

A Partnership Manual to enter a new market through partnerships: Bluet Oy Ltd

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Bachelor's Thesis
Degree Programme in
International Business
2018



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Degree programme Degree programme in International Business	
Report/thesis title A Partnership Manual to enter a new market through partnerships	Number of pages and appendix pages 41 + 24
<p>This product based thesis was commissioned by Bluet Oy Ltd and is conducted to study market entry through a partnership network. The case company operates in the floating construction industry, which is a fairly new but highly potential industry. The thesis also presents a couple of the company's referential projects in the form of an interview.</p> <p>The main objective of the thesis was to create a partnership manual to assist Bluet in its internationalization process through their partnership network. The partnership manual created is an internal manual that will be further developed over time and through experience. Information collected for the thesis was mainly through a desktop study and management interviews, and by studying the company's internal materials.</p> <p>The thesis discusses the theory behind the market entry through partnerships by analysing different market entry strategies and the ones the case company is utilizing, the theories behind partnerships and business relationships and finally project management internationally and in the construction industry. The project was demarcated to focus on the creation of the partnership manual and especially emphasising the importance of partnerships in the internationalization process.</p> <p>The partnership manual created as the end product focuses on the different parties involved in Bluet's market entry and the roles and responsibilities in the different phases of the projects.</p> <p>The results of the project indicate that Bluet has an extensive knowledge of and skills in the industry, which is its advantage in the markets. The company also has a good understanding of the growth of the industry and it is gradually building its share in the markets around the world. With the help of the partnership manual, the company will be able to grow its already extensive network more systematically and effortlessly.</p>	
Keywords Partnerships, market entry strategy, project management, internationalization, relationship marketing, start-up	

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1 Introduction

This thesis examines the theories behind market entry process through a partnership network and how Bluet Oy Ltd could make the process of entering new markets through its collaborator network more efficient. The objective of the thesis is to create a partnership manual with efficient processes by analysing Bluet's current processes and studying relevant theory. This thesis is product based and the partnership manual will be the product created at the end of the project.

This chapter introduces the thesis topic to the reader presenting the background, the objectives and the scope of the project. First the background discusses the theory behind the topic and also how it is connected to the case company. The second chapter presents the objectives and tasks of the product based thesis, which is continued in the third chapter by explaining the scope of the thesis. The project structure chapter guides the reader through the whole thesis briefly presenting the contents of each of the main chapters. The last chapters introduce the case company of the thesis and the key concepts that are supporting the thesis topic.

1.1 Background

International markets are growing rapidly and it is getting more common for companies to include internationalization in their growth strategy. The benefits entering global markets can offer are for example larger market share, increase in sales, higher profits and valuable experiences. The entry modes and channels differ depending on the market and the case company's industry.

The case company Bluet Oy Ltd (later Bluet) is operating in floating construction industry which is a relatively new, ecological and quickly growing industry. Bluet has both domestic and international operations, but the company being fairly new, they are aiming for more effective way to build partnerships to enter new markets. The company has a wide partnership network, but as its operations are growing rapidly, new partnerships around the world are needed. The aim of the partnership manual is to help form a clear view of the project process for all the parties of the project and to make the process more systematic and effortless.

1.2 Project objective and project tasks

This thesis aims to establish a partnership manual for entering a new market through partnerships for Bluet Oy Ltd. The project objective is defined as: How to produce a partnership manual to enter or expand in a new market through partnerships?

PT 1. Theoretical framework

PT 2. Analysing the background and comparing referential domestic and international projects

PT 3. Producing the partnership manual

PT 4. Presenting the manual to obtain feedback

PT 5. Evaluation on the management of the project and the final product and findings

The overlay matrix below (table 1) explains the structure and methodology of the thesis. The project task 1 (PT 1) consists of the theoretical framework of the thesis. The literature studied for the theoretical framework concentrates on partnerships and business relationships, market entry strategies and project management theories with a construction industry point of view. After creating the theoretical framework, it is compared with the case company's previous projects and will offer tools to build the end product of the thesis (PT3). The third project task (PT 3) explains the creation process of the partnership manual as well as the concluded version of the final partnership manual that will be as an appendix (appendix 2).

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Project Task	Theoretical Framework	Project management method	Results (chapter)
PT 1. Theoretical framework (will be done simultaneously with PT 2.)	- Project Management - Partnerships - Market entry strategies	- Theoretical research	- Background for the thesis topic and the reasoning for the analysis
PT 2. Analysing the background and comparing referential domestic and international projects	- Project Management - Partnerships - Market entry strategies	- Thematic analysis - Qualitative interview	- Background information for the partnership manual - Comparison of referential domestic and international project
PT 3. Producing the partnership manual	- No theory implemented	- Management interview	- The end product
PT 4. Presenting the manual to obtain feedback	- No theory implemented	- Focus groups	- Feedback and recommendations for corrections for the final version
PT 5. Evaluation of the management of the project and the final product and findings	- Comparing PT 2. and PT 3.	- Comparison of the PT's 1-4	Results of the comparison of previously used methods and the benefits of the partnership manual

1.3 Project scope

The project is demarcated to be concentrating on the company's B2B partnerships and collaborations within their international projects. Bluet operates in the construction industry which will be one of the main themes of the thesis as well as the international operations and the role of partnerships in the internationalization process of the case company. Bluet has already made the decision to internationalize and its market entry mode is chosen. Thus, the factors to consider whether to internationalize and which markets to enter won't be covered in this thesis. The focus will be on the certain market entry strategies Bluet is utilizing and internationalization through partnership network.

The partnership manual is conducted in a generic way to help with the internationalization process and it can be adjusted to different markets. The theory applied for the project is focusing on partnerships, market entry strategies and project management internationally and in construction field. The partnership manual will be concentrating on the case company's main partnerships and each process will be divided in documentation, contracts, communication and collaborators parts and their roles and responsibilities are explained. The collaborators are categorized by the type of their partnership with Bluet.

1.4 Project structure

The thesis has four main chapters that guide the reader through the thesis. The first chapter introduces the thesis topic, the case company and the background of the thesis as well as the contents of the theoretical framework.

The second chapter consists of the first project task (PT 1) explaining more profoundly the theory behind the thesis topic. First the market entry strategies and the entry mode suiting the case company's operations are introduced, and as its entry mode is through the partnerships it naturally leads to the partnership theories. The partnership theories chapter introduces the topic by first explaining the general approaches behind the theories and then emphasising more on the strategic market relationship approach and relationship marketing. International project management and project management in construction industry are elaborated as a final theory of the chapter. After introducing the reader to the theoretical framework, the case company's operations will be explained in practice. The chapter 4 consists of the PT 2, the results of the qualitative interview about the case company's referential domestic and international projects and partnerships related to them.

The fifth chapter contains the creation process of the final product of the thesis (PT 3), the partnership manual. First the meaning, methodology and design are explained and then finally the contents of the manual are presented. The results of the project, the feedback and evaluation (PT 4 & 5) are all included in the final chapter six.

1.5 International aspect

The international aspect of the thesis is covered by concentrating on the case company's international operations and by producing the Partnership Manual for the international projects. The partnership network concentrated on in the manual is widely international.

1.6 Benefits

The case company benefits from the thesis by having a clear process tool consisting the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved in the process of entering a new market or expanding in an existing market. The manual is an internal tool that will make the personnel's work faster, clearer and more effortless, as the important information is collected into one document that is adjustable to all of the cases. The partnership manual is a project that can be further developed during time and experience and an external manual can also be created later for marketing purposes, having the internal one as a base.

The collaborators of the case company can benefit of the manual by having the collaborated projects run smoothly, when all the information is collected into one document. Later on, they can have a more visualized version of the manual used more for marketing purposes that is made on the basis of the internal manual.

Benefits the thesis author can gain from the thesis is the experience it offers, as the author works in the case company as a project assistant. The end product is a tool that also the author will be using when working closely with the company's projects.

1.7 Case company

Bluet Oy Ltd is a Finnish company founded in 2016 that concentrates in floating construction. Bluet's mission is to create sustainable, ecological, usable and also profitable solutions for city development, operators, investors – and especially for the end users to enjoy – on water. Bluet starts operating in a certain area when a growing market is indicated by proven demand, existing customer relationships, a strong co-operation network and the growing trend of sustainable building. Bluet works closely with a large network of professionals from various business and technology fields. Their main goal is to create an end-solution which fulfills the needs of their clients, end-users and the environmental and detailed technical requirements of their special solutions. Bluet offers services as One-Stop-Shop solution from the early vision to the final design and

realization plan. The modular solutions of Bluet are targeted to private and business use and can be for example private homes, offices, hotels, cafes. Their special solutions and business units are for leisure and business activities and include solutions such as artificial beaches, leisure and activity parks, car parks, ferry and heli-terminals etc. (Bluet Oy Ltd 2016.)

Bluet's core business is to create, design and deliver floating solutions for the globally growing need of construction on water close to and in the centrum of cities and other urban areas – with cooperative partners. Bluet sells and markets the floating construction projects globally and offer full service to the clients by modifying the project to the clients' needs, however Bluet does not construct the solutions their selves. Bluet has founded a Team Bluet that is a group of their collaborative partners. The Bluet Teams responsibilities include project development, the concept development, the project definition services, the project zoning and permission consulting and location scouting for the clients' needs. At the beginning of the projects Bluet Team also offers feasibility study research, detail design and supervising works for the part of the floating construction and site supervision. (Bluet Oy Ltd 2016.)

Currently there are six people working at Bluet's office and in addition to four in-house team members with architect, consultancy and project management personnel. Various collaborators are included in the project works in a daily basis. The daily team at the office consists of the founders of Bluet, the CEO and Chief Engineer, and also a Marketing Coordinator, Office Manager and Project Assistants. Their office is located in Vantaa, however both the CEO and chief engineer travel regularly in Finland and abroad. The team also includes subcontractors such as an international sales advisor, architects and project managers. The thesis author is working at the case company as a project assistant and has been able to use company's internal materials in the thesis writing process.

1.8 Key concepts

There are four key concepts that will be supporting the development of the partnership manual. The key concepts are market entry strategy, internationalization, partnerships and project management. The concepts are defined in this chapter and they will form the theoretical framework of the thesis. The chapter 2 will also discuss the importance of strategic business relationships in global economy and the planning, development, communication and the types of relationships and managing them. The central phenomena of the thesis is market entry through partnerships which will be mainly

focused on, but other market entry strategies will be also briefly explained to reason the choice for partnership method. Project management theory is focusing on construction industry and international projects.

Market entry strategy is described as “an institutional arrangement that makes possible the entry of a company’s products, technology, human skills, management or other resources into a foreign country” (Doherty, Moore & Doyle 2007, 140).

Internationalization is a process of growing involvement in international procedures resulting in growth of knowledge about markets and organizations abroad (Glowik 2010, 70).

Partnerships are designed to connect heterogeneous logics of communication and divide functional systems of communication such as, for example, politics, the economy, education, care and health (Jessop, 1999; Anderson-Wallace et al, 2000; Fenwick, 2004; Hardis, 2004. Edited by Andersen 2008, 2).

Project management is the discipline of planning, organizing and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives (Collins 2011, 1). Project management is defined by The Association of Project Management (APM) as “the process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered such that the agreed benefits are realized”.

2 Partnerships as a market entry strategy in projects

This chapter forms the PT 1 theoretical framework and consists of the theory supporting the thesis topic such as market entry strategies suitable for the case company, theory related to business partnerships and international- and construction project management.

When the organization has made the decision to internationalize, the following phase is to choose the suitable international market to enter. The case company has already made the decision to internationalize and have chosen certain international markets to enter. Thus, the factors to consider in deciding whether to internationalize and which markets to enter won't be covered here. The focus will be on the certain market entry strategies the case company is utilizing and internationalization through marketing communication.

Business relationships is a rising trend for a good reason. Great new opportunities are presented to organizations that genuinely focus on growing and retaining their relationships with stakeholders by significant changes in the marketing environment (Hollensen & Opresnik 2015, 2). Relationship marketing pursues to develop a chain of relationships between the organization and its main stakeholders, including clients, suppliers, distribution channels and companies producing complementary products and services, and also the competitors (Egan 2011, 38).

2.1 General view of internationalization

"Internationalization occurs when a firm expands its research and development, production, selling and other business activities into international markets" describes Hollensen (2017, 56) In larger organizations, internationalization may be a continuous activity, if a company takes on multiple internationalization stages on many foreign expansion projects at the same time, during a certain period of time. However, for small and medium-sized enterprises internationalization is often a fairly discrete process; as the management considers each internationalization activity as distinct and individual.

Internationalization literature first developed based on general marketing. It was further developed towards choosing the entry mode from exporting and foreign direct investment (FDI). Nowadays the concentration is more on internationalization in networks including the company's relationships with their clients, stakeholders and other contacts in the environment. (Hollensen 2017, 83)

There are various different internationalization strategies that suit for the different needs of companies, the four most common ones are explained by Hollensen (2017, 454) in this chapter. The traditional marketing approach focuses on the company's core competences combined with opportunities in the foreign environment. First, Vernon's life cycle concept consists of sequential models, in which companies go through an exporting phase before switching first to market seeking FDI. Second, the Uppsala internationalization model, which main consequence is that companies tend to deepen their commitment to international markets as their experience grows, can be seen in the case company's operations. Uppsala model is further elaborated later. On the other hand, the third model is Dunning's elective approach is focusing more on the locational variables in foreign investment decisions. In 1998 Dunning came up with the theory that extensively explains the transnational activities of the firms needs to draw on various elements of economic theory (Hollensen 2017, 83). The final internationalization theory explained by Hollensen (2017, 454) is project export, which is a multifaceted international activity, involving various parties in the market. There are certain preconditions for project export such as the importing and exporting country have to have a technology gap between the countries and the specific product and technology know-how that the importing country requires has to also be in possession of the exporter. Project export includes either suppliers or deliveries of both software and hardware.

Hollensen (2017, 344) specified that after choosing the target markets, the next step is to choose the suitable way to enter those markets. An international market entry mode has to be chosen when exporting a company's products, technology and human capital into a foreign market. The entry mode is a key strategic decision for companies because of the difficulty of changing it afterwards and also companies often being reluctant to do so. The future market entries of a company can be threatened by a falsely evaluated market entry choice in the preliminary stages of its internationalization. An ideal market entry strategy does not exist, and companies can copy entry modes from each other in the same market or a company can use the same method in various markets. Different market entry modes can be combined to create a specific mode and also competing entry modes are occasionally combined (Hollensen 2017, 343). Hollensen (2015, 352) refers to Hennart and Slangen (2015) while stating that the decision of the entry mode is not a simple decision for an organization and the decision can be affected by various factors. Below (table 2) are listed four groups of factors considered to have influence on the decision of the entry mode. The four groups are: internal factors, desired mode characteristics, transaction-specific factors and external factors. An indicator of a company's available resources is the company's size, as the resources increase the international involvement

will also increase over time. Experience is measured by the company's involvement in operating internationally, and minimizes the cost and uncertainty while operating in a market. The external factors such as sociocultural distance between the countries can cause internal uncertainty influencing to the mode of entry of the company. If the country risk is high, companies usually favor entry modes such as export, as there is a lower commitment to resources. The third factor, desired mode characteristics include risk averse, control and flexibility. Risk averse managers commonly choose an entry mode to have less financial and management resource involvement. Modes that include less resource involvement may result in substantial loss of opportunity. The last factor is the transaction specific factors. When a company's know-how is tacit, costs and difficulties in transferring the know-how offer companies a reason to choose hierarchical modes. (Hollensen 2017, 357.)

Table 2. Factors influencing the entry mode decision (Hollensen 2017, 352)

<p>Internal factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Firm size - International experience 	<p>Desired mode characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk averse - Control - Flexibility
<p>Transaction-specific factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tacit nature of know-how - Opportunistic behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Transaction costs 	<p>External factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sociocultural distance between home country and host country - Country risk/ demand uncertainty - Market size and growth - Direct and indirect trade barriers - Intensity and competition - Small number of relevant export intermediaries available

“According to Uppsala’s model, internationalization is a process starting from the interaction of learning about international operations and engaging to international businesses” describe Amal and Filho (2010, 611). The lack of knowledge and operations is a significant obstacle for the internationalization. The market knowledge can be further developed through gathering experiences by implementing operations abroad. Experience is thought as necessary factor offering the organization capabilities to create new businesses and to diminish the insecurity related to the commitment and expanding abroad. The Uppsala framework has shown to be important when analyzing the internationalization of SME’s which succeeded in increasing their international

performance through relationships with other companies despite some limitations caused by their resources and market knowledge. (Amal & Filho 2010, 611)

Amal and Filho (2010, 619) conducted a study about the internationalization process of SME's, which evaluated the role and the effects of networks relationship and entrepreneurships to the strategy of market selection and entry mode. An attitude of an entrepreneur, proactive, innovative and risk friendly, changes the creation process of new skills into an opportunity to learn more about the specific market. The study also indicated that understanding the market selection, entry mode and international performance derives from understanding the importance of the relationship between the company and their networks. Performing better in the foreign markets can be reached through more involvement with the relationships networks of the company and integrating activities with customers and suppliers.

2.2 Internationalization networks

The Uppsala theory is followed by the relationship networks approach that is designed to be a natural evolution of it. Amal and Filho (2010, 610) describe that "the networks approach underlines especially social and cognitive links created between the parties in the business interactions". Networks have various different definitions, and one by Chetty and Holm (2000) define business networks as a group of companies associated through relationships that are created through commercial companies. Johanson and Vahlne (2003, 92) define a business network as "sets of international business relationships, in which each exchange relation is between business firms conceptualized as collective actors". Finally, also Axelsson and Easton (Glowik 2016, 70) have defined network as "a model or metaphor that describes a number of entities that are connected", continuing with Glowik specifying this with an international network definition as "the entities are actors involved in the economic process that converts resources into finished goods and services". (Glowik 2016, 70.)

Amal and Filho (2010, 610) emphasize that every organization has relationships with clients, suppliers and even competitors. Each company of the value chain is a part of a greater social and business network as every company has relationships with other companies. Also, different options of internationalization's pattern are suggested by the network models. In the first alternative, an early starter is defined as a company that begins to develop foreign markets with only limited international contribution by companies and networks. The second alternative, a lonely international company is more

experienced internationally and has also relationships in foreign markets, thus they have achieved a higher level of cultural knowledge and understanding. In the third alternative, the network is the most internationalized whereas the company by low level. The company has a great understanding of the global opportunities that can be offered by the network. Also, the positions, advantages and knowledge the network offers internationally can be used to develop their international operations. Thus, the higher level of international knowledge facilitates in creating new networks for extending operations in markets and also entering new markets and regions. (Amal & Filho 2010, 610.)

The multi-case study also made by Amal and Filho (2010, 619) concludes that “the role of network relationships is meaningful for specifying the core competences, as well as the firms’ goals related to the internationalization process”. The results of the case study also indicated that instead of market orientation, the strategy of internationalization is actually of a customer oriented one. They also recommend on focusing on developing the relationships with their suppliers and clients instead of concentrating on the market entry or expansion in new markets.

The internationalization and network model creates a relation for the internationalization strategy of a company and the level of internationalization of the network the company is a part of. Relationship learning may affect the company by increasing the knowledge of forming new business networks and connecting them. The choice of the first market is impacted by the entrepreneur’s experience and previous responsibilities, as the business and projects could be developed in that specific market. Thus, the company’s capabilities of managing its activities within a specific network define the company’s internationalization process. On the other hand, the expansion internationally is influenced by its capacity of creating new networks and forming collaboration processes in their existing networks. Amal & Filho (2010, 611) emphasize that the networks analysis characterizes a powerful model for the study on international entrepreneurship. (Amal & Filho 2010, 611.)

2.3 Partnerships

Many of the exchanges in the market can be thought as a transaction linking the parties involved. Relationships are the interactions between the parties during time. For a longer time, there has been a debate between the transactional and strategic market relation approach theories arguing that managing transactions is the only effective market approach instead of the newer relationship model. It is left to suppliers to decide their

different customer relationships and identify and manage their positions within the ones with only one-time sales and the long-term partnerships. (Donaldson & O'Toole 2007, 7.)

Similar to Donaldson's and O'Toole's comparison of the transactional and strategic market relationship approach (table 3) is Hollensen's (2015, 211) comparison of the differences between B2C and B2B relationships in the table in appendix 1. The form of the relationship in B2C between the individual and the company is often a membership type, whereas in B2B it is a working partnership with mutual exchange that can be for example co-marketing alliance, strategic alliance or distribution channel relationship. A sale between B2B partners is generally larger and requires larger investment from the parties, this leading to the issue that if an organization loses a large customer they are more difficult to replace. In B2C the sale sizes are smaller and the customer relationships are not as much invested on as in B2B, but a single customer can be replaced easier, at a lower cost and faster. B2B relationships require personal relationships between the organizations and there usually are various inter-organizational linkages. The emphasis is more on the personal selling and personal contact and a good customer knowledge is essential.

Donaldson and O'Toole (2007, 9) have compared the traditional transaction approach and strategic market relationship view (table 3). Transaction-based approach requires only a brief or no mutual involvement at all, as an example of a visit to a café on a vacation abroad you are unlikely to visit again. The customer often searches for the best price and availability between the different suppliers, and the price is usually the main criteria behind the purchase decision. The products considered in transaction-based approach rarely have differentiating factors and are easy to copy, thus there is a high competition with the price between the suppliers. A repeated transaction can also occur, but the relationship can still be of minor importance.

The businesses that are in the strategic market relationship category have a mutual cooperation relationship between the buyer and seller of which the both parties benefit. The business types common for the relationship based approach are industrial products and services, trade marketing and B2B selling. Mutual success can be dependent on establishing and maintaining a comprehensive relationship between supplier and customer. It is mandatory upon both parties in the relationship to assess the costs and benefits that are likely to accrue from a relationship based approach rather than one based on single discrete transactions. (Donaldson & O'Toole 2007, 9)

Table 3. A comparison between transactional and the strategic relationship approach (Donaldson & O'Toole 2007, 9)

Traditional approach (transaction)	Strategic market relationship
Transaction focus	Partnership focus
Competition	Collaboration
Firm induced	Cooperation
Value to the firm	Value in partnership
Buyer passive	Buyer as active participant
Firm as focus for control	Firm as part of the process
Firm as boundary	Boundary-less
Short-term focus	Long-term focus
Independent	Dependence and network led

Egan (2011, 1) has defined relationship marketing (RM) as “a wide range of ‘relationship-type’ strategies that have developed over the past few decades in product as well as service markets and in consumer as well as business-to-business sectors although not necessarily with the same intensity or success”. Also, Mattsson (1997, 302) suggested that RM is a generic context that includes all the marketing transactions from products and services to consumer and industrial sectors. On the other hand, Mattsson’s suggestion was specified to cover various marketing’s sub-disciplines such as channels, business-to-business marketing, services marketing, marketing research, customer behaviour, marketing communications, marketing strategy, international marketing and direct marketing. Additionally, Linton and Donnelly (2009, 161) highlight the meaning of the relationship between the parties and building interaction and discussion, which can be done through targeted communication. An important part of communications is supporting the concept of building and maintaining good communication and growing loyalty for the partnerships.

Linton and Donnelly (2009, 145) state that companies interest in building continuous relationships with customers is increasing. While sustaining a customer for longer than usually their life time value is enriched. There are differences in the profitability of customers, which require companies to communicate to customers in a way reflecting their worth to the company. Organizations aim in building relationships that are long lasting and that they can profit from. These types of relationships often require effective communication that offers added value to all the parties. The communication process

creating added value includes a continuous dialogue and understanding the stakeholders needs, which leads to creating correctly targeted marketing. Also, the communication should be regular and timely to serve the right stakeholder groups at correct times and is communicated through the relevant medias. Linton and Donnelly (2009, 153) emphasize that the role of communication is to provide the organization with a competitive advantage by clearly labelling what the product does and positioning it relative to competition, so the customer is able to differentiate the offering from the competition and can make a clear choice about which one best meets their needs. Communication is crucial when organizations are building relationships with their stakeholders. There are various groups of stakeholders that include for example public interested in the organization, distribution channels and the members of them and the clients of the organization. (Linton & Donnelly, 2009, 153.)

2.4 Project management internationally and in construction industry

“A major need, central to effectively producing projects whatever their scale, is the organization and management of people skilled in designing and building them” Walker points out about increasing complexity of the environments within which construction projects find themselves placed. (Walker 2015, 1.)

Organizations can achieve valuable results through projects. Projects require a careful use of resources to minimize the risk of destroying value, which is rare compared to the value they can bring. Project management is defined by The Association of Project Management (APM) as “the process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered such that the agreed benefits are realized”. Köster (2010,3) enlightens that each project shares three main characteristics in common, regardless of the type of the project, and the weight of the characteristics may differ in between the projects. The main characteristics of a project are limited, risky and unique. A project is designed to last a limited period of time, which often is a relatively long time. A research by Cooke-Davies (2002, 186) suggested that a project should not last longer than three years and the beginning and end of the project should be clearly outlined. A successful project also has a clearly defined end result such as a new tangible or intangible asset. Projects are usually unique as the objectives and context are most of the times different and they can be introduced by different organizations. There are cases when projects seem to have repetitive factors but in these cases, there are usually also some differences such as the location, local regulations and standards (Köster 2010, 5).

The figure 1 below visualizes the project management life cycle (Köster 2010, 6) with the four main phases. The initiating phase includes the feasibility study and the development of the business case for the project. The project planning defines the tasks that are required to be done in order to reach the objectives. The project management plan is also done during the second phase. The third phase consists of the execution and/or controlling the project. Thus, the fourth phase is the completion of the project including the delivery of the final product to the customer. The project management life cycle also can be seen behind Bluet's project processes. There are more processes in their projects but the contents are generally the same as the initiating refers to their preliminary quote phase when the project is initiated by the client. The planning phase combines Bluet's preliminary definition and feasibility study phases when more thorough planning and detailed designs are made. The design phase remains in between the life cycle models phases 2 and 3. The third phase of the life cycle model which is executing and controlling includes Bluet's phases of design and implementation of project. Bluet is supervising the design phase and the implementation phase from manufacturing to assembly on site. The final phase is when the Client is handed over their finished project and the care and maintenance phase begins.

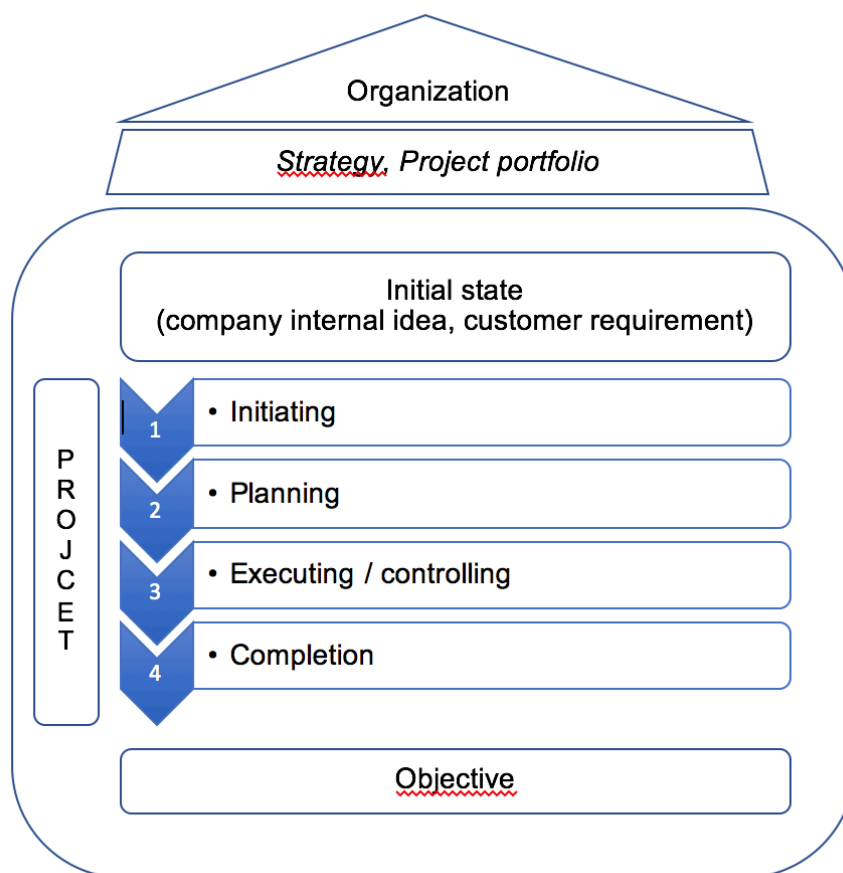


Figure 1. The project management life cycle (Köster 2010, 6)

Köster (2010, 12) has also clarified the similarities and differences between international and standard projects. The similarities they have are the type of the organization, industry, location in the value chain, and duration. The main differences are the purpose, scope, the main stakeholders and risk intensity. In the figure 2 below the main characteristics of an international project are depicted. The characteristics are interrelated and some of them contribute to another, for example risk and dynamics are contributed by complexity and limited resources, and complexity is increased by diversity.



Figure 2. Characteristics of an international project (Köster 2010, 17)

Referring to the figure above where Köster (2010, 17) has defined characteristics of an international project, the organizational and geographical causes are the main causes affecting complexity in international projects. The project set-up is often very complex

because of various stakeholders having conflicting interests, being situated in different levels of the organization or outside the organization at co-operator's or the client's organization resulting in a large amount of interdependent interactions. The project manager has a crucial role in finding an adequate structure and system to manage these multi-interdependencies. Knowing the 'hidden-agendas' of the parties involved and including these in the project planning is also vital. Geographically the project management can be complex as the parties are located around the world which requires establishing systems and policies to make smooth communication and collaboration across different time zones possible. The risks related in international projects are lead by the complexity of the projects. In standard projects, it is also usual to have budget or time overruns as it is in international projects also. The environment internationally brings along further uncertainty such as political instability or countries natural resources being strictly controlled. (Köster 2010, 17.)

Construction project management is defined as “the planning, co-ordination and control of a project from conception to completion (including commissioning) on behalf of a client, requiring the identification of the client's objectives in terms of utility, function, quality, time and cost; the establishment of relationships between resources; integrating, monitoring and controlling the contributors to the project and their output; and evaluating and selecting alternatives in pursuit of the client's satisfaction with the project outcome”. (Walker 2015, 11.)

Additionally, Walker (2015, 14) states that the client is responsible for defining the objectives of the project management process and the role of project management is to ensure that the project organization functions to achieve the client's objectives. In construction projects, there generally are various organizationally independent companies involved and a large part of their employees are part-time employees, it is the project management's responsibility to make sure everyone works for towards the client's objectives. Thus, it is crucial to state the clients' objectives clearly and communicate them in an equal way to all the participants. Adaptations of the objective may often happen, and if they are not given the attention they require, the project can be completed in a manner that the client ends up dissatisfied of the end result (Walker 2015, 12). The problem of managing firms and of managing projects are the two types of management issues the work of companies in the construction industry and its professions present (Walker 2015, 14).

3 Project methods

This chapter explains the design and methodology for the interview (PT 2) and the production process of the manual (PT 3). This chapter consists of the design of the project, the methods used in the different project tasks in data collection and in project management. The timeline of the project has been continuously updated as the project has developed, thus a specific timeline is not presented here.

The table below (table 4) explains the structure and methodology of the thesis. The project task 1 (PT 1) consists of the theoretical framework of the thesis. The literature studied for the theoretical framework concentrates on partnerships and business relationships, market entry strategies and project management theories with a construction industry point of view. After creating the theoretical framework, it was compared with the case company's referential projects, by collecting the data through a research interview (results in chapter 4). The research interview (PT 2) lead to additional ideas in building the end product of the thesis (PT3), which is further emphasized in chapter 4 with a thorough explanation of the creation process of the partnership manual. Finally, the last chapter consists of the PT 4 and PT 5.

	PT 1	PT 2	PT 3	PT 4	PT 5
Project task	Theoretical framework	Background and analysis of two projects	Producing the manual	Presenting and feedback	Findings and evaluation
Data source	- Text books relating to key concepts - Articles	-Management interview - Company documents	- Focus group discussions - Company documents	- Task outcome of PT 1, PT2 & PT 3	- Task outcome of PT's 1-4
Project management method	- Desktop study - Documentary research	-Qualitative interview - Qualitative analysing methods	- MS word	- Meeting with management	- Comparison of previously used methods and the manual produced
Task outcome	- Supporting theory for the analysis - Reasoning for the manual	- Background information for producing the manual	- The internal manual	Recommendations for making final corrections	- Final recommendations
Project outcome	The partnership manual				

Table 4. Methodology and design of the project

The first project task (PT 1) was conducted as a desktop study and documentary research by studying text books, e-books and reliable articles related to the key concepts of the thesis to form the theoretical framework of the thesis. As the end result of the PT 1 the supporting theory for the PT 2 and PT 3 was formed. The internationalization theory offers viewpoints to the creation of the Partnership Manual of what to consider when entering a foreign market, the importance of the different partnerships in the internationalization process and project management theory for building and improving the different processes.

The second project task (PT 2) was conducted as a qualitative interview to collect background information about Bluet's referential projects. Qualitative approach is used in this research because the aim is to produce recommendations based on the analysis of the previous activities and have them as an assistance in producing the end product of the thesis. Using Glowik's reasoning (2016, 2) for choosing qualitative approaches, in this case the variables of the research cannot be quantified as it is a verbal interview of two

people; the research topic is also new; and there is not enough data available. In addition, it explains the causes and effects of individual cases and is also a flexible research method. The interview produced the primary data as it represents the new data that was initially collected for certain purpose (Saunders et al. 2015, 316). Research interview is defined by Saunders et al. (2015, 388) as “a purposeful conversation between two or more people, requiring the interviewer to establish rapport and ask concise and unambiguous questions, to which the interviewee is willing to respond and listen attentively”. The purpose of the interviews is to collect valid and reliable data relevant for the research.

The objective of the interview was to collect background information and gain useful knowledge of the projects for the manual building process. The interview was designed based on its objectives and the existing secondary data, which the interviewer studied prior the interview. The interview questions were open and were aimed to gain information about the realized domestic project and to use the case to analyze how an international floating construction project would be realized and how an international project differs from the domestic one in practice. The interview was recorded and the interviewer also took some notes during the interview. After the interview, the interviewer transcribed the interview and analyzed the results (in chapter 4). Also, some of the primary data was collected during brief conversations and meetings held at the office during regular work days. A preliminary timeline for the project was created at the beginning, but the project being quite complex, the timeline was not strictly followed as it went back and forth during the project. Finally, the PT 2 resulted in beneficial information for creating the Partnership Manual.

The project task 3 (PT 3) enlightens the creation process of the end product of the thesis, the Partnership Manual. Secondary data for both the interview (PT 2) and the Partnership Manual (PT 3) was collected from the organizations' internal materials and also through the interview conducted and by general discussion at the office. Secondary data is defined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill as: “the data that were collected initially for some other purpose”. Secondary data are often used in case studies or survey research strategies within business and management research projects. (Saunders & al. 2015, 316)

In this project, the secondary data consists of text materials such as notices, communication, meetings, reports to shareholders, text of public and internal materials and text of web pages. The materials used in the project were Bluet's internal materials from internal database and also web pages. Both of these types of data can be analyzed

using either quantitative or qualitative methods (Saunders & al. 2015, 320). The non-text materials used in the manual creation included Bluet's pictures, drawings and other visualizations. The final product of PT 3 was the Partnership Manual, which would be finalized after the PT 4.

The project task four (PT 4) consisted of the presentation and feedback of the end product. It was reviewed with the CEO of Bluet to gain feedback and recommendations for final corrections. Finally, the last project task (PT 5) concluded the thesis in the chapter 5 discussing the outcomes of the previous tasks and presenting suggestions for the case company. The last project tasks do not include theoretical information as it includes an evaluation of the project and also the information is based on the previous project tasks.

4 Project implementation

This chapter explains the implementation of the project first through the qualitative interviews conducted and then implementing the preliminary information collected to the end product of the thesis, the Partnership Manual.

A manual is defined by Tripathi (2009, 1) as “an orderly collection of written instructions, directions, facts or data pertaining to the affairs activities of an organization, business, job or method” and also as “any reference book especially one giving instructions, guidebook or a handbook”. The Partnership Manual is a process tool for Bluet Oy Ltd that offers a clear view of all the collaborators’ roles and responsibilities within project process and how the partnership works in the projects. The manual is made to offer Bluet and their collaborators a clear view of the internationalization process. It is a tool that can be adjusted for each market as there are certain similarities in each project and certain differences that need to be studied for each project.

4.1 The interviews

The content of the interviews concentrates on Bluet’s referential projects, domestic and international projects, describing generally the project flow, the roles and responsibilities in the projects, and the differences between domestic and international projects. The information below is combined from the information acquired by interviewing Bluet’s CEO Tytti Sirola and chief engineer Kimmo Saharinen.

The interviewer presented open questions about the roles of Bluet and the different parties in international projects and how the different parties for the projects are usually found. Also, the challenges in international projects were discussed and finally the differences between domestic and international projects. The respondents were asked similar questions about the successfulness, challenges faced, and the functionality of the different partnerships in the projects. The interviewer had some basic knowledge about the project flow and the parties involved in the projects already before the interview, but not how they are realized in practice. The interviews were conducted at Bluet’s office 22nd Dec 2017 with Saharinen, and 5th Jan 2018 with Sirola.

The following text is written on the basis of the information received from Saharinen and Sirola during the interview. The interviews were conducted separately because of the different roles and point of views of the respondents. While explaining the findings, the

focus will be on the design and delivery of the floating infrastructure, which is Bluet's responsibility.

4.1.1 Interview findings of Allas Sea Pool project

Saharinen explained that Allas Sea Pool was Bluet's first larger realized project as a 2700m² floating swimming arena. Bluet's responsibility in the project was the floating area. The buildings on land were built separately by different companies. Allas Sea Pool consists of three swimming pools, saunas and other wellness services, a restaurant, a café, large terrace areas, an event stage and area in an area of 10 000 m², the total built area being nearly 1600m² on land and 2700m² on water, added Sirola.

In the projects, the construction of the floating infrastructure is separated from the construction of the structures on land, the contract line is agreed to end at the shore bank. Like in Allas Sea Pool project, also in all the projects Sirola, has the responsibility of the clients, the development of the concepts and project leadership, and Saharinen has the design and implementation responsibility. Other Bluet Team members work for the projects both in the office and locally in the design and supervision works and on site, described Sirola.

Marinetek Finland Oy was the main contractor in the project and the planning and design of the floating structure was started by them. Bluet was asked to participate later in the design phase to specify the designs. The collaboration between Marinetek and Bluet is based on trust as they have a long history of working together, explained Saharinen. The design phase took longer because the project is the first of its kind in the world, and needed special knowledge in combining different technologies into floating construction.

“There were parties involved from many fields and specialities and many were unaware of the special needs of floating construction and only had experience from regular construction projects.”

(Kimmo Saharinen 22 December 2017)

Saharinen continued that the project required special knowledge of the floating construction field, but as it is quite new industry, the parties were either from regular construction industry or from ship construction and also pool technique specialists. The parties involved in the designing, building and installation of the floating infrastructure were chosen from previously used specialists and also based on recommendations.

“Generally, in all the future projects the same parties will remain as partners throughout the project, and only if something goes drastically wrong, some might be switched.”

(Kimmo Saharinen 22 December 2017)

As usual, when creating something totally new, some issues were faced in the communication between the parties, mainly resulting from the lack of experience in similar projects, as there is not any realized before. For example, the parties involved had leadership experience from harbor construction projects but coordination skills for floating construction as well as for larger projects with authorities involved, was not so familiar to all the parties involved, continued Saharinen.

The flow of the collaboration varied slightly in the different phases of the project. Usually the work is designed first and then implemented, but in this project, it was needed to test various solutions first, then choose the best solution for the final implementation as there were no ready solutions to be used, Saharinen explained.

“Proper design saves money. The Bluet way of working is to emphasize on the design phase in the beginning because it is always more expensive to add some features later when the construction is going on or done. The emphasis should be in the whole process being smooth and pleasant for the customer, not only the end result.”

(Tytti Sirola 5 January 2018)

Sirola continued that Allas Sea Pool project taught that the challenges in water construction can only be learned by experience. The project also showed what should not be done in the future. Modular construction showed its importance in the project and in the future construction on final site should be minimized, and as much as possible should be pre-fabricated and modularly built in another location.

“In water construction, everything is a bit different compared to regular construction – either materials, installation methods or regulations – and fact-based information is difficult to find. As the business field is new, there is not so much existing solutions for the need, and lot of different opinions about how to do it.”

(Kimmo Saharinen 21 December 2017)

Saharinen pointed out that in the future, Bluet’s goal is to separate the different techniques used and the different parts such as the pool, pool techniques and pontoons

will be pre-manufactured by Bluet's collaborators in Finland and locally. The parts will be connected at the site during the assembly phase. The parties will be supervised by Bluet, who will be overseeing the whole process.

"Allas Sea Pool project was well executed, which lead to more work at Helsinki Allas Oy for Bluet during the year. They have been Bluet's main client and main collaborator. Bluet is also part of Töölö Urban Oy's team in the bidding of e.g. an area in Oulu for a possible new project."

(Tytti Sirola 5 January 2018)

4.1.2 Findings on referential international projects

When switching the discussion from domestic projects to the international projects, Sirola explained that the international projects will be realized based on the experience from the domestic projects. Bluet's role is to supervise and guide the projects as a specialist of floating construction. Saharinen also stated that, Bluet has a so called "umbrella" role as a main consultant supervising other project parties. The other parties are obliged to run the designs, local plans and changes through Bluet, to make sure the floating solution will be a safe and a stable solution. The importance of the local parties cannot be emphasized too much as the project is done in collaboration with the local parties that have the best knowledge of the local rules and regulations, added Sirola.

The interviewer asked to clarify the responsibilities in the projects, and Sirola continued to explain that the local main contractor is responsible to Bluet, but the main contractor can choose the subcontractors who are responsible to them. Bluet can also recommend a subcontractor to be hired if they know a suitable one. The client contract is made together with Bluet and the local main contractor. The subcontractor responds to the main contractor, but their works will still have to be accepted by Bluet.

"The projects require a good relationship between Bluet and the main contractor and good listening from the main contractors' part. As for Bluet, the guiding role is very critical and also difficult as it should be based on facts, and the guidance can be given based on experience."

(Kimmo Saharinen 22 December 2017)

Saharinen explained that in international projects Bluet's project director and/or technical manager will be visiting the site regularly. Bluet has the responsibility of their designs and

delivery of the floating infrastructure, which the local marina contractor will assemble by Bluet's instructions. The reason why Bluet will not take the local contractor responsibility, is that they cannot supervise them 24/7.

“We are currently working on projects in Australia where we already have a local investor, contractor, architect team and a local project manager. We have also received a lot of support from the local authorities, the embassy and other official parties both from Finland and Australia. The local partner was found through collaborators and the local partner then assisted in finding other needed local parties. However, the local contractors who were familiar marine construction were interviewed by me during my trip to Australia.”

(Tytti Sirola 5 January 2018)

In international projects the local regulations can be really different compared to a domestic project and this usually requires thorough pre-studying. The parties responsible for the water areas and permit processes differ widely from regular building and in some countries, such as England and Germany the marine authorities have to accept the plans for the floating construction project, explained Sirola.

“The local regulations differ widely between countries and even cities in a same country can have different regulations. In some countries regulations for water construction does not exist, and one of Bluet's roles is to tell the authorities and other parties how floating construction can be implemented and assist in creating general construction guidelines for the industry.”

(Tytti Sirola 5 January 2018)

When entering a new market, the idea is to work on realizing a pilot project, figure out the local permit process and requirements, as it can take longer when carried out for the first time and then have more projects in that country. There are similarities in the permit process between the countries but each country initially has their own permit process. Sirola clarified that the permitting required for floating construction projects usually includes at least water site permit, construction permit and the site plan. The authority responsible for the water area permitting can differ widely between the countries, for example in some areas the U.S the navy's permission is required. The local partner will take care of the permit process if the client has not already done it, and what specifications there are for building there, continued Sirola. In some countries' there is no legislation for water construction, and in these cases, Bluet will offer a suggestion and they will evaluate the situation.

4.1.3 The differences between the domestic and international projects

Sirola stated that there are no major differences in the different project phases (described in figure 4 in chapter 4) between domestic and international projects. It can vary in which process the client initiates the project and how the project process begins, depending if the client already has some preliminary designs, idea of the project or preliminary permitting done. Bluet's role in the projects can be wider in Finland than internationally, as Bluet can also be for example the head designer in the projects, when in international projects there is always a local head designer.

“Bluet's strategy is to realize a few major projects first in Finland in a familiar environment to learn from new technologies. It is safer to export the projects to an international environment when they have been carried out successfully in Finland.”

(Tytti Sirola, 5 January 2018)

In Finland solving the issues is easier as Bluet is more familiar with the ways of operating in different situations and who to contact. Going abroad with the projects brings its own issues already with the cultural differences, language and the local companies, continued Sirola.

The main difference between a domestic and an international project is the permit process, which is slightly different in each country. Also, domestically Bluet can supervise the projects more closely and have a broader part in the projects, but internationally they will give the designs and plans for the local designers for localization and take more of a guiding and supervising role, Sirola added. Domestically Bluet can also offer the main contracting. In the international projects, it can be done through their collaboration network, if the Client does not have a main contractor company. Also, a readymade package can be offered both domestically and internationally and sold as such to a local contractor, who then takes care of the assembly, contract with the client and Bluet will only be supervising.

Finally, Sirola stated that there are always risks in the projects both domestically and internationally, always some party could make changes to the designs which could cause a hazard to the safety and stability of the end product. Strict contracts between Bluet and the local contractor can prevent or at least make the other party get caught if this

happens, as they will have to run the designs through Bluet before the construction on site can start.

4.2 The Partnership Manual creation

Tripathi (2009, 1) describes a manual as “a storehouse of information for use by all employees of the organization”. He also emphasizes the importance of the authenticity of information for effectiveness, as the false information can have catastrophic outcomes. A manual’s role is becoming more essential in today’s offices as the development of businesses has created systems and processes, which are more complicated and challenging to understand. The manual will strengthen the confidence of the management and staff by offering a systematic and well-structured manner of working. By educating and assisting the reader in simple terms of the different procedures of the organization, the manual can be very beneficial. (Tripathi 2009, 2.)

Amal and Filho (2010, 611) emphasize that networks assist entrepreneurs to identify international opportunities, to form reliability along with their partners, to offer access to strategic resources, such as the understanding of market, and regularly support the development of strategic alliances. Bluet’s collaborator network includes parties from various different industries (figure 5) offering a wide range of special knowledge beneficial for the floating construction projects.

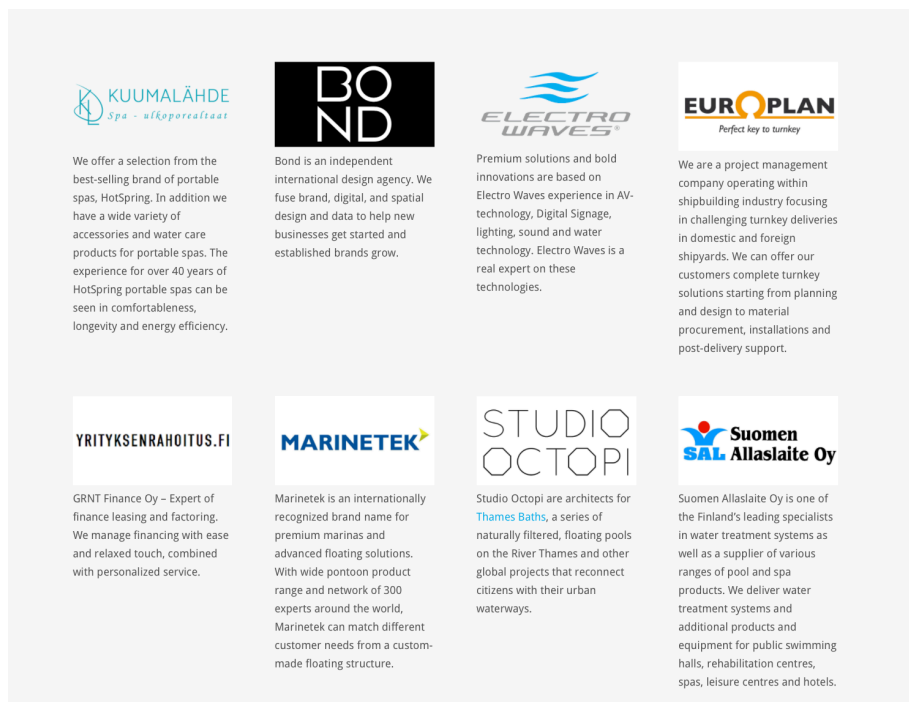


Figure 5. Some of Bluet’s collaborators, Bluet Oy Ltd’s website

The Partnership Manual was created to act as the guidelines for Bluet's employees and collaborators, and to be taken in use when a project starts or a new collaborator becomes involved. Tripathi (2009, 19) discussed the objectives for the preparation of a manual, and objectives compatible with the Partnership Manual are "to give all the related subject information at one place in sequence" and "to assist employees in obtaining the information they need from the manual". The main objective of the manual is to clearly explain all the parties involved in the projects and their roles and responsibilities in the different project phases. Additionally, the contracts, documentation and communication methods in the different project phases will be described.

The usual objectives for planning a manual (Tripathi 2009, 19):

- To give all the related subject information at one place in sequence
- To train the employees in following the correct methods of working
- To give correct interpretation of complex matters
- To serve as a ready reckoner
- To assist employees in obtaining the information they need from the manual.
- To serve as a guidebook, encyclopaedia.
- To create awareness in systematic working.
- To create a professional image about the Company.

As recommended by Tripathi (2009, 20), it is beneficial to create the broad outline for the contents of the manual by discussions with the management. The outline is not usually binding and may be modified during the manual writing process. Also, quite commonly some additions or deletions may have to be taken into consideration during the process. There is no ideal length for a manual, but it is more likely for a shorter manual to be thoroughly studied, than a too long manual which may end up unread.

The idea for the Partnership Manual came from the CEO of Bluet and was further developed in cooperation with the author. The manual creation commenced by reviewing existing secondary data such as documents, presentations and information on the website. The preliminary structure of the different project processes was formed based on the secondary data. Data collection for a manual requires discussions with the management and the information may be in writing, and tables, figures, statements and reports. These are necessary as they help the reader understand the topic clearly at a glance, highlighted Tripathi (2009, 20). Primary data was utilized in beginning and in the latter phases of the Partnership Manual creation. To collect the primary data brief

conversations at the office and more official meetings lasting from half an hour to two hours were conducted. In the meetings, I went through the manual with the CEO and encompassed the suggestions I had for the manual and corrected some of the information. The industry being fairly new to me and the different types of partnerships being rather challenging to understand, some information needed more thorough explanation from the CEO.

The manual is designed by Bluet's visual image, but as it is an internal manual, it is in a form of a document. It was designed to be easily understandable so that new collaborators would also understand the contents. Tripathi (2009, 19) emphasized that qualities such as attractiveness, easiness to follow, and being interesting and informative should always be considered while writing a manual.

Some information has been demarcated from the manual presented here because of the confidentiality of the information. Tripathi (2009, 22) mentioned that it is essential to decide on the demarcation while preparing the manual for the author to be clear in the topic.

The manual begins by describing the contents of the manual and objectives in the introduction chapter. The second chapter introduces Bluet to the reader, including its mission, description of its services and operations. The parties involved in the projects and their main responsibilities are thoroughly explained already in the beginning of the manual to prevent repetition in the project processes.



Figure 4. Project processes, Bluet Oy Ltd

The outline for the contents was based on Bluet's six project processes (Figure 4), which were further developed during the project to concentrate on the roles and responsibilities of the parties. These processes can be compared with the project management life cycle model (figure 1) by Köster (2010, 6), which consists of four phases: initiating, planning, executing and completion. Bluet's projects initially consist of the same phases, only they are broken down in six more detailed phases. The whole project process was visualised as a roadmap for the reader to understand the whole picture in one glance. Then all the six processes were individually explained more thoroughly. Also, the project processes were visualized with a table (table 6) with four fields in each of the process phases explaining the roles of the parties in the phase.

Table 6. Example of the four fields included in each project phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Contract - Feasibility study materials - Meeting memo's
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls - Meetings 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary drawings <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding the best solution for the construction - Timetable estimation

Because of its complexity, the manual creation process can be described as quite iterative. A timeline for the manual creation was formed at the beginning, but in practice the timeline was not as straightforward as the structure of the manual developed during time. Also, I lacked the knowledge of the industry which hindered the creation as more materials needed to be studied and more experience would have been needed. I was working with Bluet's projects during the manual creation process, which helped me gain knowledge of the floating construction industry as well as Bluet's partnerships gradually throughout the process. Thus, towards the finalization of the manual the knowledge had grown significantly.

Bluet Oy Ltd is a fairly new company and its activities will develop rapidly during the following years. The partnership manual created as an end product of this thesis will be working as the base guideline for future projects, but will be developed further during time as more projects are realized. As Tripathi (2009, 2) has stated: "the manual should grow with the growth of the company" and the manual should also be reviewed annually to stay up to date with the company's changing patterns.

5 Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the project as conclusions and leading then to recommendations for the case company. The recommendations chapter includes development ideas and suggestions for the case company from the viewpoint of the thesis author. Finally, the last chapter consists of the evaluation of the project management of the project based thesis and evaluation of the authors learning.

The author expected there would have been more information available and more realized projects, however there are ongoing projects but the information being confidential, they cannot be discussed in the thesis. In the beginning of the projects the progress can be quite slow due to multiple factors.

5.1 Conclusions and recommendations

The thesis process taught that the floating construction industry is fairly new and a lot of theoretical information about it was not available. The theoretical framework was framed to suit the topic and the case company as well as possible, but directly matching theory was challenging to find.

The industry is very interesting and has high potential, as floating construction will be widely needed in the future when the land areas in cities will reduce. Bluet Oy Ltd has extensive knowledge and skills of the industry, which is its advantage in the markets. Also, they have a good understanding of the growth of the industry and they are gradually building its share in the markets around the world. Bluet's network is already extensive and hopefully with the help of the partnership manual they will be able to grow it more systematically and effortlessly.

As a result of the interview it is clear that Bluet has a good understanding of the project process and they have a clear view of the way they will be running the projects abroad. The domestic project was a good learning opportunity and Bluet has a smart strategy, referring to executing the pilot projects in Finland to learn as much as possible, which prevents risks when conducting the projects abroad. The projects domestically and internationally do not have major differences. The slight differences that exist are the permit process, and the importance of the local partner in the international projects, otherwise the project processes are quite similar.

According to the author, the biggest issue in Bluet's internationalization is the slowness of the beginning phase of the projects, especially in the permit processes. However, that issue is not dependent on Bluet, but usually on the city authorities. Therefore, it was challenging to come up with fundamental improvement suggestions. However, there are some suggestions listed below.

Understanding the whole project process and the whole collaborator network of Bluet was challenging at first, as the processes and collaborator network seemed quite complex. While building the manual it was difficult to present the collaborator networks' different participants and criteria of the relationship types, thus a suggestion for future could be to clarify the criteria between the different collaborators and categorizing them. The categorization could be done for example by the contracting used or by the industry. There is a lot of information available internally and the manual had also combined some of the already existing information into a one document and developed it further. However, there would be a need for more consistency in certain areas. As mentioned before the company is fairly new and as common for other start-ups, they are lacking systemacy in certain things. Finally, Bluet's internationalization process is quite at the beginning, so there are not that many suggestions for improvement. However, the operations will most likely develop when more experience through is gained.

5.2 Reflection of learning

The personal development gained through the thesis was significant. While starting the thesis process the topic was really interesting and new. During the process, the theoretical background taught a lot about the different methods of internationalization, the criteria of choosing different methods and also extensive information about the importance of business relationships and how to manage and maintain them. The author will surely benefit from the information gained.

The project developed quite a lot during the process, as the author was not familiar with the floating construction industry and the type of the information available before starting the thesis. Also, the thesis would have been conducted a bit differently if the knowledge had been the same as it is now at the end of the process. Thus, it was a bit challenging to plan the whole process beforehand without the relevant information and try keeping up with the plan. Overall, the author experienced a lot of growth during the thesis process both academically and professionally. The thesis topic remained interesting throughout

the process, and the learning gained is beneficial for the author's work in the case company.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Differences between B2C and B2B relationships

Characteristic	B2C	B2B
1. Relationship form	Membership. The individual acknowledges some relationship	Working partnership, just-in-time exchange, co-marketing alliance, strategic alliance, distribution channels relationship
2. Average sale size; potential lifetime value of the customer to the selling firm	Normally small sale size; relatively small and predictable lifetime value of the customer limit on the amount of investment in relationship on any single customer	Normally large and consequential; allows for large and idiosyncratic investments in a single relationship
3. Number of customers	Large number; requires large overall investment in relationship management, but low investment per customer	Relatively fewer customers over which to spread investment in relationships
4. Seller's ability and cost to replace lost customer	Normally can be replaced quickly at relatively low cost	Large customers can be difficult and time-consuming to replace
5. Seller dependence on buyer	Low for any single customer	Varies based on customer size, can be devastating
6. Buyer dependence on seller	Normally has more alternatives, low switching costs, and switching can be made quickly	Viable alternatives can take time to find, switching costs can be high, and changes impact on multiple people in the organisation
7. Purchasing time frame, process and buying center complexity	Normally a short time frame, simple process and simple buying centre, where one two individuals fill most buying roles	Often a long time frame, complex process may have multiple individuals for a single buying role; may be subject to organizational budget-cycles
8. Personal knowledge of other party	Relatively few contact points with seller even when loyal user; seller knowledge of buyer often limited to database information	Multiple personal relationships; multiple inter-organisational linkages
9. Communication used to build and sustain relationships	Dependence in non-personal means of contact Sellers knowledge generally limited to database information of customers	Emphasis on personal selling and personal contact, customer knowledge held in multiple forms and places
10. Relative size	Seller normally larger than buyer	Relative size may vary
11. Legal	Consumer protection laws often favor consumers	Relationships governed by prevailing contract law as well as industry standard regulations and ethics



Partnership manual to enter a new market through the partnership network

Bluet Oy Ltd

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1 Introduction

The partnership manual is a process tool that offers a clear view of Bluet's collaborators' roles and responsibilities within the internationalization process as well as the contractual relationships and documentation in the projects are included. The manual is a tool that can be adjusted for each market as there are certain similarities in each project and certain differences that need to be studied for each project. The objectives of the manual are to assist in the projects and be a tool it can be taken into use in any of the project processes.

There are six different processes in the manual that explain which of the parties are needed in the process, the communication methods, responsibilities and dependencies between the parties. The parties involved in the projects are going to be explained in the next chapter and their roles and responsibilities more thoroughly in each of the process. The aim is to create a concept with most of their collaborators of the primary group, which would help in making the projects more continuous and systematic.

The new markets offer Bluet great opportunities to get more experience of floating construction when new solutions are realised. Another benefit that comes from entering new markets are the various partnerships that are created during the projects. The new partnerships can lead to new exciting projects and longer collaboration relationships.

The partners are offered a great opportunity to familiarize with a new field of business, floating construction, offering them unforeseen opportunities with the new partners found through the projects. Also, being a part of Bluet's network can offer them new business opportunities in different markets, shared product development with Bluet and the partners' products can be added in Bluet's web shop.

2 Bluet Oy Ltd

Bluet Oy Ltd is a Finnish company founded in 2016 that concentrates in floating construction. Bluet's mission is to create sustainable, ecological, usable and also profitable solutions for city development, operators, investors – and especially for the end users to enjoy – on water. Bluet starts operating when a growing market is indicated by proven demand, existing customer relationships, a strong co-operation network and the growing trend of sustainable building. Bluet works closely with a large network of professionals from various business and technology fields. The main goal is to create an end-solution which fulfills the needs of their clients, end-users and the environmental and detailed technical requirements of their special solutions. Bluet offers services as One-Stop-Shop solution from the early vision to the final design and realization plan. The modular solutions of Bluet are targeted to private and business use and can be for example private homes, offices, hotels, cafes. Their special solutions and business units are for leisure and business activities and include solutions such as artificial beaches, leisure and activity parks, car parks, ferry and heli-terminals etc.

Bluet's core business is to create, design and deliver floating solutions for the globally growing need of construction on water close to and in the centrum of cities and other urban areas – with cooperative partners. They sell and market the floating construction projects globally and offer full service to the clients by modifying the project to the clients' needs. Bluet has founded the Bluet Team, which is a group of their collaborative partners. The responsibilities of the Bluet Team include project development, the concept development, the project definition services, the project zoning and permission consulting, location scouting for the clients' needs and also detail designing and supervising works. The members of Bluet Team have special technical knowledge from different fields such as special engineering.

3 Bluet Team

The Bluet Team has been founded by Bluet and it is a group of cooperative local agents and consultants, design, engineering, material provider and contracting companies. The Bluet Team companies offer architectural services, structural design services, HEVAC design services, floating engineering services, pontoon providers, anchoring providers, swimming pool provider, building and house factories, the main contractors, water site survey and water construction companies and other research and supervising companies.

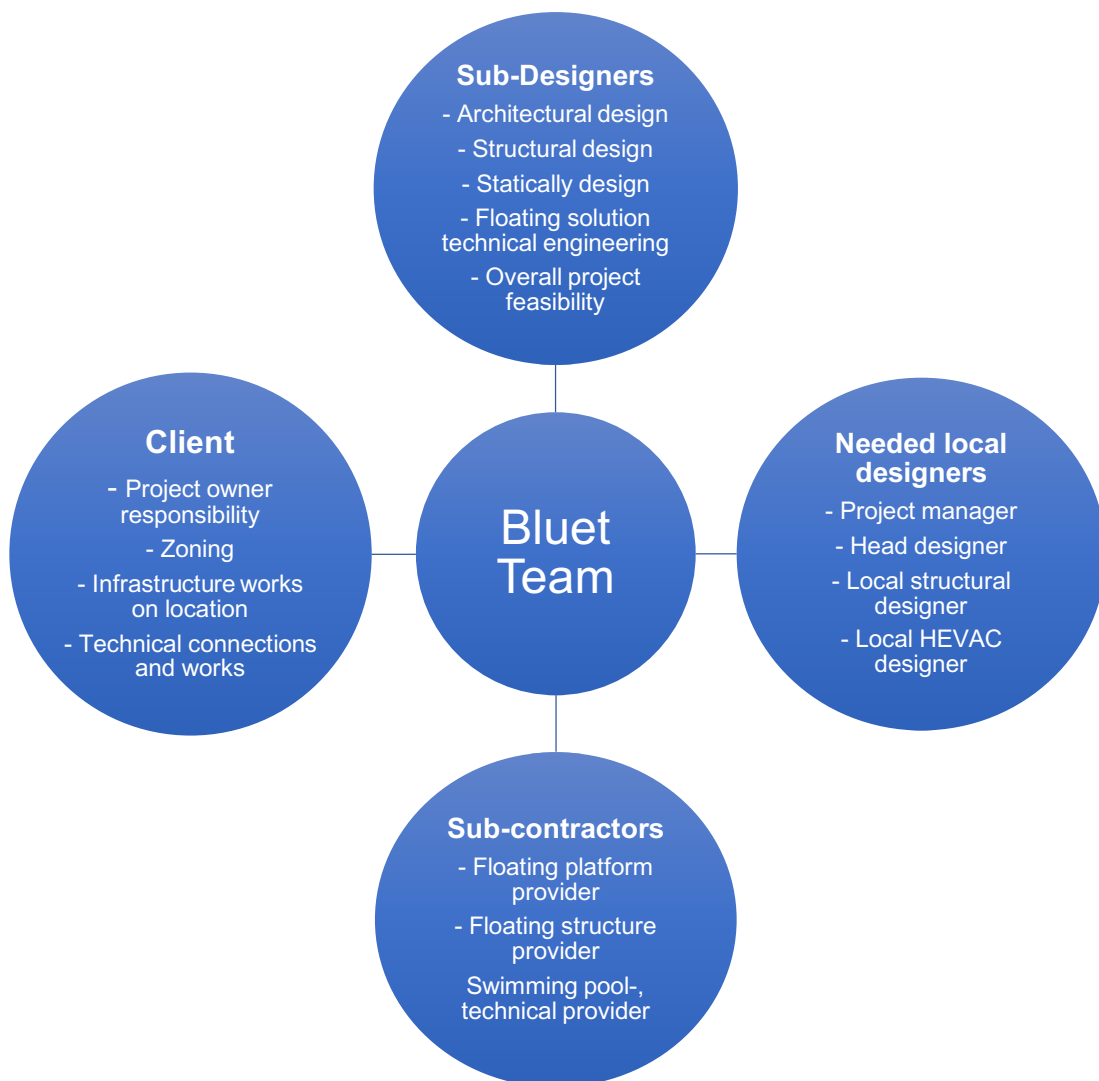


Figure 1. Bluet Team

Bluet's core team consists of six people working at their office in Finland. The team in Finland takes care of the beginning of the project and all the projects are managed from Finland. They are responsible for the designing of the projects with the engineering works, calculations, construction designs, until the permit process is started. Bluet has the main consultant responsibility, also called as "umbrella responsibility", in the projects and all the parties in the projects are responsible to review and get any changes made in the designs accepted at Bluet to make sure the floating solution will be a safe and balanced solution and the different parts of the solution will be compatible and as designed. The local main contractor will localize the designs made by Bluet to fit the local standards and regulations.

Bluet with Bluet Team offers One-Stop-Shop services that both the client and the turnkey contractor as well as the other parties involved can benefit. The client is offered supervision services in zoning, survey and building permission application process. As a part of the Bluet Team the members can gain new business relationships, new business opportunities all around the world and new marketing channels such as Bluet's new Quote Calculator. In the project implementation phase the client can benefit from supervisor services in site infrastructure works and project management and organizer services. As a part of the Bluet Team the turnkey contractor can benefit from building design supervision and guidance and in the floating and off-shore engineering design as well as project management and organizer services. In the construction phase the contractor can use Bluet Teams services in building site supervision because of their special knowledge of water construction.

Responsibilities of the different parties:

- The local main contractor
 - House / building design (architectural and statically) and delivery
 - HVAC design process and assembly (the building)
 - All necessary construction works - above the floating platform
 - The building site and safety management during the contract
 - The local main contractor responsibilities
- Sub – Contractors e.g.
 - Floating platform manufacturer
 - Barge / concrete pontoon / other floating structure provider
 - Technical solutions provider

- Swimming pool-, pool technical solutions provider
- The house manufacturer
- Sub – Designers e.g.
 - Architect design (preliminary)
 - Statically design (preliminary)
 - HVAC design (preliminary)
 - Floating solution components design
- The Client e.g.
 - The project owner responsibilities
 - Zoning process (with Bluet assistance) if needed
 - Building permit application
 - Local demands as QA manager or local head designer services and overall safety management
 - Infrastructure-, land -, or underwater works on the site
 - Technical connections and works

The Bluet Team also includes parties that are needed locally in international projects such as:

- Local project manager
- Local Head designer: design localization, building permit process
- Local structural designer
- Local HVAC designer

4 Other parties involved

There are various parties involved in Bluet's internationalization process and the amount and the type of the parties depend on the type of the project. The main parties are the client, Bluet and the primary group of collaborators. The client initiates the project, finances it, contracts it out and enjoys the benefits when Bluet handles the sales, marketing and overseeing of the projects as well as organizes the primary group of collaborators needed. Bluet's responsibility is also the engineering and supervising the project. The primary group of collaborators all sign an NDA contract or a co-operation agreement with the case company both with sales commission.

The collaborators are divided into different groups by the type of their contracts with Bluet in the figure below. The primary group of collaborators consists of design, engineering, material provider and construction companies. The companies in the primary group are the companies that are contacted primarily and if they decline a project, the companies in the secondary group are going to be asked if they would be interested to take part in the project. Other important parties in the projects are the cities and municipalities that often are the owners of the land areas at the locations. Cities and municipalities are usually the ones authorizing the permits and surveys for the projects. There are often also private land owners that have an important role at the beginning of the projects. The area can either be bought or rented by the client, depending of the type of the project and if the land is owned by a municipality or a private person or a company. The representation internationally is often managed through a local agent or other local representative such as a partner/ collaborator company. In construction projects, it is also required to have a local designer, project manager, a head designer for the permit process, a structural designer and a HEVAC –designer.

If the companies in the first circle (figure 2 below) do not want or cannot take part in the project, it can be offered to a second circle company operating in the same field. Each circle in the figure have companies from same fields, thus they cannot be divided solely by the field of business. The circle will be divided in three different sections also by the levels of partnerships which will be agents and other representatives, suppliers etc. and contractors.

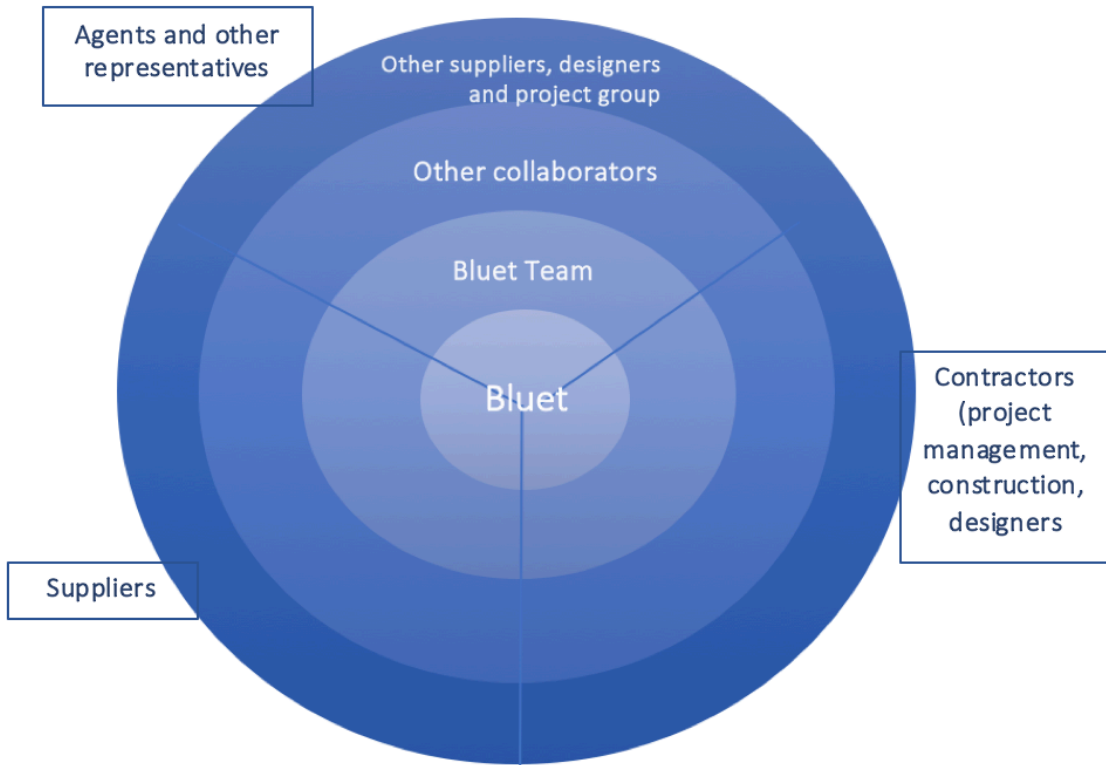


Figure 2. Levels of partnerships.

5 Contractual relationships

A contract is always created with new collaborators as soon as confidential information is being shared between the parties. The contract type depends of the type of the partnership there will be. The length of the contract depends on the contract type and if it is created just for one project or for various projects. Bluet is using various different types of contracts with their collaborators. Different contracts are needed because the types of partnerships can differ widely, for example NDA, collaborative and joint agreement can have sales and marketing commissions included in the contract because of shared product development and marketing whereas in case of representing Bluet abroad, scouting for new locations and contacting local parties an agent agreement or MOU are usually created. The contracts guarantee the both parties fair treatment between each other when there are products developed together as both parties get a commission when another one sales their products. An agent agreement or MOU can offer the agent an opportunity to be Bluet's only representative in their market, which offers for them also new business opportunities and networking possibilities.

Contract types:

- Agent agreement
- NDA - Collaborative agreement / Joint agreement
- The Project Based Agreement
- Lead agreement
- LOI – Letter of intent
- MOU – Memorandum of understanding

6 Documentation

The first documentations of a project are often emails between the client and Bluet, or their representatives requesting for a quote for their floating solution idea. The next steps are usually documented in a mode of a preliminary quote giving the client an idea of the projects costs and following steps.

Bluet has a new Quote Calculator on their website where the Client can choose the functions they would like to have on their floating solution, there are solutions for both private and public use such as the cities, marinas, businesses and for private investors or operators. The Client can combine different solutions and get a preliminary price of the solution in their email. The Quote Calculator lower's the barrier between the Client and Bluet, and makes it easier for the Client to contact and get more information for the feasibility of their floating solution idea. Getting the preliminary price for the solution through the Quote Calculator does not require the Client to order it. The Quote Calculator has models of Bluet's designs for pools and recreational areas, utility spaces, office spaces, living spaces and multi-use spaces. The budget offer is going to be made first with a price estimate, which is not yet the final price, and with estimated designs or Bluet's own model examples, as in the Bluet Quote Calculator.

The Quote Calculator includes also products created as a result of shared product development with Bluet and their partners and the partners own products such as Houseboats and fountains. Thus, the partners can gain more visibility for their products and services and new clients and business opportunities through the web shop. Bluet benefits by being able to offer their clients more options for their floating solutions through the collaborations.

Choose pools and recreational modules

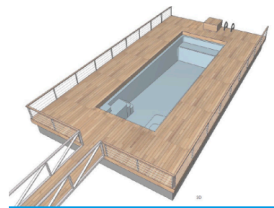
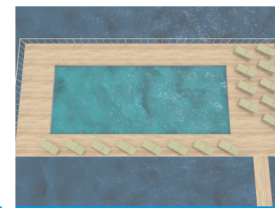
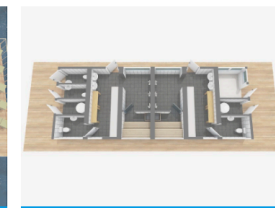
		
<p>Floating glass fiber pool Glass fiber pool 11m x 4m with ceramic coating and reinforced for floating purpose. Beautiful underwater lighting.</p> <p>Select</p>	<p>Floating steel structured pool Steel structured barge pool 25m with closed circulation heating (network water). Modern filtering technic, adequate to swimming pool requirements.</p> <p>Select</p>	<p>Floating saunas with multi-function utilities Two saunas, six showers, dressing rooms, two regular and handicap toilets, storage room, small office and techical room</p> <p>Select</p>

Figure 3. Bluet Quote Calculator, pool modules, Bluet Oy Ltd



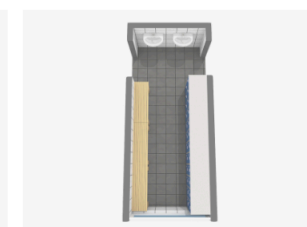
		
<p>A Floating bar Bar with a hallway and a storage room</p> <p>Select</p>	<p>Floating sauna with showers One sauna with shower room</p> <p>Select</p>	<p>Floating dressing room A dressing room with benches, sinks and lockers</p> <p>Select</p>

Figure 4. Bluet Quote Calculator, utility modules, Bluet Oy Ltd

Choose entertainment modules


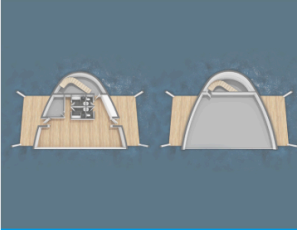
	
<p>Floating cafe Floating cafe with spacious terrace area to fit several tables with chairs</p> <p>Select</p>	<p>Floating stage Curved design two storey movable stage with spacious backstage on the second floor</p> <p>Select</p>

Figure 5. Bluet Quote Calculator, multi-use space modules, Bluet Oy Ltd

7 The project processes and responsibilities

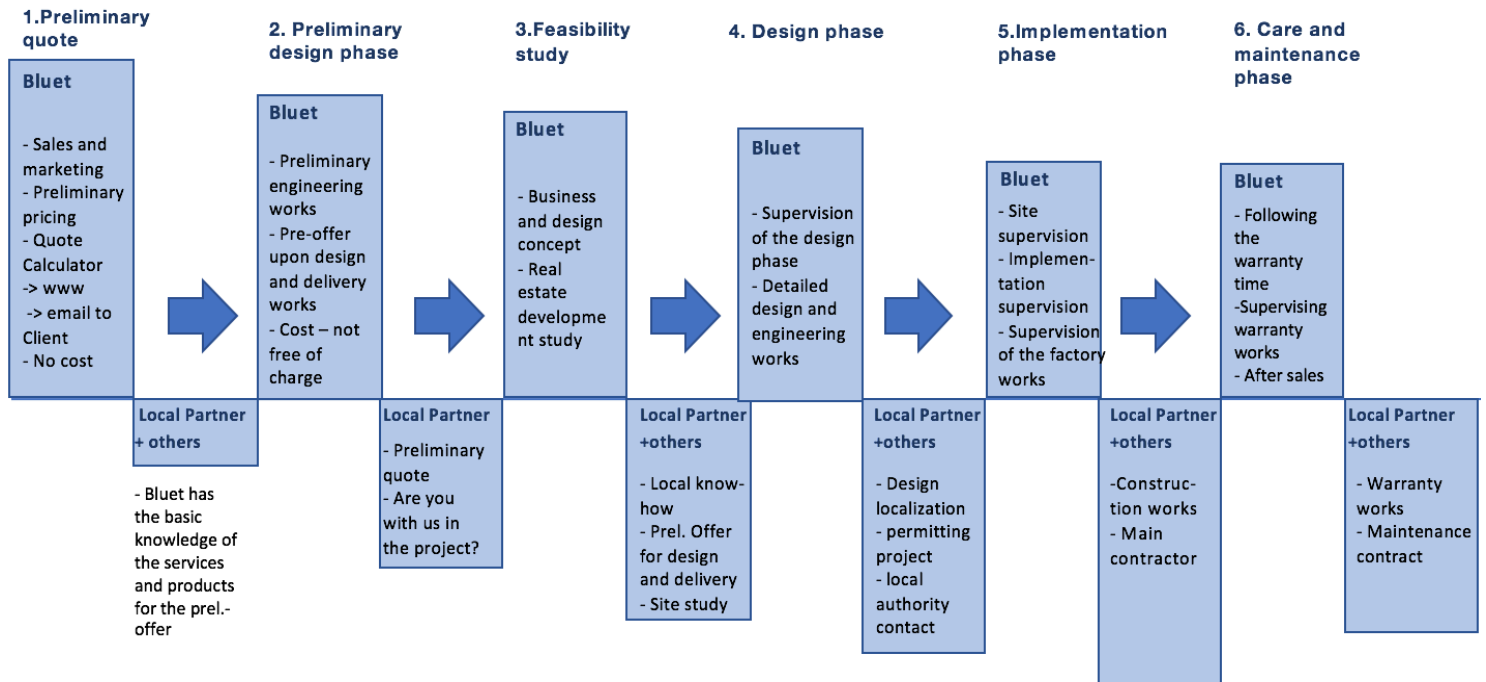


Figure 7. The responsibilities in the project processes

7.1 Preliminary quote

The preliminary quote is the first phase when a new project begins. The client initiates the project and has the project owners' responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the preliminary quote phase is at Bluet and the secondary at Bluet Team. Through the new Quote Calculator, the client can easily approach Bluet with their ideas and get preliminary pricing for their floating solution idea. The quote calculator allows people to have a preliminary price of the floating solution they want and makes it easier for the prospective clients to approach Bluet.

Table 1. Preliminary Quote

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Preliminary offer, presentation - Contract
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Quote calculator/ web shop - Contact form - Phone calls 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sales and marketing - Preliminary pricing - Contract law and managing works <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NDA and cooperation agreement - Preliminary pricing

7.2 Preliminary Design Phase

In the second phase the project already is more clearly defined. Bluet analyses the project and delivers a preliminary budget proposal with time and price estimations to the client. Bluet will be managing the supervising and giving guidance for the designs and also analyses and estimates the clients sketch, idea and concept possibility of construction methods, timetable and price. Their focus will especially be in the floating and offshore engineering and design process for the floating solution components. Bluet Team assists Bluet by offering the needed pricing information for preliminary pricing. The Bluet Team member companies will also do the drawings, specifications to the architect's designs, HVAC and assembly drawings.

Table 2. Preliminary Design Phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Contract - Drawings - Meeting memo's
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls - Meetings 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary architectural, statically HVAC, off shore and floating engineering design of the floating project - Preliminary drawings for clients building permission <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary pricing - Preliminary technical and statically support of the design phase

Examples of the materials produced in the preliminary design phase:

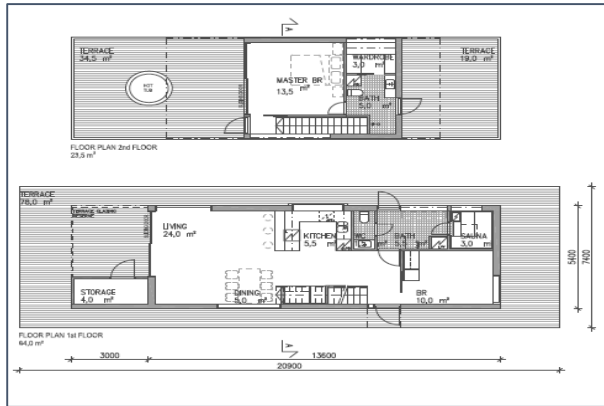


Figure 8. Concept floorplans 1:100

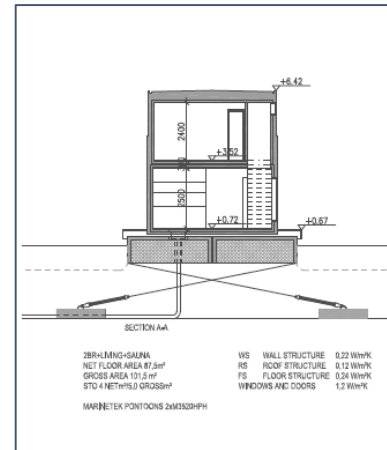


Figure 9. Concept sections 1:100

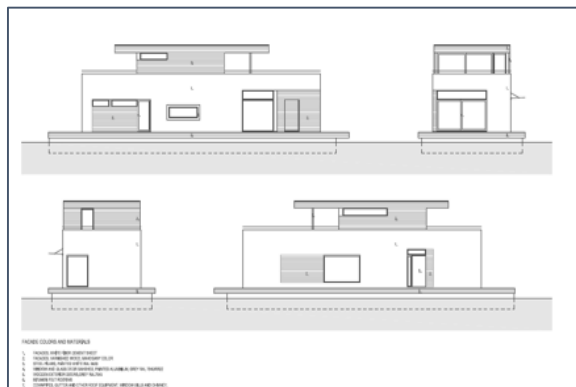


Figure 10. Concept facades 1:100

7.3 Feasibility Study Phase

The feasibility study is done by Bluet in collaboration with Bluet Team that assists in design and in estimating the price and schedule of the project. The main contractor assists in the implementation estimations and pricing. The contents of the Feasibility Study is developed by the Client's needs and answers for the questions of what the Client really needs and what would be feasible.

The Client's responsibility is to carry out the site and location survey and investigation consisting of the final seabed, drift and wave investigation. The site and location survey can also be carried out by Bluet, if the Client either does not want or know how to order it or otherwise wishes for Bluet to do it.

Table 3. Feasibility Study Phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Contract - Feasibility study materials - Meeting memo's
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls - Meetings 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary drawings <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding the best solution for the construction - Timetable estimation

Examples of the materials produced in the feasibility study phase:



Figure 11. Concept site plan 1:500 scale



Figure 12. Example of a 3D rendering



Figure 13. Example of a 3D rendering

7.4 Design Phase

This phase includes two sub-phases: final offer and final agreements, and the detail design phase. The main contractor has the main responsibility of the phase as they will give the final offer to the client. The final agreement between the contractor and the client is being made. After signed agreement the responsibility of the project implementation and design works is at the contractor. Bluet is part of the design team and supervises the design phase in the part of the floating solution techniques. KSE contract is made between Bluet and the “Main consultant”.

The design phase needs to be done by the local designer team because of their knowledge of local language and the local requirements. Bluet will be assisting and supervising the local design team that is hired by the client.

Table 4. The Design Phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final offer - Emails - Meeting memo's - Final agreement
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls - Skype calls - Meetings 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Part of the design team - Supervising the design works <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project implementation and design works after signed agreement - Final offer to the client - Preliminary pricing

7.5 Implementation Phase

The implementation phase consists of all the construction works. The components are built at the factory, the house is being built and delivered to the site and finally set on the floating platform. There are some final erecting works to do on top of the floating solutions as well as fixings of the building. When the construction is finalized, the solution can be handed over to the client.

The main consultant is responsible for the construction works but Bluet acts as the site supervisor. The contract used between the parties involved in the phase is the KSE.

The client will hire own construction consultant for project management of the construction while Bluet will supervise the construction works.

- Component production in factory
- Building production
- Other construction components such as swimming pools
- Pontoon and barge construction on site
- Anchoring on site
- Lifting the buildings on site

Table 5. The Implementation Phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Contract - Project report - Meeting memo's
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sales and marketing - Preliminary pricing - Contract law and managing works <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NDA and cooperation agreement - Preliminary pricing



Figure 14. Implementation of the house modules on the floating platform

7.6 Care and Maintenance Phase

The final phase consists of the repair and warranty works after the project has been finished. Bluet will be following the warranty time that is the main contractors' responsibility. The warranty period can be anything between two to ten years.

Table 6. The Care and Maintenance Phase

<p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bluet - The Client - The turnkey contractor 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails - Warranty documents
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone calls 	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Bluet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the warranty time - Supervising warranty works <p>The turnkey contractor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warranty works