections to topics in IS research are mostly neglected. (Knote & Blohm, 2016). The success of sharing economy services are driven by information technologies which in turn change consumer behavior by directing users towards platforms, indicating the need for more IS-centered research (Knote & Blohm, 2016; Cohen & Kietzmann, 2014). Some example how sharing economies have been studied in previous IS literature is utilizing research of digital platforms and ecosystems

and building sharing economy studies on platform economics or information infrastructure theories (Constantiou et al., 2016).

2.4 On-demand Platforms

This subchapter focuses on on-demand platforms. The literature in this context is mostly drawn from sharing economy platforms. As the sharing economy and on-demand platforms are a recent subject, relatively little literature exists around this topic. On-demand platforms are heavily linked to sharing economy platforms although they have a bit distinct characteristic. There are only few studies concentrating exclusively on on-demand platforms (Essalama, 2017). In this study, on-demand platforms are referred to as a type of sharing economy platform that delivers goods and services on demand. Studying on-demand platforms instead of just sharing economy platforms allows this study to take into account the special characteristics associated to on-demand platforms as they lean on almost immediate access to resources whereas it is not always a highlighted characteristic of sharing economy platforms (Essalama, 2017). Taking into account the special characteristics of on-demand platforms, this study utilizes sharing economy platform literature to a large extent, which is far richer compared to purely on-demand platform literature.

Defining an on-demand platform can be difficult as there are various ways to define the concept, and it is often overlapping with or linked to sharing economy. The major difference is that nothing is necessarily shared in on-demand platform, but rather accessed and the access happens in desired timeframe. According to Taylor (2018), on-demand economy can be seen as one form of the sharing economy where customers experiencing a need for a service can require it immediately. On-demand services are services that customers can order through platforms when they are experiencing a need and are sensitive to delays. (Taylor, 2018). Typical examples are ridesharing, food delivery and staffing platforms, all of which can provide their services on-demand. All of these are also considered in sharing economy literature, which validates the difficulty in separating them. However, the distinction comes from immediate access to services; Uber can be ordered within minutes, food can be ordered within an hour and staff can be recruited in the same day.

In most of the literature, there is not really a distinction between sharing economy and on-demand economy platforms, and they are linked as the same or neighboring concepts (Essalama et al., 2017). For example, Sundararajan (2016) defines the sharing economy as crowd-based capitalism because of transferring goods and services through on-demand access. According to Maselli Lenaerts & Beblavy (2016), a major difference between a sharing economy and an on-demand economy is that on-demand is more related to services whereas the sharing economy is concerned with products. Especially work-based platforms are linked to on-demand context. (Maselli et al., 2016). Essalama provides a definition for on-demand platforms that combines its characteristics with the

sharing economy: "an Internet platform (website or application) which connects users in order to provide services to each other or to give temporary access to underutilised assets" (Essalama, 2017 p. 6). This provides a loose definition but does not underline the immediate access, nor the asset's characteristics, which in this study are physical, such as workforce, a car ride or food. This delimitation leaves out assets that are only in digital form, such as movies provided by Netflix on demand. In this study, on-demand platforms are considered as a certain type of sharing economy, where a customer who orders a service, that consists of physical elements, perceives a need and is sensitive for delays (Taylor, 2018).

In the example provided by Frenken and Schor (2017), the difference between a sharing and an on-demand economy can be addressed with the taxi example: new capacity is created when a consumer orders a taxi on demand to get from point A to point B. In case of sharing a ride, the consumer occupies an empty seat, for example, through a carpooling application. So, when sharing a ride, it is different than ordering. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). In an on-demand economy, the product is not simply used and returned, for it to become available for another renter, but rather a service is temporarily rented (Frenken & Schor, 2017), as the definition for sharing economy in this study suggest in chapter 2.3. In Uber's case, the temporary access means that the car and the driver become available for other people in need for a ride service. In an online labor platform context, it can be considered that when an employee who is working through the platform has completed the given job, they become available for other employers demanding workers in the platform.

Although workers can be seen as resources that become available after a gig, just like Uber drivers, it is their freedom to decide when they are willing to work. The flexibility generated for employees by these platforms, is seen as one of the key functions of an on-demand economy. It includes providing rapid dynamic access to the service so that resources, such as work, or labor can be accessed on demand. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). The following subchapter discusses online labor platforms in more detail and provides an overview of the industry to understand the context of this study better.

2.5 Online Labor Platforms

The case companies selected for this study are platforms that provide work on-demand and operate in online labor platform domain. Online labor platforms are emerging phenomena strengthened and enabled by digitalization and globalization (Srnicek, 2017). Flexibility created for users by platforms, especially for labor, is one of the most important topics in the sharing economy literature. Platforms provide a more accessible option for part-time work and grant freedom to the workers. As platforms make invisible resources visible, unused goods such as part-time workers can be brought within the reach of the network. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). Online labor platforms are usually mobile or

browser applications facilitating work on-demand by matching labor supply and demand. They provide opportunities for people who are willing to find a job or ways to access more earnings. (Aloisi, 2015).

There is ambiguity in how to categorize online labor platforms as they are usually novel start-ups and they are often linked to being sharing economy platforms. Instead of consumers granting each other temporary access to under-utilized assets, like in the sharing economy (Frenken & Schor, 2017), in online labor platforms new capacity is being created (Vandaele, 2018). Pesole et al., (2018) defines online labor platforms as "digital networks that coordinate labor service transactions in an algorithmic way" (Pesole et al., 2018 p. 7). Table 2 summarizes the different types of platforms examined in this study.

TABLE 2 Types of Platforms

Platform Type	Definition
Multi-sided Platform	An intermediary between two or more market participants
Sharing Economy Platform	Enabler of short-term rental of underutilized physical assets, that are owned by firms or individuals, and are temporarily exchanged for money
On-demand Platform	Type of sharing economy platform allowing temporary access to a physical service that can be ordered when experiencing a need and being sensitive to delays
Online Labor Platform	Digital networks that coordinate labor service transactions in an algorithmic way

Even inside the term online labor platform, there are differences between the platforms and the kinds of work they provide. The classification for the most common online labor platforms is provided in table 3. Work happening on-demand labor platforms can be categorized into online work (crowdwork) and offline work (work-on-demand). They are both seen as on-demand labor as they are enabled by technology and utilize the same business model, but the difference is that crowdwork can be done remotely from anywhere in the world whereas work-on-demand happens in the real world locally. (Aloisi, 2015). Table 3 makes a distinction between different kinds of online labor platforms categorizing them into online work and offline work. Online work consists of low-skilled and high-skilled crowdwork. Platforms providing crowdwork are also defined as online labor platforms (Askitas, Bosc, de Groen, Eichhorst, Kilhoffer, Lenaerts and Salez, 2018). Low-skilled crowdwork varies from data entry to information searching and does not usually require much skills, whereas high-skilled crowdwork requires high skills such as programming or graphic design skills. Offline work requires commonly low or medium skills. The main difference between online and offline work is that offline work is done physically in a

certain location and human interaction can be involved. It can happen either in a private space (e.g. domestic services and waitering) or in a public space (e.g. food delivery and transport). (Vandaele, 2018; Pesole et al., 2018).

TABLE 3 Classification of Online Labor Platforms

Online work	Low-skilled crowdwork	• Placeless • Low-skilled • Repetitive tasks • E.g. Data entry
	High-skilled crowdwork	• Placeless • High-skilled • Profession based tasks • E.g. Graphic design
Offline work	On-demand digital platform work	• Time- and place-dependent • Low- to medium-skilled • In-person physical tasks • E.g. Food delivery

The management and governance of work in online labor platform setting differs from traditional work in a sense that performance monitoring and algorithmic management facilitates the overall surveillance of work. This allows more accurate and real-time monitoring of the workers and lowering of the transaction costs. (Vandaele, 2018). Digital management methods include for example tracking location data and ratings. An example of a ridesharing algorithm surveillance is that drivers are rewarded based on the user reviews and acceptance rate of the rides, meaning that their position in the platform is better if they do not reject a lot of rides. (Lee, Kusbit, Metsky & Dabbish, 2015).

Reorganization and task distribution of work has fostered several questions about the benefits and potential risks of platform work (Pesole et al., 2018). Online labor platforms' greatest contribution is that they provide extreme flexibility and autonomy for workers and an easy entry into the labor markets for specific groups of people that otherwise find it hard to get a job. These include for example people with strong family responsibilities, disabilities, students, young people, uneducated people, long-term unemployed, people with a migrant background and older people that have difficulties to find a permanent job anymore. (Vandaele, 2018).

The business model of online labor platform is characterized to rely on bypassing regular responsibilities and costs of employment (Fabo, Karanovic & Dukova, 2017). Some even say that these firms are only successful because they are circumventing the laws and regulations (Srnicek, 2017). One reason for this prejudice is that the emerging and different types of work and employment statuses are not fully understood by people, governments and platforms (Pesole et al., 2018). Concerns towards platform work derive from employment statuses mainly being independent contractors or freelancers. The main challenge is that

the workers are not in the employment relationship and therefore not covered by any labor rights and social security, but they are the responsibility of the independent contractor themselves. (Pesole et al., 2018; Vandaele, 2018). In the USA it is more common to treat workers as contractors and in Europe platform workers are more often treated as employees. Treating platform workers as employees means that the platform owners face higher costs and they have to resolve country-specific regulatory issues, but it is seen as a more ethical and sustainable business model (EU-Startups, 2020).

There is undoubtedly still a lot of legal ambiguity and inadequate social protection globally related to platform work (Stuart, Joyce, Carson, Trappmann, Umney, Forde, & Alberti, 2017). In addition, the algorithms of the online labor platforms are not seen to be transparent enough as workers do not always know how the surveillance and task allocation exactly work in the platform (Lee et al., 2015). According to Vandaele (2018) low payments, overall income security, career uncertainty and blurring boundaries of work and private life are some of the other most discussed risks of platform work. Despite the criticism and concerns focusing on platform work, it offers benefits and freedom to both workers and companies; workers have an easy access to work life and flexibility to choose working hours, and for employer's it offers the possibility to manage their workforce more flexibly and with lower costs. (Vandaele, 2018).

The case companies selected for this study are facilitators of on-demand digital platform work focusing on in-person tasks, later on referred to as on-demand staffing platforms. Figure 1 provides clarification of the parties related to this type of platform work and each parties' roles in it. Case platforms' users (=workers) perform tasks locally in a specific location and time for platforms' customers who pay for these services for the intermediary, usually a percentage of the exchange. The work is demanded by these customers (=businesses) that have work to offer and available gigs are applied or matched with workers by the platform (=intermediary digital platform). Workers are usually hired extremely fast after they have applied for a gig. (Duggan, 2019).

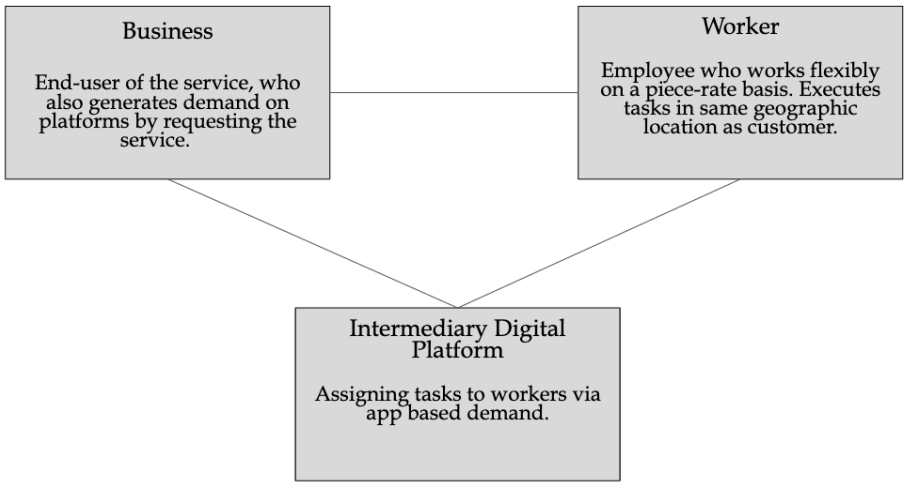

FIGURE 1 Parties Involved in On-demand Platform Work (adapted from Duggan et al., 2019, p. 119)

The main difference compared to traditional staffing companies is that the case companies have cheaper and faster service because the platform cuts down the transaction costs (Vandaele, 2018) and facilitates matchmaking (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018) and interacts in new ways including algorithms and utilization of big data (Lee et al., 2015). These features include a rating system, direct messaging between the employer and an employee and sorting employees' tasks specifically due to their qualifications. The sorting data is based on ratings, rejection rate, distance and affiliation to a relevant pool, such as waiters or cleaners. For workers, the difference is that they get paid usually weekly, they rarely need to come to an actual interview, all the documents (such as driving license and ID) can be uploaded directly to the platform and instead of having to send any CV or application letter, workers have updatable profiles. (Coople, 2020; Jobandtalent, 2020). These are only some of the reasons why these platforms have succeeded. The empirical section of this study will unfold more detailed reasons for the success of these platforms. The following chapter identifies typical strategies and failures of multi-sided platforms and based on that builds a framework to study the success factors of on-demand platforms.

3 PLATFORM SUCCESS

Various platform companies are emerging but only few manage to grow from a start-up to a sustainable business (Constantiou, et al., 2016). This can also be seen in the online labor platform industry, where few actors have shown their competences. This chapter reviews literature about what has been identified as successful characteristics and actions of multi-sided and sharing economy platforms in the previous research (e.g. Constantiou et al., 2016) and on the other hand, the success is reflected on the activities leading to failure to avoid them and learn from those mistakes (Chasin et al., 2018; Evans & Schmalensee, 2010). As growth is seen as the measure for success (Constantiou et al., 2016), growth theories, strategies and other factors leading to success are discussed in more detail forming a general synthesis on the topic. The aim is to understand the focal factors that affect platform growth and how they manage to succeed. Literature will be drawn from multi-sided and sharing economy platform research acknowledging special features of on-demand platforms.

3.1 Platform Strategies

The success of platforms is based on their strategy and the platform ecosystem that supports it (Cusumano, 2010; Eisenmann et al., 2006). This subchapter provides insights on what kind of strategies are utilized and considered successful by prior multi-sided and sharing economy platform studies. Strategy is something that can make the business model successful and should be aligned with it (Teece, 2018), which is why business models are also discussed briefly. As the focus is on platforms that operate in multi-sided markets, their strategies and business models differ from traditional businesses and therefore should be discussed in their own context (Eisenmann et al., 2006). Most of the studies that focus on the success of the multi-sided platforms concentrate on network effects and how to gain critical mass. Although that is one of the most crucial challeng-

es for platform providers there are still many other strategic challenges that need to be considered to build a successful platform business.

According to Eisenmann et al., (2006) there are three main strategic challenges for platforms to consider; pricing, coping with winner-take all and avoiding envelopment. Users find price as an important factor in the sharing economy and therefore designing a pricing strategy is essential. When considering a pricing strategy, price sensitivity, output costs and the users' brand value should be noticed. Winner-take-all has to be considered as whether there will be room for more actors or if the platform wants to win over a market or cooperate. Avoiding envelopment refers to a situation where platforms have overlapping userbases and there is a risk of bigger players to provide the same service in their bundle for cheaper price. Users that are already using some platform for multiple purposes will make it more unlikely for a single platform provider to succeed. (Eisenmann et al., 2006).

Hagiu (2014) agrees that pricing is an important strategic decision but he includes three other strategic challenges, which are how many sides to bring on board, platform design and governance rules. Typically sharing economy and on-demand platforms are two-sided and more sides are much more common in platforms that are purely digital, such as operating systems (e.g. iOS and Android). Platform design refers to different kind of features and functionalities that have potential to make the platform successful. Whether to add some major features is a question of costs and benefits analysis, which means that if the cost of building and implementing is less than the value created for the users, the feature should be included. Governance rules are the rules set by the platform as an intermediary facilitating efficient interactions between different sides on the platform. This includes regulating who can join the platform and what are they allowed to do on it. The aim is to provide higher quality service and those benefits have to be weighed against the costs of implementing tighter governance rules. Rating systems are one way to outsource some of the governance to the users. (Hagiu, 2014).

Kumar et al., (2018) suggest a more specific strategic framework for sharing platforms that takes into account different generations and their behavior. Their strategy has the critical mass in the center, but it considers other aspects and their relation to building critical mass, such as ease of use, enhanced convenience, lowered costs and autonomy of service providers. According to their study, long-term success of the sharing economy is based on well-balanced acquisition, retention and win-back of profitable service providers and customers. They suggest that in order to have well-balanced acquisition, firms need to come up with unique strategies to reach out to the different generations especially when reaching out to service enablers, that usually consist of various generations. Retention refers to increasing the number of transactions from the existing customers and win-back means winning back lost customers. (Kumar et al., 2018).

Understanding different sharing economy business models helps to understand why some platforms generate growth and to anticipate platform

trends and which technologies to use. (Cusumano, et al., 2020). Constantiou et al., (2017) state that sharing economy business models usually do not require as much resources and assets as traditional businesses, allowing them to be much more flexible in adapting their strategies to environmental changes and exploiting new business opportunities. Sharing economy business models are fluid overall because they can utilize various models or even change from one to another easier than traditional companies. An important thing in business model creation is to choose the right one for your business and remember that it should always be aligned with strategy. (Constantiou et al., 2017).

When looking into the typical success stories of Uber and Airbnb, some characteristics can be adapted from their strategies and business models. For instance, Airbnb does not follow typical growth strategies for two-sided markets such as subsidizing the other side fully, but they rely on more traditional methods, such as advertising, word-of-mouth and online communities e.g. Craigslist. (Constantiou et al., 2016). A marketing strategy can make a business model successful and knowing which segments to pursue at first is critical, even though the successful business model should be scalable across the segments (Teece, 2018). Overall, Airbnb managed to successfully create social ties between guests and hosts, which brings social value for the users and one thing that should be noted in the strategy and business model creation. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). According to Teece (2018), a platform can be a business model itself and Uber, for example, is considered as one pioneering a new way of providing taxi service. Uber's business model is based on software and data skills and applying them innovatively to reimplement a traditional service. Comparing Uber and the traditional taxi, it is clear that technology plays a major role in Uber's business model, whereas utilization of information technology in traditional taxi companies is low. (Teece, 2018).

Just like Uber and Airbnb, a number of platforms operate globally or in various countries (Constantiou et al., 2017). Digitalization and modularization of services provide digital platform providers a favorable opportunity to scale globally and seek for global success (Ojala et al., 2018). Previous platform strategy studies do not have unified findings about entering new markets and its effects on success. According to McAfee and Brynjolfsson (2017), early entrance to a new market can be considered as a critical success factor, whereas other literature does not seem to highlight it as a critical step to success (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006). Entering new markets is a strategic decision; e.g. Uber's strategy is to enter new markets and less about how to expand existing markets (Teece, 2018), whereas Lyft and TaskRabbit concentrate on existing markets (Constantiou et al., 2017).

Platform businesses do not necessarily need to transfer goods to foreign markets, but rather their business model. Entering new markets is a question of replication. (Brouthers et al., 2016). Most of the sharing economy businesses do not possess any rare or inimitable resources. Therefore, the first-mover advantage, both in local and international markets, can be extremely important. (Parente et al., 2018). The first-mover advantage is a situation where a platform

is the first one in the market and there are no similar platforms or services existing yet. Thus, the first mover needs to develop a new set of users to adopt the platform. (Eisenmann, 2006). Various literature acknowledges the impact of platform companies' early entrance but does not highlight it as a critical step to success (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006). Less discussion evolves around late movers even though they can have an advantage over the first movers by learning from positioning errors, technological mistakes (Eisenmann et al., 2006) or utilizing their userbase (Brouthers et al., 2016). Teece (2018) highlights that being the first with an imitable business model may even teach users in the market about the new value proposition, helping rivals to enter without securing any lock-in for that pioneer firm. If a late mover manages to have better branding, better technology or to answer customer needs better than the current platform, it is a disadvantage for the first platform in the market. (Brouthers et al., 2016).

The order in which platforms enter new markets is not the only way for platforms to secure their success, but they also need to create barriers for entry in their industry. A way for a platform to protect their userbase and network effects against competitors is by managing the switching costs (Eisenmann et al., 2006; Farrell & Klemper, 2007). It is typical for consumers to use multiple similar platforms or to switch a platform to another. The phenomenon is called multi-homing and it is a crucial factor when assessing a platform's competitiveness because it defines how well the platform can preserve its userbase. The costs that are caused by consumers switching from one platform to another are called switching costs and they can be managed by creating lock-in features to the platform. (Eisenmann et al., 2006). Platforms use a combination of switching costs and network effects to lock customers in their platform, trying to achieve a situation where the platform's userbase and features are too valuable to abandon and at the same time switching costs are too high to change to a competing platform. (Farrell & Klemper, 2007). Moreover, pricing, platform competition and the decision on platform openness are strongly affecting multi-homing.

According to Brouthers et al., (2016) one challenge to overcome in new foreign markets is that the platform usually has few or none collaborators in the market which makes them feel outsiders. Outsidership concerns especially digital platform firms as they do not have ties in the user community. Even though these platform firms are accessible from anywhere, in the extreme situation they do not have any users when they enter new markets. Network effects are therefore hard to reach in the new foreign markets. So, according to the authors, the main strategic concern is to move from learning and reducing investment risks to minimizing outsidership by creating a large, local network of users. Platform companies should make potential users aware of their service and get them to adopt it. (Brouthers et al., 2016).

In the past, successful platforms have entered markets gradually by learning while doing. Platform companies try to start with small investments and learn from the market, its regulations, legitimacy and other practical matters before making any further commitments in order to avoid too big risks. (Evans,

2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006). Gradual market entry has been conducted by building one interaction link between two user groups and testing and developing it. The market entry is carried out gradually to learn the right technology and operating infrastructure before making big investments. (Evans, 2003). After the operational and technological infrastructures are right, it is important to find talent and funding in order to scale the platform. When the company has the right mixture of dynamics and resources overall, the network effects begin to play a major role in the platform strategy. (Eisenmann et al., 2006).

There are some main strategies to follow in order to generate success for the platform, but more specific practical descriptions of the actions are missing. Taking a look into the actions that platforms should avoid provides a richer overall description of the steps that lead to success. The following subchapter will go through the failure factors identified in the literature.

3.2 Platform Failures

As discussed in previous chapters, Uber and Airbnb are typical examples of successful sharing economy businesses but there are many lesser-known platform businesses that have not succeeded so well. Identifying the failures of others is a good way to learn from their mistakes and acknowledging what should be done differently. Chasin, Hoffen, Hoffmeister and Becken (2018) studied over 500 failed sharing economy platforms. They found seven reasons in their study that lead to failure: lack of providers, insufficient analysis of the sharing market, trust and safety, hidden resource requirements, unscalable technical design, unclear legal environment and business termination through acquisition, which means taking over a similar business to acquire their userbase rather than their business model/solution. Sharing economy businesses are unique in nature and are usually dependent on private individuals and therefore they have unique challenges. Failing to overcome these unique challenges might lead to overall failure of the platform. Failure is usually due to multiple factors, not just a single one. (Chasin, Hoffen, Hoffmeister & Becker, 2018).

The first reason to failure that Chasin et al., (2018) describe is lack of providers which refers to a situation where there are not enough individuals who offer resources on the platform. As mentioned earlier, a multi-sided platform needs a supply and a demand side and attracting both user groups is the biggest challenge of platform businesses. Depending on the platform, the other side might be harder to attract. Usually it is the demand side that should be there to attract supply. A lack of participants is often due to insufficient and ineffective raise of awareness resulting from inadequate marketing and market focus. Not gaining enough userbase can also be a result of competition in the market. (Chasin et al., 2018). Just being a foreign in a new market can cause problems for a platform company as locals might choose a similar, available domestic platform. Platform businesses might suffer from outsidership in different foreign markets. Therefore, the focus of those firms' internationalization

processes should be on their network and diffusion-based user adoption processes. (Brouthers, et al., 2016). Evans and Schmalensee (2009) identify that failures are most likely due to failed steps to push adoption past the critical mass.

The second reason to platform failure identified by Chasin et al, (2018) is insufficient analysis of the sharing market. Many startups fail in the insufficient analysis of the market and are forced to go back to the planning and analyzing phase and identify why their service did not work in the market. (Chasin et al., 2018). A common reason to failure is that an effort is not put to understand the target market demand and not attracting sufficient userbase in the chosen market (Kumar et al., 2018). Reason number three, users' trust and safety concerns towards the platform, are consequences of the insufficient analysis. (Chasin et al., 2018).

Reason four for failure is hidden resource requirements. Sharing economy companies might underestimate the resource requirements, because they think their solution is so simple. (Chasin et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2017). The actual complexity of the business might come as a surprise for many platform managers making them realize the lack of time, personnel and/or financial resources. For example, there might be a situation where the company needs more people to take care of the operations and therefore have to hire more people or they need more capital than expected to sustain growth. (Chasin et al., 2018).

Reason number five to failure is unscalable technical design. Technology is the factor that helps a platform business to scale by making the operations much more efficient (Teece, 2018), and to do that the technical solution should be scalable itself. There is a variety of technical challenges that can make the business inefficient. A sharing platform should be able to handle rapidly growing number of users. In addition to scalability issues, other technical issues are too complex design which makes it difficult to make even small improvements to features increasing development cycles and preventing some modifications almost completely. Technical issues can be due to adding more and more new ideas on top of each other that are not compatible with each other or because the algorithms do not work as they were meant, leading to dissatisfied users. (Chasin et al., 2018). Dissatisfaction to a platform technology leads to low service quality which leads to lack of engagement (Kumar et al., 2018).

Reason number six is unclear legal environment. Digital platforms need to deal with a lot of legitimacy and regulation issues (Brouthers et al., 2016). The sharing economy is new, and it faces legal barriers and there can be unforeseen legislative barriers. New regulations can appear unexpectedly, and they might require a lot of effort to overcome. Regulatory challenges might even lead to market shutdown. This is not purely a failure, as there might be unforeseen surprises, but with thorough research of the target market the risk can be minimized. (Chasin et al., 2018).

The seventh reason to failure is business termination through acquisition. Chasin et al., (2018) studied over 500 sharing platforms from which 33 were acquired. Most of these resulted in the acquired platform's users being transferred to platform that acquired them, so that the business itself was not acquired at all.

This is a common case when a larger sharing platform acquires smaller ones. The authors do acknowledge that acquisition entails some degree of success, although in sharing economy context acquisition typically means eliminating your competitors and buying yourself more userbase. (Chasin et al., 2018).

Based on their findings, Chasin et al., (2018) provide four recommendations that center on the dimensions with the most striking differences between successful and failed businesses, which are the level of reliance on business partners, the level of reliance on indirect income, the level of focus on self-service and the choice of market focus. The first recommendation is ensuring an appropriate level of reliance on business partners, which implies the tendency of successful sharing economy platforms to rely on businesses as providers more than failed platforms do. For example, car sharing services partnering with car rental companies are more likely to gain customers because the rental companies add credibility to the service. The second recommendation is to not rely on indirect income. According to the study less than 4% of successful platforms rely on indirect income, like advertisements or data trades, whereas it is more typical to failed platforms. The income should come from various kinds of membership or transaction fees from providers and consumers. The authors also point out, that the readiness of customers to pay for the platform services directly is a good indicator of whether a new sharing economy platform will be viable in the long term. The third recommendation is not focusing on self-service, meaning that users value their time so much, that for example, in some cases they would rather own a tool than go borrow it from someone's house. The fourth recommendation is to consider the geographic market focus. Many sharing platforms operate in geographically integrated markets meaning that the services can be ordered despite the location, for example by renting a room from another country. Some platforms operate in individual cities or countries. Successful platforms tend to operate in integrated markets but in some cases, it makes sense to provide resources on the platform locally. (Chasin et al., 2018). Online labor platforms that provide work locally are a good example of this. According to Chasin et al., (2018), the failure related to this category results from the businesses not putting in effort required to understand the market's demands and not attracting a sufficient userbase in the chosen market and from the insufficient analysis of the sharing market and underestimating the resources required.

Going through the basic platform failures, it complements the successful strategies and they give more details and concrete recommendations. These failures and recommendations will be utilized to better understand why and how some platforms succeed. The following subchapter combines the findings from platform strategies and platform failures providing synthesis and a framework to study a platform success.

3.3 Synthesis and Framework for Platform Success

Prior research provides an understanding of how sharing economy platforms succeed from their research point of view. Some study the evolutionary aspects (Constantiou et al., 2016) and a number of studies focus on network effects and building critical mass (e.g. Rochet & Tirole, 2003) while others try to provide theoretical lens for the most critical strategic decisions to make (e.g. Eisenmann, 2006). A universal theoretical lens for the success factors is still missing. In this subchapter the success factors found in previous literature are discussed further and synthesis is provided.

What is notable is that most of the success factors discussed in the literature are related to the early phase of the platform business. This is of course understandable as the beginning is filled with many critical decisions, analysis and actions that determine the future of the platform. Most of the literature concentrate on platform economics and building the network of users in the platform's early years, whereas Constantiou et al., (2016) utilize the information infrastructure theory to explain both establishing and maintaining an installed base including developers, work practices, human resources, standards, technological artefacts and organizational commitment. According to the authors, the success depends on gaining initial user networks and after that, maintaining the users' active participation and ensuring sufficient growth of the userbase for sustainable revenue generation. (Constantiou et al., 2016). In addition to critical mass and network effects, the role of other factors such as technology itself should be noted as well and how it influences building and maintaining the userbase. Table 4 summarizes the success factors found from the literature. They are based on common theories indicating platform success and insights from typical platform failures. All the findings are brought together and categorized. Next, a more in-depth and comprehensive overview will be taken to the literature findings to provide synthesis.

Many of the aspects dealt in the previous chapter, such as market analysis, analysis of needed resources, analysis of legal environment, scalable technical design and overall good strategy and business model planning can and should be planned to some extent before starting to gather critical mass. A platform business should be scalable to some extent before getting too many people in. (Eisenmann et al., 2006). Some market entry related aspects also cover starting the platform business in general.

To consider how to establish userbase, a number of studies focus on factors affecting the participation to sharing economy. Frenken and Schor (2017) consider people's motivation to participate in the sharing economy as the fundamental success factor. When examining the success from a network point of view the essential question is what makes people participate in the sharing economy, in other words what they value in it. Motivation can be generally divided into social and economic motivation. Platforms should provide monetary value, social value or both for their users. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). Kumar et al.,

(2018) and Schor (2014) add a technology as a driver for the sharing economy participation and overall enthusiasm towards a new technology, including more elegant interfaces and more efficient services than traditional models can offer. According to Kumar et al., (2018), some main reasons for participation are the cost, ease, efficiency and immediate gratification provided by the platform. These include cutting out bureaucracy, user friendliness and fast service delivery. Overall, they suggest that convenience provided by platforms is what initially draws customers to the platform. (Kumar et al., 2018). Both Kumar et al., (2018) and Frenken and Schor (2017) identify environmental aspect for participation, but do not consider it as an equally important reason to the aforementioned reasons. User's belief of a more environmental option due to lesser resource-intensive business model can motivate some users to participate. For example, using Uber on demand is a more appealing option for some people compared to buying a car. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). Overall, diminished dependence on ownership is seen as an important reason to participate for some, especially for younger generations, that do not consider owning itself as an intrinsic value (Kumar et al., 2018).

Having a solution that will attract users is also crucial to get the early adopters onboard. Part of the early phase of platform success is getting early adopters to use the platform which affects the platform's early survival. After all, early adopters are the initial userbase and therefore a starting point for network effects. (Constantiou et al., 2016). The desired outcome is that early adopters spread positive word-of-mouth fostering the participation of other users (Constantiou et al., 2016; Eisenmann et al., 2006).

Although users need to have motivation to participate in the first place, there are various aspects to consider that makes them stay. Constantiou et al., (2016) discuss it as maintaining the userbase which means that people continue to use the platform. Continued use is even more important in cases where companies provide services through mobile applications (Ding, 2018), which usually is the case in sharing economy. Mobile applications typically lose most of their users within the first month after installation (Ding, 2018). This high churn rate can be dealt with continuous entry of new customers and service providers and trying to win back old customers (Kumar et al., 2018). Findings from the literature also illustrate that complementary innovations support the success in this phase, and they should be added after the initial success (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006).

What each of the sharing economy platforms should be able to do is at least to facilitate demand, balance conflicting needs and provide sufficient matchmaking and enhance value for all parties (Knote & Blohm, 2016). This means having well-functioning technology and considering users while developing the platform. Knote and Blohm (2016) find IT-user aligned business model innovation to be one of the most critical dynamic capability. It includes fast reaction to emerging technologies and changing consumer needs. (Knote & Blohm, 2016). There might be a conflict between consumers' acceptability and business model innovativeness, which can be managed with integrating novel

technologies into their business model, keeping the already existing model in mind (Sach, 2015). This is something that can be considered as a factor that motivates users to stay as they are expecting impending improvements (Ding, 2018).

The major challenge assigned to IS research "is to investigate how IT can help to build trust among peers and in the intermediary to foster acceptance of the sharing services." (Knote & Blohm, 2016, p. 8). Rating systems, user reviews and other evaluative features are basic trust building elements for sharing economy platforms, but to actually facilitate trust it is up to the technical solutions of a sharing platform to build efficient trust and recommendation systems. For example, in some cases, qualitative ratings are missing completely and only quantitative ratings are offered, such as star or numerical ratings (Ikkala & Lampinen, 2015). Frenken and Schor (2017) simply state that ratings are not accurate, but they are important factors that affect participation to the sharing economy. Kumar et al., (2018) state that rating systems are biased because of peers giving each other good ratings to receive back good ratings. Other reason for biased rating systems is called herding, which means that users simply reflect the earlier ratings and evaluate their peer based on them. The authors also agree that more accurate rating systems should be developed for them to better support platform participation. (Kumar et al., 2018).

In addition to rating systems, intermediary has other ways to build trust among users. Their responsibility is managing and facilitating safe and reliable transactions, which includes spotting stalkers, running background checks, facilitating trust networks and maintaining human interaction. (Knote & Blohm, 2016). Kumar et al., (2018) also highlight the importance of trust networks and human interaction because for users, the possibility to be heard and communicate with the intermediary is important to feel trust, safety and commitment. More profound examples of an intermediary's responsibility as a trust builder are providing online payments and standard contracts. Paying via platforms is already a familiar way to pay transactions and standard contracts are becoming more common as well, but it is important to recognize their roles in building trust. (Frenken & Schor, 2017). Studies state that the success depends overall on how service providers are treated. This includes rewarding them, delivering knowledge and training them. It does not only make satisfied service providers, but also when the service providers (e.g. Uber drivers) are well trained, they provide higher quality service for the demand side. (Knote & Blohm, 2016; Kumar et al., 2018). Ratings and rewards also help the parties of the sharing economy to stay and they increase switching costs by lock-in as the users commit to the platform better. In addition to rewards and rating systems, other ways to increase switching costs is adding complementary and value-added services and offering increasing user trust by offering e.g. loans and insurance. (Constantiou et al., 2016).

TABLE 4 Theoretical Framework for Assessing On-demand Platform Success

Category	Success factor	Source
Market	Market entry	McAfee & Brynjolfsson (2017); Teece (2018)
	Utilizing first mover advantage	Parente et al., (2018)
	Utilizing late mover advantage	Brouthers et al., (2016)
	Concentrate on existing markets	Constantiou et al., (2016)
	Trust and safety	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Sufficient analysis of needed resources	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Consider the geographic market focus	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Sufficient analysis of legal environment	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Marketing strategy	Teece (2018)
	Market segments	Teece (2018)
	Align business model with strategy	Constantiou et al., (2017)
	Overcoming outsidership in new markets	Brouthers et al., (2016)
Network	Sufficient network	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Early adopters	Constantiou et al., (2016); Eisenmann et al., (2006)
	Economic, social and environmental motivators to participate	Frenken & Schor (2017)
	High switching costs	Constantiou et al., (2016)
	Developing unique strategies to acquire new customers from various generations	Kumar et al., (2018)
	Increasing the amount of transactions (retention)	Kumar et al., (2018)
	Winning back old customers	Kumar et al., (2018)
	Good trust and recommendation system	Knote & Blohm (2016)
	Intermediary facilitating trust and governance	Frenken & Schor (2017); Knote & Blohm (2016); Kumar et al., (2018); Hagiu (2014)
	Not focusing on self-service	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Ensure an appropriate level of reliance on business partners	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Fast reaction to changing consumer needs	Knote & Blohm (2016)
Pricing	Not relying on indirect income	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Subsidize the side that is more sensitive to price or quality	Eisenmann et al., (2006); Hagiu (2014)
	Lower prices and incentives to get marquee users onboard	Eisenmann et al., (2006)
	Pricing algorithms	Constantiou et al., (2017)
Technology	Fast reaction to emerging technologies	Knote & Blohm (2016); Sach (2015)
	Convenience (efficiency, cost, ease, immediate gratification)	Kumar et al., (2018)
	New technology (elegance and rapid service)	Schor (2014)
	Scalable technical design	Chasin et al., (2018)
	Platform design	Hagiu (2014)
	Cost-benefit analysis of new features	Hagiu (2014)

Among treating users well and providing a great service, pricing structures are the most important strategic decisions that platforms have to make to succeed as discussed in the multi-sided platform chapter (Hagiu, 2014; Eisenmann et al., 2006; Constantiou et al., 2017). As pricing is very dependent on market structures and different dynamics among competing platforms, it is common for platforms to subsidize one side with cheaper prices and have higher prices for the other side (Evans, 2003). This strategy is used by platforms to overcome chicken-and-egg problem to get important users on board, or to compete with other platforms (Evans, 2003; Hagiu, 2014; Eisenmann et al., 2006). Maybe the most common pricing related frameworks are by Eisenmann et al., (2006) and Hagiu (2014). The decision criteria created by Eisenmann et al., (2006) suggests that a platform should put a lower price, or subsidize, the sides that are more sensitive to price or quality and secondly, the platform needs to get the marquee users onboard by lowering prices or providing incentives to join. Three pricing decision rules suggested by Hagiu (2014) follow the similar overall logic. The rules are following: (1) Charge a higher price for the group that has less price sensitivity, (2) if there are no priced transactions between the groups, charge more from the side that benefits more from having the other side present in the platform and (3) if there is priced transactions between the groups, then charge more from the side that extracts more value from the other. (Hagiu 2014). Among these, there are new emerging pricing strategies to consider, such as dynamic pricing (Kumar et al., 2018) and different kinds of pricing algorithms (Constantiou et al., 2017). For example, Uber sets the price centrally with their automated algorithm that takes into account many variables such as location and related historical and real-time data to predict supply and demand for different times. When demand exceeds a certain threshold, Uber dynamically increases the prices and that is called surge pricing. With this pricing strategy, they also manage their supply and demand sides, as even inactive drivers get notified of the higher prices convincing more drivers to even out the peak. (Constantiou et al., 2017). Dynamic pricing might even have an effect on consumers' choice and brand preference if drivers or workers are happier (Kumar et al., 2018). All in all, the Uber pricing example shows that there are various ways to practice pricing and exploiting technology to get it right.

To conclude on relevant points on the literature, a platform needs to get it right with correct mix of dynamics and resources (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006; Chasin et al., 2018). To succeed, it is required to find the right operational and technological infrastructure (Evans, 2003). To highlight technology's role, it is present in each category of the framework (table 4). Technology is in crucial role as it enables almost all of the functions on the platform in the ideal situation. Frenken and Schor (2017) states that in the end, technologies determine whether the platform business will be successful or not, supporting the interpretation of technology having a focal role in each category of the framework. All in all, technology enables market related actions, building userbase and having efficient pricing but building technology is based on strategic decisions behind them. What is considerable is that the framework can be classified but

each category affects each other. The framework presented in this chapter acts as a basis for an empirical study on selected case companies Jobandtalent and Coople, that are presented in the following chapter. The framework is used to compare the findings of theory with the results of the empirical study.

4 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study will be conducted as a qualitative multiple case study using grounded theory as a basis for the analysis. Two case companies were selected to study patterns from their actions that led them to their current success. Qualitative secondary data will be used to form a detailed view of the case companies' actions by utilizing public data collected from online sources. The discussion part of the study will be drawn from the current data of multi-sided, sharing economy and on-demand platforms, their success factors and compared with the findings derived from the case data. The goal is to draw a rich description of the success factors analyzed from the case data. Also, a timelines from both of the case company will be drawn as a part of the analysis and to track the actions taken over the years to gain their position as leading on-demand staffing platforms in Europe. The focus is therefore on finding and explaining the success factors of on-demand platforms in the on-demand staffing platform setting. Critical success factors are those things that need to go well in an organization in order to ensure success and high performance (Boynton & Zmud, 1984).

Romano et al.'s (2003) three step data analysis method is adapted to go through the collected case data systematically. The steps are elicitation, reduction and visualization and they are exploited to refine the large data amount to understandable form for illustrating the findings. Results found from the case data will be compared with the earlier findings in the discussion part. Grounded case study methodology was chosen to develop an understanding of on-demand platforms, because it aims to generate novel theory, model or rich description from research findings (Wiesche, Jurisch, Yetton & Krcmar,2017), which allows this study to rely on case data and draw findings from it without relying strongly to former theories. In other words, the purpose of this thesis is to identify those factors that has led the case companies to succeed and form a rich description based on the case data with support from theory.

Methods used by earlier studies about platforms in information systems science served as an inspiration for this study (Ghazawneh & Hendfrisson, 2016; Constantiou, Eaton & Tuunainen, 2016). The main source of qualitative data

used in these research papers is freely available data found from online sources. In the same manner, data will be solely online-based in this thesis.

4.1 Case Selection

The number of different on-demand platforms is increasing, and they bring various changes into work life that are still not clear. Platform work and gig applications are becoming a more common way to earn income (Askitas et al., 2018). It is important to pay more academic attention to them in platform research as current studies are mostly focused on law issues and social challenges. Instead of focusing on challenges and weaknesses of these platforms this study aims to provide insights on how these platforms operate and what makes them successful. Despite the criticism the on-demand staffing platforms provoke, they are increasingly gaining interest and millions of users around the world are working through platforms (Pesole et al., 2018). There is no definite number of the amount of platform workers, but one of the case companies alone, Jobandtalent, claims to have around 10 million registered users and it is not the only on-demand staffing platform in the market (Jobandtalent, 2020). According to Askitas et al., (2018), around 17% of Europeans engage in some kind of online labor platform economy as occasional consumers or labor suppliers. The number of platforms that provide work is growing fast and is expected to continue to do so along with the on-demand work. (Askitas et al., 2018). Despite the phenomenon's significance, there is still relatively little knowledge on how on-demand platforms succeed. With these justifications, on-demand staffing platforms were selected as case companies for this study to present on-demand platforms as a rising platform industry.

There is a relatively wide range of actors in the on-demand staffing market, which made the case selection challenging as different sources rank these platforms based on different metrics. All ranking sources tend to take into account recruitment and hiring mobile applications overall, making it time consuming to sort out only the on-demand staffing platforms. The difference between on-demand staffing platform compared to other job applications is that the work happens on demand within few days to few hours starting time and the work is usually short-term or gigs, whereas other job platforms tend to focus on hiring and long-term employment to permanent employment. For the purpose of this study, these common rankings found from the Internet were not found too useful and other case selection criteria were applied. Without relying on too much public rankings, two cases were selected based on the following criteria.

First, the founding year was one of the selection criteria. Many of the staffing platforms emerged around 2015 making the staffing industry crowded (Stuart et al., 2017). Based on founding year, mature platforms were selected to have more rich and voluminous data and to identify what on-demand staffing market leaders are doing right in the long run. Also, similar timespan to Airbnb provides insights on more than just userbase related success (Constantiou et al.,

2016). Based on the study of Constantiou et al., (2016), it is likely that more mature companies are concentrating on augmenting the platform and maintaining their current userbase by developing value-added services and the platform overall.

The second criteria were the number of users and customers. Number of users and revenue are typical metrics to see if the platform company is successful (Constantiou et al., 2017). The information about the number of users and revenue were difficult to find and the numbers were self-reported by the case companies, and therefore they are not completely reliable. Nevertheless, they give understanding about the numbers in hand.

The third criterion was platforms' origin and whether they operate in multiple locations. Both case organizations originate from Europe, operate in various countries and aim to expand their markets to more locations. The origin and similar goals support their comparability. It appears that on-demand staffing platforms founded in Europe are more likely to operate in various countries within Europe as well as outside of it, whereas successful on-demand staffing platforms in USA, Australia and Asia are concentrating on their local market. Therefore, European platforms were chosen to increase comparability to the whole global on-demand staffing industry and to study how they manage to expand their platforms to other countries successfully.

The next criterion was the amount of data available from online sources and the name of the company. The information was mostly retrieved using the company name as a keyword initially examining whether there was enough data found from CrunchBase, Google and the companies' own websites. Some names of successful on-demand staffing platforms generated too much irrelevant search results, which is why it was too time consuming to try to find information concerning only the company in hand (e.g. Job Today). Other than that, it was mandatory to find enough data. Both case companies generated over 60 results each after sorting out unnecessary sources, which was sufficient amount considering the time available for conducting this thesis.

As the success and growth is the target of this study, the third criterion was the amount of the funding. It was difficult to find comparable case companies in this criterion as Jobandtalent seems to be one of the world's best funded on-demand staffing platform. Although Jobandtalent's and Coople's comparability is not the best in this category, they both still represent world's best funded on-demand staffing platforms and it is interesting to see whether they have a lot of differences because of the funding.

Finally, as staffing platforms are a little bit different compared to companies that can be defined as solely on-demand staffing platforms this criterion was applied and numeric data was found to support the claim, that the staffing happens on-demand. What separates on-demand staffing platforms from merely staffing platforms and regular work agencies is specifically the shift filling duration. On-demand staffing platforms talk about hours or even minutes whereas regular staffing services talk about days. Therefore, the numeric criterion applied here was the value proposition of how long it will take to fill a

work shift. These were self reportedly few of the fastest on-demand staffing platforms and therefore representing comparable and interesting cases. Both case companies are on-demand platforms and focus their business models on providing on-demand staffing service, which makes their basic dynamics pretty much the same.

According to these criteria, two top funded European on-demand staffing platform companies that had easy-to-find names and enough data available were selected as case companies for this study. With the careful case selection, it was ensured that the cases are comparable and generate an adequate amount of information to provide a rich description of on-demand platforms' success factors in the scope of this thesis. The metrics that served as a base for selecting these companies are presented in table 5. The case companies are next described briefly based on information retrieved from their own websites.

TABLE 5 Case Company Selection Criteria

Platform data	Jobandtalent	Coople
Founded	2009	2009
Users	+10 million	400 000
Customer businesses	150 000	20 000
Funding	$182.4M	$75M
Markets Entered	United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, Sweden, France, Mexico and Colombia	Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom
Revenue	$154,4M	$30M
Shift fill duration	Few minutes	4 hours

Case Company 1: Jobandtalent

Jobandtalent is one of the leading European on-demand staffing platforms and Europe's 24th fastest growing company that was founded in 2009 in Madrid. The goal of Jobandtalent is to make labor market more fluid and accessible by getting rid of the barriers to job search and lowering the hiring and workforce management costs for businesses. The platform matches jobseekers and passive jobseekers with businesses by means of an algorithm developed by engineers and data scientists, that reduces the usual hiring time. Jobandtalent also takes care of the contract-signing and payroll, which provides businesses a workforce scheduling tool and for workers opportunities to work through the platform either as a contractor or an employee any time they like providing them the ul-

timate flexibility. Jobandtalent has also developed Workforce as a Service (WaaS) that aims to flexibility of the labor market by allowing companies to skip hiring anyone directly to their own books supporting reactive and efficient hiring on-demand. Jobandtalent provides social benefits for their workers such as insurance and a pension plan. (jobandtalent.com, 2020).

Case Company 2: Coople

Coople is another leading European on-demand staffing platform founded in 2009 in Zurich. The platform instantly matches workers with companies using an advanced algorithm that handles big data and analytics. The work is shift-based or even hourly work. Many of Coople's customers are international companies that require temporary workers for jobs in retail, hospitality, office and logistics. Coople's vision is to create the future of flexible work where working is simple and satisfying for both the worker and businesses. Coople offers staff managing for employers through their calendar view. Through the platform, workers and employers can rate each other, enabling a clear and open network of trusted, skilled staff and dependable businesses. For workers Coople offers several ways to filter and personalize job search: they can for example look for jobs that are close to their location. Coople has a web-based application for employers and separate mobile applications for workers and employers. Workers are referred to as "Cooplers" and they are defined as agency workers, so they are in contract of service with Coople. (coople.com, 2020).

4.2 Data Collection

The aim of this study is to explain what the success factors for an on-demand staffing platform are. For this purpose, secondary data was collected from publicly available mass media sources (Sarajärvi & Tuomi, 2017), that were freely accessible. Three primary sources were used to collect the secondary data for this research. The data sources included CrunchBase, Google search engine results and the websites of the case companies, especially their blogs. The data included news and announcements; archival data; conference, workshop and special events data; interviews; videos; and online articles. First, data was collected from CrunchBase, which is considered to be one of the most popular start-up databases holding information for example about companies' products, their founding year, funding and tech blogs' posts they appear in (Mannes, 2016). All the tech blog posts were gathered from CrunchBase news feed and used as secondary qualitative data.

As the amount of blog posts in the CrunchBase news feed was insufficient, secondary data was also collected using Google search engine. Company names were used as keywords and the former name of Coople, Staff Finder, to track their earlier path. All the results were reviewed by how strongly the source was related to the case company. In some cases, the companies were only mentioned

because some register consisted their contact information. Those were left out as they did not give any information about the case company itself. Basically, after that, search results were sorted to those that held any important or new information about the case companies.

Case companies' websites were examined thoroughly. Constantiou et al's., (2017) study about Airbnb inspired the utilization of case companies' own blog posts to find additional information and to build a rich qualitative narrative including the case companies' perspectives as well. Timelines were drawn to visualize the case data and to help to support finding the success factors of these companies. Case data covered years from 2011 to 2020 and altogether 128 online sources were collected and analyzed, giving a sufficient understanding of the case companies and the factors leading them to success. The case data included articles, news, interviews, videos, conferences, government archives and blog posts. Using only online based secondary data to create a narrative has been a successful method in previous studies where data from past events were collected and first-hand observation is not possible (Constantiou et al., 2016; Eaton, Sørensen & Yoo, 2015; Ghazawneh & Hendfrisson, 2016). For example, Ghazawneh and Hendfrisson (2016) studied boundary resources in third-party development utilizing only online sources related to Apple. Overall, secondary data collection is good for examining historical background of the research setting providing extensive database (Ghazawneh & Hendfrisson, 2016).

4.3 Data Analysis

Grounded theory was used as a basis to analyze the qualitative case data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The aim was to study the success factors of on-demand platforms and two on-demand staffing platforms were chosen to serve as case companies. This study relies on publicly available data from the Internet. The data was studied carefully trying to find the case companies' actions to grow and develop into successful companies.

Grounded theory is a data driven theory that systematically gathers and analyzes data through the research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Although grounded theory has certain processes and guidelines, it allows highly iterative processes, where the writer has the freedom to adopt and adapt methods to create diverse ways to conduct the research (Charmaz, 2006). Data, analysis and the final theory are in a close relationship to one another in this method. Grounded theory does not rely on preconceived theory but the researcher rather begins with an area of study in mind from which the theory can emerge. It is likely that grounded theory offers insight, enhances understanding, and provides a meaningful guide to action. (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Whereas the ultimate goal of grounded theory is to form a theory, in information systems research models, rich descriptions are common outcomes as well (Wiesche et al., 2017). This study follows this trend by forming a rich description instead of a pure theory.

Data was triangulated by using multiple, more precisely two, cases and collecting data from several sources. Multiple case study design was used to develop a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon than a single case could have provided (Yin, 2002). Also, due to the limited data, the goal was that the case companies' data would supplement each other and therefore as comparable cases as possible were selected for this study (Sarajärvi & Tuomi, 2017).

Romano et al.'s (2003) data analysis method was adopted to make sense of the case data and to find meaningful information. The methodology of Romano et al., (2003) is a step-by-step way to analyze web-based data and it is developed especially for information system science research. Therefore, it was suitable for this study allowing a clear and phased analysis of the case data. The analyzing happened in three steps: elicitation, reduction and visualization. The steps are presented in table 6 that consists of main tasks and outputs of each step. Elicitation is collecting data already with some kind of a focus (Romano et al., 2003). In this study the first step of elicitation was to choose data sources that included CrunchBase, Google and company websites. Keywords were the companies' current and former names resulting in 37 CrunchBase articles and a large amount of Google articles covering the years from 2011 to 2020. There was no need for more keywords as the amount of results was sufficient and altogether 128 online data sources were selected for this study. Selection was based on any relevant information about the case companies and results that consisted for example only contact information or mentions, that did not provide any novel information, were left out.

TABLE 6 Data Analysis Method (adapted from Romano et al., 2003)

Steps	Tasks	Outputs
Elicitation	- Elicited data from three data sources - Initial coding	- Research database - Initial coding concepts
Reduction	- Used the framework to select general categories - Assigned the codes to selected categories - Assigned key events to selected categories	- Key success factors categories - Key events related to the success factors
Visualization	- Identified and visualized success factor categories - Identified steps for each success category - Used the framework to analyze the case findings	- Timelines - The framework of success factor categories and steps to achieve success in each category

After filtering the results, the data was reviewed more intensively and carefully resulting initial coding in concepts that emerged from the data (Charmaz, 2006), such as "matching", "user", "technology", "expand", "funding", "pricing", "feature", "acquire", "team", "innovation", "marketing" and "business model innovation". As grounded theory methods allow the flexibility to add new or even surprising information that emerges from the findings (Charmaz, 2006), it

is justified to allow this to happen in the coding process as the phenomenon is not studied before in this context and interesting factors were to appear. Both priori and data-generated categories are important for reduction as without initial theory driven categories it would be difficult to code the data meaningfully and on the other hand, without data-derived meaning specific codes in some categories might be overlooked (Roman et al., 2003). So, coding was based on existing theoretical framework (table 5) and findings from the case data.

The initial coding was carried out from elicited data sources. During the data collection, notes were taken about the case companies and their actions. As a result, comprehensive notes of 24 pages all together were written summarizing each data sources' key findings. After that, the notes were analyzed by forming initial code words that were applied to each data source to categorize them. The framework of this study was utilized by reviewing it from time to time to better keep the theory in mind while analyzing the data. In initial coding the mind was kept open (Charmaz, 2006), which allowed additional code words to arise.

The following phase was reduction. It is a critical step in the methodology, and it involves selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming raw data to more useful form. (Romano et al., 2003). In this phase, the final categories were derived from the initial codes by keeping the framework in mind and combining some of the categories, that appeared to consist of similar qualities and steps such as technology and matching. In this case, a word matching was transferred under the technology category and defined as a critical step to achieve success in the field of technology. First, the initial codes were arranged under the four success factors presented in the framework (table 4) and it was soon clear that more categories were needed to categorize all the initial codes. Overall, eight categories were selected to represent all the success factors. The categories were applied to each data source to classify them and to track how much each category appeared. Examples of how these categories came to exist from the online data are roughly presented in the table 7. Some meaningful quotations are collected to address the formation of each category. After forming the categories, the key actions of the case platforms were arranged under the selected categories to address the steps leading to the success. These key actions were derived from the comprehensive summary of each data source in the notes and they can be found from table 8.

In the last phase, data visualization, findings were visualized into timelines (figure 2 & 3) and main findings were summarized and visualized to final success factor categories and related steps (table 8). The data was arranged into timelines to see interconnections between the results and to visualize the amount of data and publication years. Table 8 represents the main findings and aims to visualize the categories and steps inside each category to achieve success. In addition to just providing visual materials, the focus of this step was to find the relationships, patterns and principles to present them in meaningful form, to understand these interrelations (Romano et al., 2003). This phase also consisted clearly presenting the steps for each success factor category by wording the key actions clearly.

TABLE 7 Examples of Category Formation from Case Data

Category	Coding example Jobandtalent	Coding example Coople
Network	*Its system ties in with social networks such as Facebook to foreground any relevant connections… (Evans, 2013)*	*[To build network] the goal is to provide a platform with so many jobs that one can work as much as they want. (Larcher 2019)*
Technology	*A key strategy to be able to change and pivot your system architecture is to script and automate as much as you can. (Espeja, 2019)*	*We focus on intelligent matching between candidates and recruiters. -- Matching is all important. (Salisbury, 2020)*
Regulation	*Jobandtalent has been designed to dramatically reduce the administrative and HR burden of hiring, onboarding and managing staff, by generating employment contracts, managing payroll and dealing with all payments to local tax authorities. (Gentle, 2016)*	*the business takes care of all right-to-work checks, admin and payroll and fills 98 percent of roles within four hours. (PYMNTS, 2016)*
Market	*Having spent the first two and a half years of its existence focused on platform development, jobandtalent has experienced fast growth. (Ruthven, 2014) -- it's all about knowing your market to the fullest possible extent. (Bornefalk, 2017)*	*Coople announced launcher to Netherlands. They have so called "managing director" in each country and has physical office there. (Beltran, 2019)*
Team	*Its linguistics algorithm, developed in collaboration with HR and big data experts, with input from PhDs. (Lomas, 2013)*	*The key is the team. We already have a strong team in place, and their energy, talent and keenness to improve every day is crucial in our ability to react quickly to the market. (PYMNTS, 2016)*
Pricing	*Since September the company is testing with SMEs a new model, that they call transactional, that's basically one which forces companies to pay between €49 to €199 per worker hired through the platform. (Novoa, 2016)*	*We charge a premium for salary because it includes the total cost of the worker. We may move to a subscription model for employers. (Salisbury, 2020)*
Funding	*we just went to the most relevant business angels in Spain and other nations, and then it was a case of pitching the idea and demonstrating the product. (Ruthven, 2014)*	*The funding will help the Swiss company to accelerate its international expansion and support product development. (Treija, 2016)*
Innovation	*don't be closed to research and innovation. Invest time in trying everything that could improve your platform and apply it when it becomes worthwhile. (Espeja, 2019)*	*a company that is revolutionizing an industry, taking an existing business model and turning it on its head to provide a superior service in a totally new way. (PYMNTS, 2016)*

5 FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the empirical study of two on-demand staffing platforms, Jobandtalent and Coople are presented. They are presented in categories that arise during the analysis. Each category is discussed separately. The Results of both companies are reflected together as the aim was to have similar companies that supplement each other in this study. An overview of the results is presented in table 8.

Network

As mentioned in the theory part, a network is one of the most crucial things to consider for on-demand platforms and a factor determining the success (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006; Constantiou et al., 2017). Both case companies had various ways to build and maintain their network. Jobandtalent managed to build their network early on very quickly. They managed to engage users by linking Facebook to their service and spreading their 200 000-user network to 7 million passive candidates making it more social for users and making businesses want to get an access to that pool. This gave them social value and the users a possibility to share and recommend jobs easily. (Lomas, 2013). In 2011 Jobandtalent had 20 000 users and in 2014 1,75 million. In other words, Jobandtalent was growing with 200 000 new users each month. Jobandtalent mentions two reasons for their growth in the interview: First, having a mobile app, which was launched in 2013. Secondly, designing the mobile app in a way that leverages on the social network of existing users, where users can suggest and share job offers for their friends. To put it differently, they utilized word-of-mouth to grow their network.

> ”The other factor has centred on some of the social actions that we have introduced to the platform, where users can suggest jobs to friends. This has worked well to increase growth due to word of mouth.” (Uridales, 2014).

Jobandtalent invested a lot in network development e.g. by employing a team specifically for user acquisition by analyzing the supply and demand sides.

(Ruthven, 2014). Their matching technology is designed to minimize users' efforts while searching for work. Jobandtalent even say that their matching technology is the main reason for the massive growth in both sides. (PR Newswire, 2015).

> "Jobandtalent is generating more than 200 million data points each month including job views, applications and discards, which are used by our advanced technology team to continually improve the ATR [a self-created industry performance metric known as Application Through Rate] and thus the accuracy of its matches. This is a huge competitive advantage against any player that wants to enter this category." (Navio, 2015).

The supply side is attracted by providing free job offers and for big customers, providing the opportunity to promote the customer's brand on company profile pages on the Jobandtalent platform (Novoa, 2016). In addition to word-of-mouth, they use multiple sources for brand awareness and marketing, such as social media, Youtube and TV (Dalal, 2016).

Coople's growth has been much more moderate compared to Jobandtalent. Although their growth tripled every year in the beginning and 2013s 30 000 users and 1500 businesses became 400 000 users and 20 000 businesses by 2019 (Startupkicker, 2014; Wise, 2019). They rely on physical office locations to build network as they guarantee the user quality by interviewing each person working through their platform (Startupkicker, 2013) and customers are met in person to help them to use the platform and discuss the details (Brackin, 2019). Their aim is on the business side as they aim to gather so much jobs on their platform, that users can work as much as they like (Colson, 2016). User engagement on Coople's platform is also good and it is due to the balance of both sides and having enough jobs for everyone (CNNMoney, 2019). Coople is also good at using incentives to attract more people. For example, they invest in high-class customers and special opportunities to attract users, and they also use testimonials to attract more businesses. Coople has impressive customers from Four Seasons hotels to Formula 1 Grand Prix. They have also hired people to a Coldplay concert, to work as race manager assistants and taking over social media in AUDI FIS Women's Ski World Cup (Larcher, 2019), giving Coople a great deal of attention and undoubtedly new users. For businesses Coople provides a worker for a free 2-hour trial and for restaurants a trial of several weeks to use their platform for free. Among these actions, they build their brand awareness by promoting their business model and the way they treat their workers; the workers are employees and the platform offers them a lot of benefits, education opportunities and they even reward "Coopler of the month".

> "We are exploring ways to offer fringe benefits. Candidate smartphones act like PCs and are the connection to work, so we could offer a phone subscription benefit when they complete a certain number of shifts. Another possibility is to allow access to earnings immediately rather than weekly. We could offer additional services, for instance transport, buying footwear for candidates, even insurance services. We are not doing this but could explore ideas at a later stage." (Calabrò 2020).

To lower barriers to join, both case companies have two-way rating and review systems for both sides to increase transparency and trust. Both attract businesses by having accurate and huge worker pools that are matched to employer needs. Jobantalent even charge businesses more for them to get an access to even larger pools. Both the review system and accurate matching are for assuring the quality of workers and also employer quality. (Novoa, 2016). What they also do is that they increase switching costs by providing added value by end-to-end recruiting and staff management, meaning that their customers do not need to use any other services to hire and fully manage their workers. (Gentle, 2016; FinSMEs, 2018). Overall, positive network effects are ensured by the case companies utilizing multiple methods, such as providing value for users, good marketing, balancing both sides, ensuring trust and safety, offering incentives and added value services and quarantining good quality for both sides.

Technology

Technology is at the centre of these platforms and it enables their whole business model. Coople and Jobandtalent utilize matching algorithms to automate the whole recruiting process and they provide technology-enabled end-to-end recruiting and staff management services including hiring, onboarding, generating contracts, managing payroll, payments, taxes, and automatic background checks (FinSMEs, 2018; Shead, 2016). What is notable is that both companies used the first two years building the platform before launching it. In the beginning the focus was on developing the technology and therefore engineers were developing different types of algorithms to automate business processes. In 2013 Jobandtalent launched their mobile application and according to them, it was one of the reasons why they experienced considerable user growth. Moreover, Jobandtalent went purely mobile in 2016, whereas Coople still has a web application for workers and employers (Lomas, 2016; Consumer Value Creation, 2016). At the same time, Jobandtalent added geolocation and mobile messaging to their platform to support their on-demand model by allowing both sides to find each other based on close location and messaging each other instantly. By 2016 their algorithm was said to be 80% successful in matching workers and employers without any delay. (Lomas, 2016). Their technologies ensure that users have a minimum effort to search for a job and their customers have a minimum effort in finding suitable workers. This is done by pushing job offers to the users that belong to a certain pool and have the required skills. From those who accept the offer the employer gets a shortlist where they can pick whomever they like. (Lomas, 2016; Consumer Value Creation, 2016).

> ”We focus on intelligent matching between candidates and recruiters. To do this at scale is very difficult. It involves building a large data set and you need to add behavioural data that helps predict the next job a candidate might go for so that we bring the relevant jobs and employers to them. To do this successfully you have to ask candidates and employers the right questions. Matching is all important.” (Calabrò 2020).

One of the main tasks that their technologies are doing is scaling their business, which allows them to handle massive growth and quick operations. (Ruthven, 2014). To make all their processes work and be efficient is not only about the algorithm, but it requires a lot of big data, behavioural data, deep knowledge and analytics, so that they can scale and that actions and trends can be identified and reacted to accordingly helping decision making (AIM Group, 2016; Martínez, 2019). Having advanced and constantly developing technology requires strong development teams. Jobandtalent gives more information about their development and ways of working in their engineering blog. For example, they share information about the technologies they use and explain how they utilize agile methods improving their ways of working. According to the blog, their technique to apply technologies is to invest time in trying everything that could improve their platform and apply it when it becomes worthwhile. They constantly try out a lot of technologies in order to find the ones that beat their current technologies. (Bel, 2017). As startup business models evolve fast and pivot occasionally, their system architecture should change accordingly. Answering the architectural changes in the company scripting and automating as much as possible is required, and this strategy has been a key in tackling technical challenges for Jobandtalent. (Espeja, 2019). Coople has far less public information about their technologies and how they develop their platform, but what they do is focus on co-creation and developing their platform regularly with their customers (Coople, 2019). "As part of the ongoing improvements we make to our product, we regularly speak to clients big and small about what they would like to see from Coople." (Coople, 2019). Their strategy to promote themselves in public is not as technology centered as Jobandtalent's and they rather not uncover so much details.

> " [The best feature is] The matching system that links candidates to employers. It happens in the background and requires a lot of engineering and data. The more a user doesn't realize anything is happening, the better." (Calabrò 2020).

Even though they share less data about their technical aspects, their platform efficiency does not seem to be much behind Jobandtalent as they both match work and workers quite fast, both use AWS cloud and both have technology related long-term visions; Jobandtalent is building their WaaS and Coople is building software and product development hub in the UK. There were interesting findings related to these platforms' technical success one of which was developing their platform a while before launching. All in all, the matching technology is the most highlighted element of these on-demand platforms and they constantly develop their technology infrastructure to make their matching even better.

Regulation

There were not regulatory issues concerning these platforms according to the case data. These platforms rather took an advantage of regulations by taking

care of the regulatory issues for their customers. Jobandtalent studied small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in UK and discovered that most of the businesses found regulations difficult and confusing (Gentle, 2016). Both Jobandtalent and Coople are offering their service as a full staff management including all the regulatory matters, solving their customers' problems and saving their time.

> "Most small businesses sadly don't have an HR function or dedicated employment expertise, so the time burden of finding new talent and the risk of non-compliance with employment regulations are both major pain points." (Peck, 2016).

They promote their services as being less risky for businesses than dealing with the regulations on their own as the platforms take care of the regulations and administrative HR tasks properly. (Gentle, 2016; Salisbury, 2020). Under the terms and conditions of both platforms it can be seen that they treat their users as workers (Jobandtalent, 2020; Coople, 2020), which requires much more effort from the platform but is seen as more sustainable and ethical way to employ workers through platforms (EU-Startups, 2020). Jobandtalent offer also a possibility to hire contractors through their platform. All in all, case companies' key to succeed with regulations was not simply dealing with them but to guide their users and customers and be the expert of regulations.

Market

Both case companies operate in various markets and eventually aim to operate globally. Both have entered new markets during their success stories and have grown through international expansions. At first, the case companies have been creating their product and learning in their home market for a few years before launching their platform anywhere else. They have entered new markets very gradually and tested their business model in different key locations before the actual launch. (Jobandtalent, 2015; PYMNTS, 2016). Choosing the right market and finding the product-market fit is crucial. Coople evaluates market potential by looking into how big the staffing industry that they will be facing is and how open is the market towards innovation and online labor market. Jobandtalent have also put resources into finding the perfect product-market fit and modifying the architecture of the platform accordingly and aligning it with the overall business model (Espeja, 2019). Among that, regulations should be dealt with very carefully and the target market environment should be studied to get familiar with the operating environment. According to Jobandtalent's research, Europe can be considered as the biggest staffing market available at the moment. (Wise, 2019). Market entry also requires enough resources and as Jobandtalent's CEO says in the interview:

> "We did a very small prelaunch test, and we realised that we didn't have enough money to do a relevant marketplace testing, so we decided to postpone it. Now we have enough funding to do it properly, so we are going to do some tests in specific

> locations to understand the marketplace dynamics and then scale it rapidly from there." (Lomas, 2015).

The case companies enter markets slowly and test their product, but after that they proceed more aggressively. Before seeking further expansion, Jobandtalent makes sure that maturity is reached in the existing markets and that the service quality and satisfaction of the current users is maintained (Sawers, 2016). According to Jobandtalent, the global profitability depends on the strategy to follow (Reche, 2019). They say one of their keys to growth is a replicable go-to-market playbook which helped them to reach profitability in each market in 18 months (NOAH Conference, 2019). Both Jobandtalent and Coople use launchers that are responsible for opening the new market and lead the growth there (Workaround, 2017; Beltran, 2019). According to the case data, on-demand staffing is very urban phenomenon and the concentration should be on cities rather than countries (Lomas, 2016). The main insights from the market category are to be well prepared by doing research in advance, to know the environment, proceeding gradually and to have a person or a team solely focusing on the market in hand to succeed.

Team

Both companies highlight the importance of their teams and aim to build diverse, strong teams. Jobandtalent created their algorithm from the beginning with experts from different fields (Lomas, 2013). Both aim to hire people that have worked in other successful platform companies. For example, Jobandtalent have people from Uber and Skype (Lomas, 2016). Jobandtalent seems to use their engineering blog to also attract talent to their team. They write about their advanced technologies and team-building events and they let individual technology team employees to write the blog from their perspective creating a good employer image from the perspective of the actual employees.
" Imagine that you are working in a team that tries to raise the bar every day as a collective way of thinking. After working for a long time in that team chances are that mind-blowing achievements in the past now feel normal. They become the foundation to building new things and are used on a daily basis." – "At this point you realize that you are working with brilliant engineers and amazing people. You feel part of the team and the company, learning and improving every day" (Jobandtalent Engineering, 2019).

They promote their teams in many ways letting people outside the organization know how great teams they have. Their working methods are also highlighted for example, that their teams use agile methods and SCRUM is applied due to better organization of their growing team and to better share the knowledge inside teams (Bel, 2017). Among this, their IT vacancies are placed in connection with the blog. Coople uses focused teams to solely solve some focal challenges, such as expansion to other markets (Nicolle, 2018) and how to balance both sides (Hardy, 2020). Case companies' overall success regarding the teams, based on the case data, is building diverse and talented teams and to

attract team members from other successful platform companies and to give them focused tasks.

Pricing

Jobandtalent and Coople charge the customer (demand) side of the platform and the user (supply) side can use their platforms for free. What is also in common for them is that they try and explore different pricing models. Posting job offers to both platforms is free, and they charge a percentage of the work that customers order, and they have been experimenting the right percentage. (Lomas, 2016; AIM Group, 2020). Coople simply adds a multiplier on top of the hourly wage that the employer sets. As they have taken the role of a legal employer, they pay all taxes, national insurances and holidays (Dawson, 2019). Today the employer pays 100% and Coople takes 30% off that (NOAH Conference, 2019). Jobandtalent gains revenue from multiple sources by for example providing a possibility for companies to pay extra to have better visibility in their platform and for wider worker pools (Novoa, 2016).

> ”Companies can post job offers for free on Jobandtalent. However, the startup also presents big customers the opportunity of promoting their brand and the way they work with profile pages and such. These packages cost between €6,000 to €30,000 per year, and they allow companies to reach a wider pool of workers on the platform.” (Novoa, 2016).

These extra services presented 30% of their revenue in 2016. Other revenue sources include traditional advertising and educational program recommendations for users, which is based on their profile and jobs they apply to. (Novoa, 2016). Part of their pricing strategy is the fully automated payment system, where taxes and national insurances are calculated on top of the salary (Salisbury, 2020). The insights derived from pricing is that they do not rely on indirect income as suggested in the literature (Chasin et al., 2018), but their main source is their service. On top of that, they have other revenue sources and they constantly explore new ways for pricing and making revenue.

Funding

Funding was one of the most discussed topics in media articles and it also explained the intensive appearance of all kind of articles around the same time they closed new funding rounds. Funding seemed to awake a lot of attention around these platforms as can be interpreted from figures 2 and 3. On-demand staffing is really capital intensive as they have all the employer reliabilities and as the regulation management constantly requires resources. Therefore, it is crucial to find funding to continue the growth. Getting funding depends on many things, one of which is simply pitching your idea and having clear examples of your product, how it works and what are the benefits and to identify a new market opportunity. (Ruthven, 2014).

> "To start with we just went to the most relevant business angels in Spain and other nations, and then it was a case of pitching the idea and demonstrating the product. They believed in what we were saying and saw the market opportunity." (Uridales, 2014). "it's all about knowing your market to the fullest possible extent. In my first project, I didn't quite know 100% how the technology worked and it proved hard to go into a new sector without having a full knowledge of what the customer needed." (Bornefalk, 2017).

The company has to have a clear plan about what they are developing next with that funding. Funding is not only about money, but about finding the right investors to work with. (Ruthven, 2014). As the co-CEO of Jobandtalent said in the interview "We're not in a hurry. It's more about finding the right investors than just cash" (Novoa, 2016). Case companies need a lot of resources to develop and they have managed to gain sufficient amount of funding partly by having clear ideas and products to present and finding the right investors.

Innovation

Innovation is utilized by both case companies according to the case data. Innovation refers to carrying out new services, technologies, business models and combination of these aiming to more effective products and processes (Yoo, Hendfrisson & Lyytinen, 2010). Case companies' business models are highly challenging as they require considerable automation and agility, making the innovation important (NOAH Conference, 2019). They both aim to solve industry-specific problems and replace and disrupt the traditional staffing industry. Overall, they provide efficiency that traditional staffing industry is not able to do. They both provide comprehensive staff management, such as managing hiring, onboarding, generating contracts, payroll, payments, taxes, automatic background checks and also trust metrics such as reviews and ratings. (Consumer Value Creation, 2016; Shead, 2016).

One of the key qualities of the case companies is that they are able to evolve and adapt to changes quickly. Jobandtalent found a new, better business opportunity and they changed their whole business model from recruiting to on-demand staffing, making them more profitable than ever before. As a part of their business model change, they decided to go purely mobile and target SMEs rather than big companies in the hope of faster turnover and more jobs changing their business radically. Behind these changes were their reaction to the rise of gig work and the nature of work changing because of smartphones. (Lomas, 2016). In the business side they targeted the success factors of SMEs, which are cutting time to hire workers and reduce the risk of not fulfilling all the necessary regulations (Gentle, 2016). Coople highlights that there are multiple ways to launch, take new opportunities and to boost innovation noting that they can serve in multiple ways and it doesn't necessarily have to be the core of their market. New innovations, heavily including new services, will be drivers for their future profitability (Coople Stories, 2019; Wise, 2019). One of the innovations of Coople is their pooling system. They have been working together with

hotels to build pools together with them and allowing different hotel chains to share their workforce building a truly societal impact where even rivals can benefit from co-operation, not to mention part time workers that have the possibility to work more and top up their salaries. (Colson, 2016).

As a part of their innovation, both case companies have added services and features to their platforms. Some are to simply make the service more efficient and some are to solve a problem. For example, Jobandtalent added mobile messaging and geolocation to make their service better and more efficient (Lomas, 2016). Some of their additional services in turn aim to solve a problem such as workers not reporting hours worked through their platform but starting to work directly for the customer company. Jobandtalent's solution to overcome this problem was providing a bank account for the workers to make the workers commit to the platform. They provide different kinds of incentive packages for their workers including a medical insurance, getting 250€ if the worker opens a bank account through them and a free operator for a year. (Novoa, 2016). Coople also tends to explore new opportunities. They have recently added new features for employers such a calendar view for better staff management and a mobile version to manage the staff. (Coople, 2020). As discussed in the network category, they discover new ways to offer added value for they users by considering different opportunities, such as the possibility to provide footwear, insurance services, transport and smartphones for their workers making their service accessible for everyone (Calabrò 2020). They also aim to top up their fast business model by paying their workers salary immediately rather than weekly. (Wise 2019; AIM Group, 2020).

Both offer some kind of education as an additional subsidy service to have more qualified workers and to gain revenue by partnering with education institutions. For example, Coople supports further training via its own platform aiming to enable permanent positions for those workers that seek for it (Huebscher, 2019). Jobandtalent in turn recommends education institutions based on the user data and the education institutions pay per lead generated (Novoa, 2016). Other sources they use data for new innovations is to spot trends and insights to predict what the future will hold and to be able to react and change fast (Martínez, 2019). To support the fast changes Jobandtalent makes sure that their technology can change as fast as their business by using Code-as-early-as-you-can -method and be ready to change it when it better fits the stage the company is at. For Jobandtalent this strategy has been the key to tackling its technical challenges. (Espeja, 2019). Among adding features, services and reacting to environment changes, they develop their WaaS to truly disrupt the staffing industry (Jobandtalent, 2020).

As the whole business model and platform work are still quite new, there is a need to familiarize masses with it and justify why it is a better option than traditional ways to hire workers. By marketing their business model actively, they make it more accessible and familiar for everyone, and build trust to the whole on-demand economy. Especially Coople concentrates on marketing its business model actively in the media and their blog. In most of the articles

and blog posts the focus is on how they change the world of work and help workers and businesses and why they can be trusted. Coople's main focus is to solve problems for businesses and improve employee circumstances and gig workers' position in the job market and overall, making flexible work an attractive option. For employers they announce to solve three problems that are absenteeism, managing peaks and demand, and managing administrative issues like payroll and taxes. (Colson, 2016). Coople enables employers to think about flexible staffing as a long-term strategic way rather than the usual short-term reactive approach (Jones, 2017). They focus a lot of their efforts in making their business sustainable and fair for everyone "to show the world that flexible work can be both dynamic and responsible" (Huebscher, 2019). Their actions include all the worker benefits mentioned earlier and providing jobs that are actually exciting and attractive, like the dream jobs in sport events. As a part of their sustainability they also provide education and training to help those who are willing to find a job, including young people and unemployed adults, to support them into employment. (Huebscher, 2019). Coople is often compared to Uber and said to be the Uber of on-demand staffing. By this, they try to make the association that also the way people work is changing. (Colson, 2016). Whereas Coople's approach is more business model-oriented, Jobandtalent concentrates more on advertising their technology and less the overall business model. The main insight derived from the data is that the case companies develop their business models and innovate new ways of doing things in each of the above-mentioned categories to foster growth and success. One of the overall main insights derived from the case data is that these categories are not separate but rather each of them affects each as one of the Jobandtalent's employees state:

> " Jobandtalent came in from scratch, building something with the right mixture of the smartest people from staffing industry and other relevant areas like engineering and management. That expertise mixed with a lean organization means we can lower prices and grow our market share, all while providing a better service through the best technology." (Bornefalk, 2017)

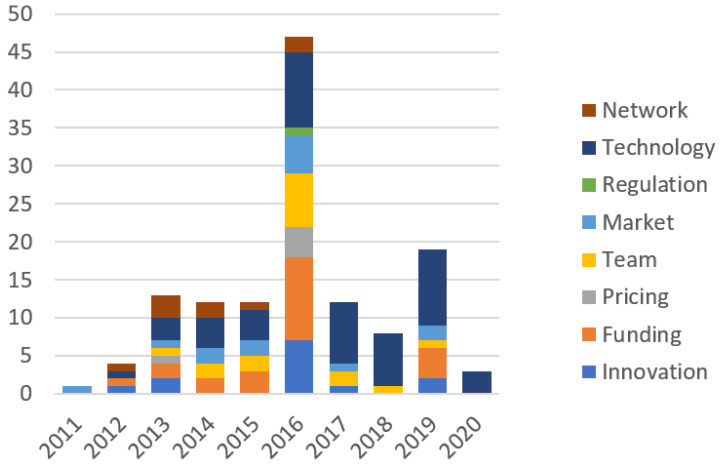

FIGURE 2 Timeline of the Findings on Jobandtalent

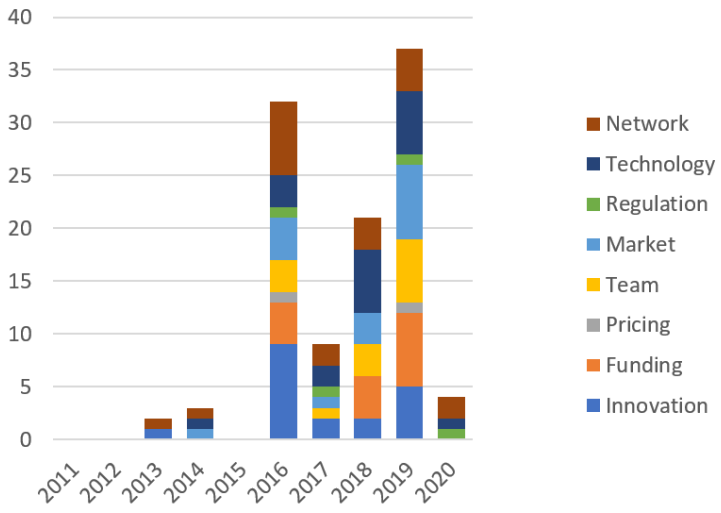

FIGURE 3 Timeline of the Findings on Coople

TABLE 8 Framework for On-demand Platform Success

Success Factor Categories	Steps to Achieve Success Factors
Network	Social sharing User research Build brand awareness Full commitment to user acquisition and balancing both sides Trust metrics, quality assurance, value-added services and incentives
Technology	Develop platform before launch Matching algorithm Automation of operations Intensive data utilization Scalable technology Secure functionality Fast adaptation of new technologies Continuous research, prototyping and trying new IT tools
Regulation	Regulation research Reduced risk for and solving regulatory issues for customers
Market	Build product in home market Reach maturity in existing markets Research target market and assure product-market-fit Test the model before actual launch Enough resources Aggressive approach after initial testing Replicable go-to-market playbook Launcher
Team	Experience from various fields and successful platforms Focused teams Agile teams
Pricing	Multiple revenue sources Explore and experiment different pricing models Automated pricing and payment processes
Funding	Find right investors Clear development plan Media visibility
Innovation	Solve problems Fast adaptation to changes Improve service efficiency Evolve fast and pivot Add subsidy services Explore and identify business opportunities Innovation marketing and bring up new opportunities

6 DISCUSSION

This chapter will go through the discussion part of the study. First, the research questions will be answered by examining the study results. Similarities and differences between the study results and theory will be examined by studying the critical success factors presented in the literature and comparing to those arising from the case data. After that, the chapter will address the limitations of the study regarding reliability and generalization. Finally, the contributions of this study will be discussed and suggestions for future research will be presented.

6.1 Answering Research Questions

In this subchapter the results of the study will be further discussed, and insights found from the case data will be addressed. The research questions were: "What are the success factors for on-demand platforms?" and "what are the steps for on-demand platforms in achieving their success factors" These questions were answered by studying two successful online labor platforms that provide on-demand staffing services. The success factors found from the data are gathered in table 7. There are not simply success factors that determine the success but rather areas where things must go right and steps to achieve that. These together form the success factors for the companies. Clear success factor categories were derived from the research framework and case data completed that and the final categories were formed. These categories appeared repeatedly in the analysis, which then helped to identify the steps to achieve the success factors. Each success factor category will be discussed shortly and the steps to success inside each category.

Firstly, there was not only one single factor that creates success for the platform, but at least multiple factors need to be in order to grow the business to be successful as they are closely linked to each other. There were some success factors that were considered as key success factors for the case companies by media, but these factors varied depending on the nature of the media; tech-

blogs highlighted technology and HR-articles highlighted work life related aspects. The success factors that were identified represent a comprehensive set of factors that create the success for on-demand companies.

Network

The first success factor category was network. Network has been one of the most discussed issues and the most important success determinator in platform literature (Hagiu, 2014; Eisenmann et al., 2006). Network does not only consider building the network but also how to maintain it (Constantiou et al., 2016). Network was also discussed in a number of case data sources and growth was measured mostly as growth in customers and userbase, and how well customers and users stay on the platform. Most of the platform companies' actions' final goal is to grow their network but some clear steps to build network were found from the case data. Jobandtalent results supported the evolution of sharing platforms by Constantiou et al., (2016), as there were much more network-related data in the earlier phase. Coople has almost an equal amount of network-related data each year. The reason is most likely that Coople is still creating its network whereas Jobandtalent has reached maximum users in some markets (Dalal, 2016). In terms of network, Jobandtalent can be considered more successful. There were some differences in their actions to build network, that can explain why Jobandtalent has more users. For example, Jobandtalent had a different business model in the beginning, where social media accounts were linked to it, and it was possible to share the jobs on the platform through social media even to people that were not users yet and this was one of the most liked features by users and employers. (Palmer, 2012). Frenken and Schor (2017) mentioned that the social aspect of the platform should be noted when creating the strategy and, in this case, social sharing effectively increased the userbase. Uber and Airbnb used word-of-mouth to gain visibility (Constantiou et al., 2016) and so did Jobandtalent by letting users suggest jobs to their friends, making their brand known and userbase grow really fast (Ruthven, 2014).

As Kumar et al., (2018) suggest, multi-sided platform's long-term success derives from well-balanced parties. Both case platforms invested in balancing both sides and managed to make the other side interesting for the other. Jobandtalent had a team working only with balancing both sides. According to the data from both case companies, what mattered the most in their industry was to have enough work on the platform, which they gained by investing a lot in customer relationships, acquiring well-known companies as their customers and by publishing testimonials. Both also used a great deal of quality assurance measures to guarantee workers' suitability and quality to match customers' expectations. Case companies also encouraged the workers to perform well by worker trials, review systems and rewarding those who perform well. These actions help in building customer side of the platform as one focal concern for them is whether the gig and short-term workers can be trusted. For on-demand platforms where service is in a focal role, high quality is expected from service providers (Kumar et al., 2018). To assure quality, matching algorithm was alone

meant for finding the perfect work-worker match. Other reassurance methods included a review and ratings system, free worker trials and professional training for workers.

It is one thing to build the network but to maintain it and keep the users and customers using the platform is another question. Platforms try to maintain their users by preventing multi-homing by increasing the switching costs. (Eisenmann et al., 2006). The case companies provided a lot of value-added services to lock in their users. Their core business is providing workers on-demand, but in addition they have created an end-to-end service for customers consisting of automated recruiting, staff management and handling administrative tasks, such as regulations, payroll and taxes. For the worker side they also have more than just job offers; they offer for example insurances, training and education. These possibly explain their low churn and good user engagement as these value-added services tend to increase switching costs by user lock-in (Constantiou et al., 2016). One thing was also that the case data gave an expression, that the workers are truly treated well, which is said to be fundamental to platform success (Knote & Blohm, 2016). The case data did not implicate that the case companies needed to win back old customers as Kumar et al., (2018) suggests but rather they cherished their customers and tried to develop co-operation all the time to expand the co-operation and this way the tackled both, suggestions of Kumar et al., (2018) increasing the amount of transactions and not having to win back lost customers. Especially Coople ensured an appropriate reliance on business partners suggested by Chasin et al., (2018), where they closely worked with them but not relied on them, but rather generated extra value for all the parties. For example, they build pools of workers in co-operation with hotels, for hotels to share their worker pools and each having larger pools. This also shoved their ability to react fast to changing customer needs which was important success factor according to the literature (Knote & Blohm, 2016).

Technology

The next success factor category was technology, which was one of the most common aspects discussed in the case data. Technology is what makes the company scalable (Teece, 2018) and a well-functioning matching algorithm is what leads to satisfied users (Chasin et al., 2018). All in all, satisfaction to platform technology is what makes users engaged to the platform and to use it (Kumar et al., 2018), and in the case of on-demand platform, the core is the matching algorithm to enable on-demand operations. The findings support the idea of technology being in the center of success. Jobandtalent had much more technology related case data available. This was partly due to their engineering blog but in addition, they highlighted their technology much more in the interviews. They have also conducted a few academic studies about linguistic matching algorithms (Poch, Bel, Rafecas, Espeja & Navio, 2014; Hondaro et al., 2016). Among their algorithms, they both aim to provide overall intuitive and user-friendly software for their users and enable fast on-demand recruiting by utilizing technology and data (Trujillo, 2018; Coople, 2020), which combines the

convenience and the technology related expectations placed on platform services (Kumar et al., 2018; Schor, 2014). To gain this, they both invested a lot in development. The technology has been focal from the beginning as they both reported that they built their platforms and developed their algorithms for a few years before launching their products. From the beginning, Jobandtalent's goal was to have a 100% accurate algorithm and having zero human recruiters by automating and scaling the whole process (StartupBeat, 2013). Part of the automation for both companies was to automate even the job searching so that the platforms push the relevant jobs for the right candidates saving their time to sort out jobs (Novoa, 2015; Coople, 2020).

One of the technical challenges mentioned in the literature was not being able to handle the rapidly growing number of users (Chasin et al., 2018). To handle matching the growing number of users, Jobandtalent secured the scalability of their operation functionality early on by relying on AWS (Amazon Web Services), providing them e.g. computing power and database storage, and helping them manage enormous user and request amounts (AWS Amazon, 2015). Other challenge mentioned in the theory was too complex technical design, which makes it difficult to make even small improvements to features increasing development cycles and preventing modifications (Chasin et al., 2018). Jobandtalent tackled this problem with their agile way of developing the platform technology and infrastructure by researching new technologies and opportunities (Bel, 2017). New tools were constantly searched and tried out to have the best possible set for them and to improve their platforms. Arising opportunities were found by investing resources into finding a perfect product-market fit by utilizing continuous research, prototyping and data to spot trends and insights. Jobandtalent also highlights that their technology is aligned with their business and the systems architecture is changed according to the changes in the company following the code-as-early-as-you-can -strategy, which means that they already have something ready when it is best for the company to start to develop something. This has been their key to adapt to changes fast. (Espeja, 2019).

Based on the case data, it cannot be assumed that one has a better platform technology than the other, but their technologies are definitely both Coople's and Jobandtalent's key success factors and technology is related to each category either it is a facilitator or enabler of the category, or it has otherwise focal role. Jobandtalent even reported that the reason for their user engagement was their accurate matching technology and it had a central role building their network. Overall, their technology-related strategies were to first build their platforms, then build and develop a unique matching algorithm and automate their operations. To do that they needed to scale their technology and secure the functionality of the platform. And finally, to maintain and improve their platform they constantly adapted new technologies. Scalable infrastructure and intensive data utilization supported all technology development.

Regulations

Having well-functioning technology and balanced network with a great number of active users are not enough to guarantee the success. Previous literature has discussed about regulations to high extent, which underlines the problematic nature of these platforms. An unclear legal environment and constantly changing regulations can cause a failure for a platform (Brouthers et al., 2016). There were no issues recognize in the case data concerning Coople's and Jobandtalent's regulatory issues, but regulations were brought up in a couple of interviews asking the case companies how they manage them (CNNMoney, 2019; Salisbury, 2020). They both approached regulations proactively answering most of the regulatory challenges by conducting studies and writing blog posts how they deal with regulations before any questions were even asked. Jobandtalent conducted a study about how well businesses in the UK understand the staffing market, and according to their results, most of the employers are not aware of the regulations they should follow. As a solution, Jobandtalent introduced their platform as an easy way for employers to handle their regulatory responsibilities. (Gentle, 2016). They both market their platforms by assuring businesses a reduced risk related to their regulation management, turning regulations as their advantage. There is not much information about how they have managed the regulations, as regulations seem to be the threshold for many other companies (Chasin et al., 2018). It is not easy to manage regulations especially when operating in the on-demand staffing industry, as every sector has varying regulations on top of each country having their own regulations (Salisbury, 2020). Taking care of these issues for themselves but also for their customers seems to generate trust towards their service helping them gain the demand side for the platform.

Market

Regulations are also linked to the next success factor category, which is market. As mentioned, each market requires adapting new regulations but there is far more to do to succeed in a new market. Entering new markets is important when pursuing broader success, which is the common goal for any startup. Early entrance is recognized as a success factor in the previous literature (Mcafee & Brynjolffson, 2018), but not the overall market entry. Unlike in the literature, the case data implicates that market entry itself can be seen as a factor determining the success, but it does not implicate the early entrance to be a significant factor for success. Instead of early entry, they rely on building better and new solutions, e.g. Coople is said to be the first platform to actually hire the platform workers and defining the workers as their employees instead of freelancers (SIA, 2017).

Overall, one of the most important findings related to the market category show that the market focus is on pursuing new markets. Coople and Jobandtalent operate in various markets and the case data highlights the importance of pursuing new markets. The steps to enter new markets follow the

steps found from the literature: proceed gradually, learn from the market, find talent, have enough resources (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006). In addition, the case data also suggest new and more concrete steps. At first, both built their platforms in the home market before entering new markets. Opposite to Uber's strategy claiming that the existing markets grow bigger more or less organically (Teece, 2018) does not apply in this context. Case companies need to concentrate all the time on current markets and keep customers happy and grow their customer base. Uber works differently in a way that people join there and in online labor market, there is a business side which should be attracted, maintained and the co-operation should be developed further. On-demand staffing is much more costly than Uber. Coople states that one reason for their success in the UK was that they have developed their technology, legal and support framework, operational knowledge, customer support and network before entering (PYMNTS, 2016). Also, Jobandtalent tells that their overall high-quality service and user satisfaction is guaranteed in the new markets by reaching maturity in the existing markets before seeking further expansion (Sawers, 2016). Refining their platforms and gradually testing out their models in new locations creates a base for their success, and certainty of product market fit and also gives them certainty that they have the right resources to conduct the entry before entering markets aggressively.

The case data validates that the basics of a business model need to be replicable to enter new markets efficiently. Jobandtalent has a replicable go-to-market playbook to follow and they do a lot of research about the markets and the potential to launch their business model (Sawers, 2016). Whereas a replicable business model is crucial to scale internationally, Coople also points out that new markets can be an opportunity to find new business opportunities and the core business does not necessarily need to remain the same from market to market. Although there is not yet evidence of them doing this or it being a successful way to enter new markets (CNNMoney, 2019).

Another thing considered in the literature regarding market entry was overcoming outsidership (Brouthers et al., 2016). This did not come up in the case data, but there were some indicators that the case companies had means to overcome outsidership in new markets. The launchers that they hired to start a new market usually originated from that new target market. Having someone on charge who is familiar with the location might affect positively their adaptation to new markets. Also, outsidership might have been avoided by reaching culturally similar locations and locations within the same continent. This did not just apply to the case companies but other on-demand staffing platforms were mostly operating inside the same continent as well. The exception were platforms originating from Spain. Among Jobandtalent, other Spanish on-demand staffing platforms were operating in Latin America too, where the language and culture are similar making it more effortless to scale there.

An important market related step to success is recognizing potential markets and assuring product-market fit. Jobandtalent sifted from targeting countries to targeting cities. In physical on-demand setting, the market is hyper

local and rather aims to cities than countries as cities have high density population and therefore more readiness to utilize services (Teece, 2018). All in all, a successful market entry generates growth for the platform and the core of entering new markets should be not taking too big risks as Eisenmann et al., (2006) suggest as well. Among gradually learning and operating in a new market, earlier research and case data show that other supporting actions to apply are market and regulation research and ensuring a sufficient amount of resources. Case data also suggests that hiring talented people that focus solely on launching the platform is a worthwhile strategic decision to succeed in new markets.

Team

Building a successful platform requires people to do it and teams were seen as one important source of success by Coople and Jobandtalent. There were not any specific mentions in the literature about teams being a success factor, but it was one of the themes that constantly arouse from the case data. Both relied on people that had worked for other successful platforms before. They were clearly trying to have good employer branding and especially praised their technologies and technology teams. The talent is brought by the teams and right mixture of varying talents from the industry, technology and economics is the basis for extensive success on all the areas.

Pricing

Pricing is one of the categories that the framework also suggests. There is a sufficient amount of fundamental studies considering pricing (Evans, 2003; Eisenmann et al., 2006), but the direction of traditional multi-sided platform pricing is drifting to more dynamic way (Constantiou et al., 2017). This trend is not yet seen in on-demand staffing industry. Some reasons for this include complex legislative environment regulating the salaries, additions and taxes. Applying dynamic pricing to this equation can be difficult, but the platforms are constantly exploring novel pricing strategies. What they have done with pricing is gathering revenue from multiple sources and automating the payroll process. The regular pricing strategy of Jobandtalent and Coople follows the basic scenario: subsidize the side that is more sensitive to price or quality (Eisenmann et al., 2006; Hagiu, 2014). Worker side can join freely, and business side is the one charged, although businesses are offered lower prices and incentives to join, such as free two-hour worker trial and discounts for the first staffing. This is also to lower the barrier for entry and to get the marquee users onboard adapting the literature (Eisenmann et al., 2006). The income coming from multiple sources and the main sources being a fee charged from the service itself, is in line with Chasin et al., (2018), recommending that the platform should not entirely rely on indirect income. This highlights their success as people are willing to pay for their core service. As mentioned in the findings, part of the case companies pricing strategy is the fully automated payment system, where taxes and national insurances are calculated on top of the salary (Salisbury, 2020). So, the

businesses are not alone paying the fee for the workers but also for the fully automated service. What is notable is that all the salary related regulations vary depending on the industry and country, proving the efficiency of these platforms to the businesses but also emphasizing the platforms' responsibility to follow regulations and difficulty to dominate the pricing. To put together, in pricing, the valuable lesson is to have the basic understanding on dynamics, explore new pricing strategies, have multiple revenue sources if possible and automate the pricing and payment processes as far as possible. The automation is especially important for on-demand platforms as the pricing and payment should be as invisible and efficient as possible to support swift and voluminous transactions.

Funding

Funding was one of the most discussed topics in media as big investments tend to draw in attention. Funding is not discussed in the literature as a success factor per se, but it definitely is an important success factor for any startup to continue their existence and developing their product. Eisenmann et al., (2006) simply mentions that it is an important resource to find but it is not highlighted. Funding also differs from other categories as it seems to be the most difficult factor to influence from inside the company as it is highly dependent on external factors and existing relationships. What the case companies did to gain funding was actively searching for right investors and those they want to cooperate with. Another action to gain funding was a clear development plan to pitch for the investors and the last was being actively visible in media and bringing their own content managing the public image of the company.

Innovation

Innovation was slightly discussed in the theory part but not highlighted as a major success factor. For example, Evans (2003) and Eisenmann et al., (2006) suggests that the innovation should step in after the initial success. Another innovation related mention was that IT-user aligned business model innovation is critical for the platform (Knote & Blohm, 2016). In the findings from the case data, an innovation was an important factor for the success and both case companies had various areas where they utilized innovation. As mentioned in the findings, their business models are highly challenging and require a lot of automation, which makes the innovation even more important. What can also be considered a challenge for this category is that the innovation is ahead of the regulatory markets, meaning extra work to deal with the regulations and assuring people that these platforms know what they are doing (Schneuwly, 2019). Getting users and customers onboard to use a new concept requires an extra work and the most important area where the case companies answered to this problem was by providing convenience with their technology, that traditional staffing industries are not able to do. That is one of the main reasons for users to

participate on the on-demand platform in the first place creating the success (Kumar et al., 2018).

Part of the innovation is to familiarize the users with the on-demand staffing business model and remove doubts among them by bringing the benefits to awareness and using that as a part of marketing. As the platform work still awakes a lot of concerns, especially about the regulative issues and worker rights, it is important to reassure and convince people that the regulative side is in order and among that bring up the opportunities the platform can provide with its on-demand business model. The concrete actions for this were to solve an actual problem or problems for the companies and clearly presenting how the platforms manages to do it. Also, marketing their additional services and how users will benefit from them was a clear marketing strategy. The overall goal is to build their network by marketing their innovativeness. People can be sceptical about new business models and Coople's marketing strategy was to lower the barriers to try a new way of recruiting for companies and for users they marketed a new flexible option for working by assuring freedom, safety, trust and even education.

To conclude the discussion part, all eight categories presented quite the same aspects as the theoretical framework, but none of the previous research have taken all the categories into account or highlighted them as important factors for success nor have they studied the exact activities that make on-demand platform successful. The success factor categories and steps to achieve success in each category represents concrete and comprehensive ensemble derived as a result of literature findings and case data. The emergent framework seems to match to the key factors of the research framework explaining the reality of the field (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The findings consist of internal and external factors that together generate the on-demand platform success but there were some factors that stood out over the others. According to the case data, a conclusion is drawn that the matching is the most important feature and a factor leading to success, because in this context, there are a huge volume and variation of different kinds of jobs requiring variation of skills and on the other side of the platform there is a huge number of workers equipped with different skillsets and preferences making it extremely challenging to match the sides. The case organizations managed to build reliable and efficient matching algorithms that they started to develop right in the beginning and are still developing to be even better at matching. Not only that, but when operating in the on-demand economy the matching is all important, as the core of the business is being able to answer demand fast and that is where efficient matching becomes important. Generally speaking, a good core product and technically well-functioning platform can be considered as the base for building success.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

This subchapter will go through the limitations of the study. There were certain limitations that can affect the reliability and generalizability of the study. In particular, there were limitations regarding the case companies, the research context and the existing literature.

The limitations regarding the case companies concerned the specific context of online labor platforms and limited online data. The specific context of online labor platforms have its unique characteristics that cannot be necessarily generalized to other on-demand platforms as such. For example, tight regulations concerning staffing industry are centric for these platforms but does not necessarily apply to platforms operating in other industries. Although, other on-demand platforms can adapt basics from online labor platforms turning regulations for their advantage. Other than that, rest of the categories consist guidelines that are not necessarily industry specific, but the research context might have an effect on the success factors' generalizability because they were recognized and highlighted from the case data from specific context. The comparability of these two case platforms was sufficient. Finding two on-demand staffing platforms with similar backgrounds and growth stories proved to be a difficult task. Biggest difference was the funding: Jobandtalent had a lot more funding than any other on-demand staffing platform which might affect its success and overall story a lot. Although Coople had much more moderate funding and growth overall, the case companies' stories and actions seemed to match in the most fundamental areas.

There were also limitations regarding the overall data. The amount of data was sufficient as there were 128 online sources altogether, but these sources were lacking important numerical data such as the active user amounts and the number of shifts worked through the platform. These can be crucial numerical indicators for success (Constantiou et al., 2016). Also, the data did not go into detail, and the available data represented mostly information that these platforms were willing to give or what they in fact wished to share. This is partly due to the platform companies' tendency to protect critical information. So, it was challenging and almost impossible to link success to specific actions. However, Frenken & Schor (2017) also recognize this issue stating that platforms have been restrictive and selective in granting researchers access to their user data, citing privacy and competition concerns. Instead, these platforms release their own research results just like Coople and Jobandtalent did. Those studies tend to emphasize the direct benefits without much consideration of the more complex and indirect effects (Frenken & Schor, 2017) which this study, for example, provides. In addition, some data may have been left out by the search engine because of the origin of these platforms and the original language affecting the Google search results by prioritizing sources, that were in English. Other reason for insufficient data was that there were a lot of paid articles and it remains a mystery whether they contained important information. All things

considered, the data provided sufficient and comprehensive information to understand case companies' success within the scope of this Master's thesis.

Regarding the existing literature, on-demand platforms were not studied substantially. However, this gap was filled by utilizing literature from multi-sided platform and sharing economy platform literature. On-demand platforms are multi-sided platforms and they share broadly same dynamics with sharing economy platforms but including the on-demand aspect. Sharing economy platforms per se, are difficult study area and for future research, it might be even desirable to define more specifically what kind of sharing economy platforms the study concerns as plenty of the sharing economy platforms have nothing to do with the original definition of sharing (Belk, 2014). Nevertheless, the overall ambiguity of these concepts might affect the reliability of this study.

6.3 Contributions and Suggestions for Future Research

This subchapter will go through the contributions this study has done to the research area of on-demand platforms and their success factors. In addition, this subchapter will propose suggestions for future research.

This study contributes to the research area of sharing economy and more specifically on-demand platforms. Sharing economy platforms have been introduced to the masses around 2011 (Schor, 2014). After 2013, the sharing economy became popular topic in the academic literature. The literature on the sharing economy is still recent and much work done is exploratory and the definitions are emerging. Most contribution is on studying sharing economy as a business and economic model. (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). Past research focuses on describing the phenomenon itself and its disrupting influences for current economy (Knote & Blohm, 2016). Information system research is quite scarce around the topic, but there has been more contribution to it in recent years (Knote & Blohm, 2016; Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018). Especially platform studies and information infrastructure theory has been adapted from information systems research to study sharing economy platforms (Constantiou et al., 2016; Jarrahi & Sutherland, 2018). It is clear that there is still a call for theoretical and scholarly development in sharing economy platform domain by studying it more especially from information system perspective (Knote & Blohm, 2016; Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018; Constantiou et al., 2016; Cusumano et al., 2020). Also, the success of these platforms should be studied more detailed (Constantiou et al., 2016; Chasin et al., 2018), not to mention the interesting area of online labor platforms that provide topics from algorithmic management to changes in the way we work (Askitas et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2015). This study contributes to the specific context of on-demand platforms and especially on-demand staffing success factors, which has not been studied widely before. The study introduced a comprehensive set of key success factor categories and how to gain success in each providing a framework for on-demand platforms.

By defining sharing platforms and more specifically on-demand platforms and online labor platforms, and using them as part of research, this study contributes to sharing economy, on-demand platform and online labor platform research. The study also contributed by summarizing several multi-sided and sharing economy platform strategies and failures that have been found essential in the literature. This is important as similar comprehensive summaries cannot be found from the previous literature, and summarizing the existing strategies and failures, helps in providing justification and a base for testing the success criteria for sharing economy platforms. New and more specific ways to succeed were also found in this study and they provide more practical implications. The framework offers practical managerial implications for start-ups and industry incumbents alike to assess success or to have overview guideline to establish and maintain successful on-demand platform.

An especially interesting topic for future research from information system perspective would be to examine more closely what makes users accept and adapt certain sharing platforms and what makes them continue using them by adapting, for example, UTAUT model. The case data provided insights into how they engage current users, but they did not provide much information how they managed to get users onboard and adopt their platforms in the first place. Another interesting topic for future research would be to study success factors for on-demand platforms in other specific research settings such as other emerging industries and taking into account their unique characteristics. In addition, having other data sources, such as interviews of case company managers, could provide better means to analyze the decisions made inside the platform company and give even more specific insights.

7 CONCLUSION

This Master's thesis examined the success factors for on-demand platforms and the steps to achieve the success by studying two case companies that represented two most successful on-demand staffing platforms in Europe. The context of the study is fairly new and prior research about the success factors for on-demand platforms is scarce making the research area very interesting. The literature review of this study was derived from the sharing economy, multi-sided and on-demand platform theories and strategies. The empirical part was conducted as a multiple case study utilizing grounded theory to go through the data. The study relied on publicly available online data to understand case companies' success and the steps that lead to their success. The study identified eight different success factor categories and steps to achieve success in each of the categories.

The literature review identified prior theories and strategies that applies to the on-demand platforms. A number of existing strategies were utilized to aggregate current factors generating success to these platforms. In addition, factors leading to failure were examined to gain even deeper and more concrete understanding to support the success factor framework. The theoretical framework consisted of four individual success factor categories and the more exact actions presented in table 4.

The empirical part was done as a multiple case study utilizing two successful on-demand staffing platforms, Jobandtalent and Coople as case organizations. Studying the case data found between years 2011 to 2020 created a sufficient database to examine their success and identify actions that lead them to success. The success categories identified from case data were network, technology, regulation, market, team, pricing, funding and innovation. All of them consisted steps that suggests actions for on-demand platforms to gain success in each of them. One of the main contribution is on presenting concrete steps to achieve success instead of just providing categories. The cases results indicated a strong theoretical fit for earlier theory and the study proposes the framework adding some new and more specific categories and steps. For example, regulations are rarely seen as a success factor, but the case companies turned them to

derive success for them by specializing in these regulations and selling their service by promoting their expertise in regulative matters. Each category was somehow mentioned in the literature but not necessarily highlighted as a success factor. Findings from case data suggested that they in fact are success factors. The most crucial base for on-demand platform success identified in this study is the matching algorithm and related technical infrastructure.

The results can be considered reliable but it should be kept in mind that they were generated from specific industry with challenges that might not concern each on-demand platform. This study brought together success factors found from the literature and real-life context generating concrete guidelines to succeed as an on-demand platform. As is covered in the literature, sharing economy and on-demand platforms have aggressively taken a huge share of the markets and they are here to stay. The sharing economy and on-demand economy models have gained globally significant popularity in handful of industries, for example in hospitality and transportation and it remains to be seen whether online labor platforms reach the same acceptance.

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APPENDIX 1 JOBANDTALENT DATABASE

Year	Title	Link	Author	Publisher	Category
2011	UK entry	https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/07890603/filing-history?page=2			Market
5.6.2012	A social media job agency	https://www.ft.com/content/3eccc0d0-a8ff-11e1-b085-00144feabdc0	Maija Palmer	Financial Times	Network, Funding, Technology, Innovation
22.7.2013	Jobandtalent Raises $3.3M For Its Linguistics Algorithm-Based Approach To Recruitment	https://techcrunch.com/2013/07/22/jobandtalent-funding/	Natasha Lomas	TechCrunch	Funding, Technology, Innovation, Team, Network, Market
13.8.2013	With a second round of funding in the bank, jobandtalent is building an employment platform for 'passive' candidates	https://startupbeat.com/with-a-second-round-of-funding-in-the-bank-jobandtalent-is-building-an-employment-platform-that-finds-jobs-for-passive-candidates-id3377/7026/		Startup Beat	Funding, Innovation, Technology, Pricing, Network
17.9.2013	jobandtalent launches 'match.com for jobseekers' iOS app	https://www.uktech.news/news/jobandtalent-launches-match-com-for-jobseekers-ios-app-20130917	Jeremy Evans	UKTN	Technology, Network
9.7.2014	Jobandtalent's quest to disrupt the recruitment sector	https://www.growthbusiness.co.uk/jobandtalentand39s-quest-to-disrupt-the-recruitment-sector-2467022/	Hunter Ruthven	Growth Business.co.uk	Funding, Technology, Network, Market, Team
10.7.2014	Funding Daily: The everything-gets-money edition	https://venturebeat.com/2014/07/10/funding-daily-the-everything-gets-money-edition/	Kia Kokalitcheva	Venture Beat	Funding, Technology, Network, Market, Team
10.7.2014	Jobandtalent raises $14M for recruitment platform	https://venturebeat.com/2014/07/10/jobandtalent-raises-14m-for-recruitment-platform/	Brenda Barron	Venture Beat	Technology

2014	Ranking job offers for candidates: learning hidden knowledge from big data		Poch, M., Bel Rafecas, N., Espeja, S., & Navio, F.	Ninth International Conferene on Language Resources and Evaluation	Technology
2014	Consumer Behavior: Mobile Recruiting Apps.	https://eprints.ucm.es/27374/	Aguilar Pérez, A. M.		Award, Technology
12.5.2015	LeoVegas, Sigfox and Jobandtalent take home the awards at GP Bullhound's European Unicorn Summit	https://www.gpbullhound.com/news/news/leovegas-sigfox-and-jobandtalent-take-home-the-awards-at-gp-bullhounds-european-unicorn-summit/		GB.Bullhound	Funding, Team, Technology, Network, Market
27.5.2015	Jobandtalent Raises $25M to Lead Job Matching Category	https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/jobandtalent-raises-25m-to-lead-job-matching-category-300089277.html		CISION PR Newswire	Funding, Technology, Team, Market
27.5.2015	jobandtalent Secures $25M in Series A Funding	http://www.finsmes.com/2015/05/jobandtalent-secures-25m-in-series-a-funding.html		FinSMEs	Market, Funding
2.6.2015	Jobandtalent Gets $25M To Steer Its Linguistic Analysis Recruitment Platform Toward The U.S.	https://www.socialtalent.com/blog/recruitment/recruiting-news-2nd-june		Social Talent	Technology
2015	jobandtalent Case Study (AWS)	https://aws.amazon.com/solutions/case-studies/jobandtalent/		AWS Amazon	Market, Technology, Team, Funding,
14.6.2016	Job matching platform Jobandtalent raises USD 42M Series B	https://vator.tv/news/2016-06-14-job-matching-platform-jobandtalent-raises-42m-series-b	Steven Loeb	Vator	Funding, Technology, Market, Team, Innovation
14.6.2016	A jobs website has received $42 million from a VC fund set up by one of Skype's cofounders	https://www.businessinsider.com/jobandtalent-raises-42-million-from-atomico-2016-6?r=US&IR=T	Sam Shead	Business Insider	Funding, Pricing, Market, Team
14.6.2016	Jobandtalent onboards USD 42 mln in Atomico-led Series B	https://www.pehub.com/3338607/	Eamon Murphy	PE Hub	Funding, Market, Team

14.6.2016	Atomico leads a $42M investment in Jobandtalent – an innovative matching technology for the jobs market	https://www.eu-startups.com/2016/06/atomico-leads-a-42m-investment-in-jobandtalent-an-innovative-matching-technology-for-the-jobs-market/	Ieva Treija	EU-Startups	Funding, Innovation, Market, Team
14.6.2016	Recruitment marketplace Jobandtalent raises $42 million Series B round led by Atomico	https://tech.eu/brief/jobandtalent-series-b/	Jonathan Keane	Tech EU	Funding
14.6.2016	Spain's Jobandtalent raises $42M to match job seekers with vacancies using algorithms	https://venturebeat.com/2016/06/14/spains-jobandtalent-raises-42m-to-match-job-seekers-with-vacancies-using-algorithms/	Paul Sawers	Venture Beat	Funding
17.6.2016	Funded B2B Startups Break Through The Mold	https://www.pymnts.com/news/b2b-payments/2016/b2b-startup-venture-capital-unique-funding		PYMNTS	Funding
18.6.2016	The 10 biggest European tech stories this week	https://venturebeat.com/2016/06/18/the-10-biggest-european-tech-stories-this-week-10/	Robin Wauters	Venture Beat	Funding, Technology, Innovation
24.6.2016	Jobandtalent Continues To Revolutionise Job Market	https://recruitmentbuzz.co.uk/o-jobandtalent-continues-revolutionise-job-market-42-million-series-b-round-led-atomico/	Nathan Kitto	Recruitment Buzz	Regulation, Research
11.7.2016	CORNERJOB RAISES US$25M IN SERIES B FUNDING	http://lavca.org/2016/07/11/cornerjob-raises-us25m-series-b-funding		LAVCA Venture Investors	Technology, Innovation, Funding, Pricing
13.7.2016	Two-thirds of small businesses risk being fined through lack of HR resources and knowledge	https://www.onrec.com/news/statistics-and-trends/two-thirds-of-small-businesses-risk-being-fined-through-lack-of-hr	Stuart Gentle	On Rec	Technology, Team
29.8.2016	Explosion of Gig Economy Means There's an App for Juggling Jobs	https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-29/the-more-jobs-you-have-to-juggle-the-better-for-these-startups	Gabrielle Coppola	Bloomberg Business	Technology

14.11.2016	Hello world	https://jobandtalent.engineering/https-jobandtalent-engineering-hello-world-bc38d2b97f33	Sergio Espeja	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Innovation, Pricing, Network
14.11.2016	Test Doubles in Swift	https://jobandtalent.engineering/test-doubles-in-swift-fd9303f2591	Daniel García	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Innovation, Funding, Team, Technology, Network, Innovation, Pricing
23.11.2016	Battle of the Jobs Apps	https://medium.com/@varundalal/battle-of-the-jobs-apps-70f1658ce1d1	Varun Dalal	Medium	Technology, Innovation
2016	Jobandtalent promises to help you find your dream job: but can they find a scalable business model?	https://novobrief.com/jobandtalent-business-model/4399/	Jaime Novoa	NovoBrief	Technology
2016	inploi is another jobs app that wants to kill off the service industry CV	https://techcrunch.com/2016/08/04/inploi-is-another-jobs-app-that-wants-to-kill-off-the-service-industry-cv/	Natasha Lomas	TechCrunch	Technology, Team
2016	RecTech 2016: Digital tsunami envelops recruitment classifieds	http://www.redarbor.net/files/david-gonzalez-castro-keynote-speaker.pdf		Advanced Interactive Media Group LLC	Technology
2016	Jobandtalent at recsys challenge 2016.		Honrado, et al.	In Proceedings of the Recommender Systems Challenge (pp. 1-5).	Technology
2016	Talented Europe Analsysi	https://talentedeurope.gitbooks.io/talented-europe-analysis/content/system-definition/current-situation.html		GitBook	Technology
26.1.2017	Why I use Story Points to estimate tasks	https://jobandtalent.engineering/why-i-use-story-points-to-estimate-tasks-d912fb15e821	Santi Bel	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
21.3.2017	Learning to (Retrieve and) Rank — Intuitive Overview— part I	https://jobandtalent.engineering/learning-to-retrieve-and-rank-intuitive-overview-part-i-5340fcf4a863	Michele Trevisiol	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology

27.3.2017	Learning to (Retrieve and) Rank — Intuitive Overview — part II	https://jobandtalent.engineering/learning-to-retrieve-and-rank-intuitive-overview-part-ii-79c3791c558f	Michele Trevisiol	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
4.4.2017	Learning to (Retrieve and) Rank — Intuitive Overview — part III	https://jobandtalent.engineering/learning-to-retrieve-and-rank-intuitive-overview-part-iii-1292f4259315	Michele Trevisiol	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Market, Innovation, Team
10.4.2017	VisualKit: creating a UI Framework	https://jobandtalent.engineering/visualkit-ui-framework-74ab8aae0d42	Victor baro	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
10.5.2017	Manage AWS ECS services with docker compose	https://jobandtalent.engineering/manage-aws-ecs-services-with-docker-compose-b609028f0ff6	Victor Castell	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
20.6.2017	Learning to develop Jobandtalent's design system for Android	https://jobandtalent.engineering/learning-to-develop-jobandtalents-design-system-for-android-54160a571d7b	Jorge Rodriguez	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
16.10.2017	iOS Architecture: A State Container based approach	https://jobandtalent.engineering/ios-architecture-an-state-container-based-approach-4f1a9b00b82e	Luis Recueno	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology, Team
28.2.2018	Fostering security with Hashicorp Vault	https://jobandtalent.engineering/fostering-security-with-hashicorp-vault-4e45ec4eb399	Jorge Quintás	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
11.4.2018	Optimizing docker images for a faster development workflow	https://jobandtalent.engineering/optimizing-docker-images-for-a-faster-development-workflow-591dc3ac4de0		Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
3.5.2018	Hack&Talent 2018: Jobandtalent Engineering Hackathon	https://jobandtalent.engineering/hack-talent-2018-jobandtalent-engineering-hackathon-7196bcfeeff3	Sergio Espeja	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
23.7.2018	When the best practice is avoiding best practices	https://jobandtalent.engineering/when-the-best-practice-is-avoiding-best-practices-d7da6f10407e		Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
11.9.2018	iOS Architecture: Separating logic from effects	https://jobandtalent.engineering/ios-architecture-separating-logic-from-effects-7629cb763352	Luis Recueno	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Innovation

22.11.2018	Working with a design system	https://jobandtalent.engineering/https-medium-com-aracem-working-with-a-design-system-f426be09c470	Marcos Trujillo	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
13.12.2018	Adopting Elixir: The BFF Case study	https://jobandtalent.engineering/adopting-elixir-the-bff-case-study-b575a81ec794	Sergio Espeja	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Market
10.3.2019	From VTC to Amazon: Jobandtalent hits record revenue	https://www.economiadigital.es/directivos-y-empresas/de-las-vtc-a-amazon-jobandtalent-llega-a-ingresos-record_610766_102.html	Cristian Reche	ED Economía Digital	Technology
11.3.3019	Speeding up Superset by choosing the right database	https://jobandtalent.engineering/speeding-up-superset-by-choosing-the-right-database-d85283d39f75	Javier Fortea	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology, Team
20.3.2019	JobAndTalent more than doubles revenue	https://aimgroup.com/2019/03/20/jobandtalent-more-than-doubles-revenue/	Cila Warneck	AIM Group	Innovation, Technology
27.3.2019	The power of mixins in Swift	https://jobandtalent.engineering/the-power-of-mixins-in-swift-f9013254c503	Luis Recueno	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
12.4.2019	Hack&Talent 2019: Jobandtalent Engineering Hackathon	https://jobandtalent.engineering/hack-talent-2019-jobandtalent-engineering-hackathon-2489e978e011	Sergio Espeja	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
24.6.2019	Jobandtalent - NOAH19 Berlin	https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=349&v=uZAERPLUdBM&feature=emb_logo		NOAH Conference	Technology
7.7.2019	Command pattern: how and why we use it	https://jobandtalent.engineering/command-pattern-how-and-why-we-use-it-fa8af952bca1	Manuel González Merino	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding, Market
17.7.2019	Data Visualization Tools at Jobandtalent	https://jobandtalent.engineering/data-visualization-tools-at-jobandtalent-fcd3bb93a2be	José Gabriel Martínez	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding

24.7.2019	10 years of the Jobandtalent platform	https://jobandtalent.engineering/10-years-of-the-jobandtalent-platform-6e6ae111735	Sergio Espeja	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology
5.8.2019	Jobandtalent completes its round of more than 40 million with international funds	https://www.lainformacion.com/empresas/jobandtalent-ronda-40-millones-fondos-internacionales/6508623/	Jesus Martinez	La Informacion	Technology
12.8.2019	JobAndTalent reportedly near closing $45 million round	https://aimgroup.com/2019/08/12/jobandtalent-reportedly-near-closing-45-million-round/	Cila Warneck	AIM Group	Funding
22.8.2019	Screenshot testing on Android	https://jobandtalent.engineering/screenshot-testing-on-android-88da6c004cf0	Eduardo Pascua	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding, Market, Technology
26.9.2019	How to create Web Components by a project	https://jobandtalent.engineering/how-to-create-web-components-by-a-project-7577e5cf2262	Iris Carballo	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding
15.10.2019	SPAIN – JOBANDTALENT ACQUIRES TWO COLOMBIAN TEMPORARY STAFFING FIRMS	https://www2.staffingindustry.com/eng/Editorial/Daily-News/Spain-Jobandtalent-acquires-two-Colombian-temporary-staffing-firms-51552		Staffing Industry Analysts	Technology
22.11.2019	Jobandtalent obtains €70M with SEEK intending on a LatAm expansion	https://www.onlinemarketplaces.com/articles/29921-jobandtalent-obtains-70m-with-seek-intending-on-a-latam-expansion	Silvia Castro Betancourt	Jobs PortalWatch	Technology
29.11.2019	Jobandtalent attracts 78 million euros	https://www.expansion.com/expansion-empleo/2019/11/29/5ddba16b468aeb437a8b459a.html	Clarisa Sekulits	Expansión	Technology
5.12.2019	AI in Madrid: 10 promising Spanish tech startups holding the flag high!	https://siliconcanals.com/news/10-promising-ai-startups-in-madrid/		Silicon Canals	Market
29.12.2019	Jobandtalent	https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jobandtalent#Lanzamiento		Wikipedia	Network, Funding, Technology, Innovation

9.1.2020	Predicting contract length with probabilistic programming	https://jobandtalent.engineering/predicting-contract-length-with-probabilistic-programming-2015f7c7cccb	Antoine Hachez	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding, Technology, Innovation, Team, Network, Market
24.2.2020	API authentication strategies in a Service Oriented Architecture	https://jobandtalent.engineering/api-authentication-strategies-in-a-microservices-architecture-dc84cc61c5cc	Gonzalo Gómez	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Funding, Innovation, Technology, Pricing, Network
9.3.2020	The Navigator, Another twist to iOS navigations	https://jobandtalent.engineering/the-navigator-420b24fc57da	Rubén Méndez	Jobandtalent Engineering blog	Technology, Network

APPENDIX 2 COOPLE DATABASE

Date	Title	Link	Author	Publisher	Category
22.2.2013	STAFF FINDER: Quality certified	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/february-2013/staff-finder-qualitat-zertifiziert		Staruptickr.ch	Innovation, Network
14.4.2014	STAFF FINDER, the just-in-time recruitment service, now also in Lausanne	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/april-2014/staff-finder-le-service-de-recrutement-just-in-time-desormais-aussi-a-lausanne		Staruptickr.ch	Market, Network, Technology
24.10.2014	EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™2014: the winners	https://www.ey.com/ch/en/newsroom/news-releases/ey-news-release-entrepreneur-of-the-year-2014-winners		EY	Award
26.2.2016	STAFF FINDER: THE END OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES	https://consumervaluecreation.com/2016/02/26/staff-finder-the-end-of-employment-agencies/		Consumer Value Creation	Innovation, Technology
7.3.2016	One Peak Partners, Goldman Sachs Private Capital invest in Staff Finder	https://www.pehub.com/one-peak-partners-goldman-sachs-private-capital-invest-in-staff-finder/	Luisa Beltran	PE Hub	Funding, Technology, Market
7.3.2016	Staff Finder, the on-demand marketplace for temporary staff, bags €20M from One Peak and Goldman Sachs	https://www.eu-startups.com/2016/03/staff-finder-on-demand-marketplace-for-temporary-staff-scores-e20m-from-one-peak-and-goldman-sachs/	Ieva Treija	EU-Startups	Funding
7.3.2016	Staff Finder, the on-demand marketplace for temporary staff, scores €20M from One Peak and Goldman Sachs	https://techcrunch.com/2016/03/07/staff-finder/	Steve O'Hera	TechCrucnh	Funding, Market
7.3.2016	Staff Finder Completes Growth Equity Investment	http://www.finsmes.com/2016/03/staff-finder-completes-growth-equity-investment.html		FinSMEs	Funding

8.3.2016	SWITZERLAND – GOLDMAN SACHS AND ONE PEAK PARTNERS INVEST IN STAFF FINDER	https://www2.staffingindustry.com/eng/Editorial/Daily-News/Switzerland-Goldman-Sachs-and-One-Peak-Partners-invest-in-Staff-Finder-37160		Staffing Industry Analysts	Market
6.4.2016	Two new Swiss startup teams selected to conquer the US market and its investors in June	https://www.venturelab.ch/Two-new-Swiss-startup-teams-selected-to-conquer-the-US-market-and-its-investors-in-June	Lara Rossi	Venture Lab	Network, Team
15.4.2016	Staff Finder celebrates 5 years and 80,000 employees	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/april-2016/staff-finder-feiert-5-jahre-und-80-000-arbeitnehmer		Staruptickeer.ch	Team
18.4.2016	Staff Finder receives Country Manager Switzerland	https://abouttravel.ch/geschaftsreisen-tagungen/events-organisieren/staff-finder-erhalt-country-manager-schweiz/	Travel inside	Primus Publishing	Innovation, Network
5.11.2016	Meet Coople: The 'gig-economy' app that's like Uber for short-term staffing	https://www.insider.com/coople-the-staffing-app-seeking-to-harness-the-gig-economy-2016-10	Thomas Colson	Business Insider	Team, Network, Market
19.5.2016	Viktor Calabrò from Staff Finder: "For a startup in Switzerland, it´s hard to grow" [EN]	https://www.swissstartupassociation.com/viktor-calabro-from-staff-finder-for-a-startup-in-switzerland-its-hard-to-grow/		Swiss Startup Association	Network, Market
19.7.2016	Former Asos and Ocado marketer heads to recruitment app Coople amid hiring spree	https://www.thedrum.com/news/2016/07/19/former-asos-and-ocado-marketer-heads-recruitment-app-coople-amid-hiring-spree	Jennifer Faull	The Drum	Innovation, Pricing, Technology, Regulation, Network
27.7.2016	The Lancaster London Hotel signs up flexible staffing app Coople	https://www.takeawayexpo.co.uk/news/blog.asp?blog_id=2451		Restaurant & Takeaway Innovation Expo	Innovation
28.9.2016	Uber Of X: Baristas, Waiters, Chefs … On-Demand	https://www.pymnts.com/uber-of-x/2016/uber-of-x-coople/		PYMNTS	Innovation, Network
10.10.2016	Coople, a new gig economy app, looks to grow UK operations	https://www.hrdive.com/news/coople-a-new-gig-economy-app-looks-to-grow-uk-operations/430184/	Tess Taylor	HR Dive	Innovation

18.10.2016	Staff Finder on the road to success	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/october-2016/staff-finder-auf-erfolgskurs		Staruptickeer.ch	Market, Network
21.20.2016	54% value a good work-life balance more than pay and benefits	https://employeebenefits.co.uk/issues/october-online-2016/54-value-a-good-work-life-balance-more-than-pay-and-benefits/	Katie Scott	Employee Benefits	Innovation
16.11.2016	Staff Finder enters the healthcare industry	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/november-2016/staff-finder-steigt-in-die-gesundheitsbranche-ein		Staruptickeer.ch	Award, Market
29.11.2016	Coople, the new Uber-style app for gig economy jobs	https://recruitingtimes.org/recruitment-and-hr-industry-announcements/16097/coople-new-uber-style-app-gig-economy-jobs/		Recruiting Times	Award
1.12.2016	Viktor Calabrò (STAFF FINDER) at Startup Grind Zurich, w/ David Butler	https://www.startupgrind.com/events/details/startup-grind-zurich-presents-viktor-calabro-staff-finder/		Startup Grind	Innovation
2016	Disrupt 100 2016	http://2016.disrupt100.com/company/staff-finder/		Disrupt 100	Team, Innovation, Network
11.1.2017	Millennials working harder than ever as study finds 1 in 5 have two or more jobs	https://www.newstalk.com/business/millennials-working-harder-than-ever-as-study-finds-1-in-5-have-two-or-more-jobs-555889		News Talk	Innovation, Network
24.2.2017	Q&A with Viktor Calabrò, Founder and CEO of Coople	https://www.executivegrapevine.com/content/article/news-2017-02-24-qanda-with-viktor-calabr-founder-and-ceo-of-coople	Rianna Fulham	My Grapevine	Technology, Market
3.4.2017	5 minutes with... Jacques de la Bouillerie, MD of Coople	https://www.breathehr.com/blog/5-minutes-with...-jacques-de-la-bouillerie-md-of-coople	Melissa Jones	Breathe	Technology, Market, Regulation
18.4.2017	STAFF FINDER is now called «Coople»	https://www.startwerk.ch/2017/04/18/staff-finder-heisst-neu-coople/#		Startwrek	Network
19.4.2017	SWITZERLAND – STAFF FINDER REBRANDS TO COOPLE	https://www2.staffingindustry.com/eng/Editorial/Daily-News/Switzerland-Staff-Finder-rebrands-to-Coople-41748		Staffing Industry Analysts	Innovation, Network

1.8.2017	CornerJob has raised USD 57 million in two years of existence	https://www.lesechos.fr/2017/08/cornerjob-a-leve-57-millions-de-dollars-en-deux-ans-dexistence-180285	Raphael Bloch	Les Echos	Innovation
15.3.2018	Coople partners with Springboard	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/coople-partners-springboard/		Coople	Innovation
15.3.2018	Embracing the digital world of work	https://www.coople.com/uk/coople-stories/embracing-digital-world-work/		Coople	Network
15.3.2018	The Gig Economy Done Well: A Better Staffing Model for Your Business	https://www.coople.com/uk/employer-stories/gig-economy-done-well-better-staffing-model-business/		Coople	Technology
9.5.2018	Staffing Industry Analyst's inaugural 'Collaboration in the Gig Economy' conference and Dragons' Den	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/staffing-industry-analysts-inaugural-collaboration-gig-economy-conference-dragons-den/		Coople	Funding, Technology, Team, Market
2.8.2018	The power of upskilling	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/the-power-of-upskilling/		Coople	Funding, Team, Technology
17.9.2018	The brand new Coople Job app	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/the-brand-new-coople-job-app/		Coople	Funding, Technology, Market, Team
25.10.2018	Coople Raises USD 21M in Funding	http://www.finsmes.com/2018/10/coople-raises-us21m-in-funding.html		FinSMEs	Innovation, Technology, Network
25.10.2018	Swiss-founded on-demand staffing platform Coople raises $21 million	https://tech.eu/brief/swiss-founded-on-demand-staffing-platform-coople-raises-21-million/	Andrii Degeler	Tech EU	Funding, Market, Technology
25.10.2018	Goldman Sachs-backed flexible working startup Coople raises $21m	https://www.cityam.com/goldman-sachs-backed-flexible-working-startup-coople-raises/	Emily Nicolle	City a.m.	Innovation
2.11.2018	Viktor Calabrò, Coople - NOAH18 London	https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=luljqYysyuo&feature=emb_logo		NOAH Conference	Innovation, Market
8.11.2018	Coople nets $21M to expand internationally	https://www.onlinemarketplaces.com/articles/22053-coople-nets-21m-to-expand-internationally		Jobs PortalWatch	Team

29.1.2019	How do recruitment agencies work?	https://www.coople.com/uk/in-the-news/how-do-recruitment-agencies-work/		Coople	Innovation, Network, Team
25.2.2019	Coople is changing the working environment in the winter season	https://www.imaginemag.ch/coople-veraendert-die-arbeitswelt-der-wintersaison/	Urs Huebscher	Swissness	Market, Network
3.5.2019	Yves Schneuwly appointed as new Managing Director of Coople Switzerland	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/yves-schneuwly-appointed-as-new-managing-director-of-coople-switzerland/		Coople	Market, Regulation, Innovation, Network
24.6.2019	Coople - NOAH19 Berlin	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_gIUC_f7Jw&feature=emb_logo		NOAH Conference	Funding, Market, Technology
8.10.2019	Trying out Coople – the new marketplace for temps	https://tamebay.com/2019/11/trying-out-coople-the-new-marketplace-for-temps.html	David Brackin	Tame Bay	Funding
23.10.2019	Coople Cashes in on the Growing Gig Economy	https://www.cnnmoney.ch/shows/living-markets/videos/coople-rides-wave-growing-gig-economy	Hannah Wise	CNN Money Switzerland	Funding, Market, Technology, Team
24.10.2019	Coople snags $32 million to disrupt staffing industry, expand on-demand platform into Netherlands	https://tech.eu/brief/coople-snags-32-million-to-disrupt-staffing-industry-expand-on-demand-platform-into-netherlands/	Annie Musgrove	Tech EU	Funding, Market, Team
24.10.2019	Flexible Staffing Platform Coople Secures USD 32M	https://www.businesscloud.co.uk/news/flexible-staffing-platform-coople-secures-32m	Alistair Hardaker	Business Cloud	Funding, Technology
24.10.2019	Coople with $ 32 million expansion financing	https://www.startupticker.ch/en/news/october-2019/coople-mit-expansionsfinanzierung-uber-32-millionen-dollar		Staruptickeer.ch	Funding, Innovation, Network, Market
24.10.2019	Coople Receives USD 32 Million in Funding and Announces Expansion Into the Netherlands	https://finance.yahoo.com/news/coople-receives-usd-32-million-	PR Newswire	Yahoo! Finance	Funding, Market, Team

24.10.2019	Coople raises USD 32 mln	https://www.pehub.com/coople-raises-32-mln/	Luisa Beltran	PE Hub	Funding, Market, Technology, Business boosting, Team
25.10.2019	Swiss à la carte work platform Coople raises $ 32 million	https://www.ictjournal.ch/news/2019-10-25/la-plateforme-suisse-de-travail-a-la-carte-coople-leve-32-millions-de-dollars	Steven Wagner	ICT Journal	Network, Innovation, Pricing
25.10.2019	Swiss staffing platform Coople bags €29M funding, plans to launch in Netherlands	https://siliconcanals.com/news/swiss-staffing-platform-coople-funding-to-launch-in-netherlands/	Editorial team	Silicon Canals	Network
24.10.2019	Coople Receives USD 32 Million in Funding and Announces Expansion Into the Netherlands	https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/coople-receives-usd-32-million-in-funding-and-announces-expansion-into-the-netherlands-1028626188		Market Insider	Technology, Feature, Network
25.10.2019	EUROPE – IN TECH: COOPLE RECEIVES $32 MILLION IN FUNDING, EXPANDS INTO THE NETHERLANDS	https://www2.staffingindustry.com/eng/Editorial/Daily-News/Europe-In-tech-Coople-receives-32-million-in-funding-expands-into-the-Netherlands-51673		Staffing Industry Analysts	Technology
25.10.2019	PM Night Zurich #3 @Coople	https://productmanagementfestival.com/pm-nights/product-management-night-zurich-coople/		Product Management Festival	Network
28.10.2019	Meet the company: Coople	https://tamebay.com/2019/10/meet-the-company-coople.html	Chris Dawson	Tame Bay	Network, Market, Regulation, Innovation, Technology
28.10.2019	COOPLE IS OFFERING TWO NEW DREAM JOBS AT THE AUDI FIS WOMEN'S SKI WORLD CUP IN ST. MORITZ	https://swissentrepreneursmagazine.com/index.php/2019/10/28/coople-is-offering-two-new-dream-jobs-at-the-audi-fis-womens-ski-world-cup-in-st-moritz/	Angelyne Larcher	Swiss Entrepreurs Magazine	Market, Innovation
6.11.2019	A new employer experience	https://www.coople.com/uk/inside-coople/introducing-coople-hire/		Coople	Innovation
2.12.2019	Coople Launches Application For Employers	https://www.allnews.ch/content/news/coople-lance-une-application-destin%C3%A9e-aux-employeurs		Allnews	Innovation

10.2.2020	From Switzerland to the UK: The Road to Startup Success	https://www.swissembassyuk.org.uk/enews/swiss-uk-innovation-meet-up/task::data_task_number		The Embassy of Switzerland	Market, Innovation
4.3.2020	Interview: Gig site Coople plots U.K. growth	https://aimgroup.com/2020/03/04/interview-gig-site-coople-plots-u-k-growth/	Ben Salisbury	AIM Group	Innovation, Network
25.3.2020	Cooperation between Swiss companies and agricultural associations to secure the 2020 harvest	http://www.swisscofel.ch/de/aktuelles/meldungen/archiv/1585699261_Kooperation-von-Schweizer-Firmen-und-Landwirtschaftsverbaenden-zur-Sicherung-der-Ernte-2020.php		Swiss Cofel	Market, Network, Technology
31.3.2020	Recruitment agency Coople sees unabated demand in retail and logistics	https://www.luzernerzeitung.ch/news-service/wirtschaft/personalverleiher-coople-stellt-ungebremste-nachfrage-bei-detailhandel-und-logistik-fest-ld.1209106		Luzernen Zeitung	Award
9.4.2020	Case study: how Deliveroo Editions worked with Coople for flexible, crisis-proof staffing	https://www.coople.com/uk/future-of-work/case-study-how-deliveroo-editions-worked-with-coople-for-flexible-crisis-proof-staffing/		Coople	Innovation, Technology, Network
14.4.2020	When There's Plenty Of Work In The Fields, But Few Workers	https://www.eurasiareview.com/14042020-when-theres-plenty-of-work-in-the-fields-but-few-workers/	Alexander Thoele	Eurasia Review	Funding, Technology, Market