Tomi Juutilainen

Pyry Kangasperko

PK Tradesman Tmi
Developing marketing in a multicultural environment

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MIKKELIN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences

DESCRIPTION

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Abstract

Purpose of the thesis was to find ways to improve PK Tradesman Tmi's customer and partner relations and marketing processes as well as research the viability of its product offering. This was accomplished by researching the concepts of guerrilla marketing and customer relationship management, and comparing different aspects of the Finnish and Chinese culture.

The thesis consists in part of exploring the theory of aforementioned concepts, and in part of a questionnaire which was implemented in Akseli Shopping Mall in the heart of Mikkeli city. The questionnaire was used to chart the respondents' attitude towards purchasing made to order clothing in internet and to find out the general price level they would be ready to pay for the products.

The research process uncovered valuable information considering the various customer segments of PK Tradesman Tmi, its distribution channels and product pricing. The information derived from the thesis will be used to improve the company's activities on multiple levels of business.

Subject headings, (keywords)

Cultural dimensions, Customer Relationship Management, Guerrilla Marketing

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Remarks, notes on appendices

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Tutor	**Employer of the bachelor's thesis**
Eila Jussila	PK Tradesman Tmi

SISÄLTÖ

1 INTRODUCTION

In the modern world of business, companies operating in multicultural environments pay an increasing amount of attention to marketing and relationships to their customers. The goal of this thesis is to discover how a made to order suit importer PK Tradesman Tmi would benefit by incorporating concepts and ideas of guerrilla marketing and customer relationship management into its multicultural business strategy and developing its business model in general to offer better products and services to Finnish customers, and a higher level of communication and mutual understanding to its Chinese and Finnish partners.

Other points of interest and potential areas for improvement are the web based company's online security, online promotion, advertising, order process and payment method optimization which are all closely related to the company's sales process as all business is done online for the time being. Also, using customer databases is important to reselling process and returning customers. Collecting data from registered online customer accounts is an important part of customer relationship management, its uses and benefits will be discussed.

The existing business plan of PK Tradesman Tmi consists of importing made to order clothing from China while keeping the cost as low as possible for the consumer. For example, there is no storage facility for the stock. The product will be shipped straight from the supplier to the end customer. At the moment the product selection consists of made to order suits, dress shirts and women's garments. The unique selling point is to offer a made to order clothing for the same price as regular rack clothing available in supermarkets. The main customer segment consists of people who can't find the correct size or color for themselves. The quantitative research conducted for this thesis is used to determine the gender, general age segment, and the price image of this segment, and the secondary segments.

At the moment PK Tradesman Tmi is conducting research to define the required standards for profitability and product quality. In addition, research is required to determine the business idea's development chances and final sales prices for the products.

These questions will be answered in part through this thesis and in part through the company's own research after which they will be implemented into company's business strategy.

2 CULTURAL ASPECTS

Culture (from the Latin *cultura* stemming from *colere*, meaning "to cultivate") Culture itself can be understood in many ways. For example fine arts are high culture. This part of the thesis will concentrate on differences in behavior and customs between Finland and China.

2.1 Concept of culture

Culture is a difference that a group of people have in their knowledge, belief and behavior they have learnt through social intercourse. When comparing cultures that exist very far away from each other, the differences can be so immense that the person who comes into contact with a foreign culture might experience a culture shock. The shock is a result of confusion and confronting new things. 95% of people see something intimidating in a new thing, even though it might be a good thing. It is simply part of human behavior. When doing business, it is necessary to consider how to face the other culture and how to deal with different situations in order to get the business done. (Wikipedia 2010)

Geert Hofstede – Cultural Dimensions

This section concentrates on giving the reader a tool to prepare him- or herself to meet a new culture. This is done through Geert Hofstede's five cultural dimensions. This example is a comparison of the Chinese and Finnish cultures, and how they differ.

Index score differences in 5 cultural dimensions between Finland and China.
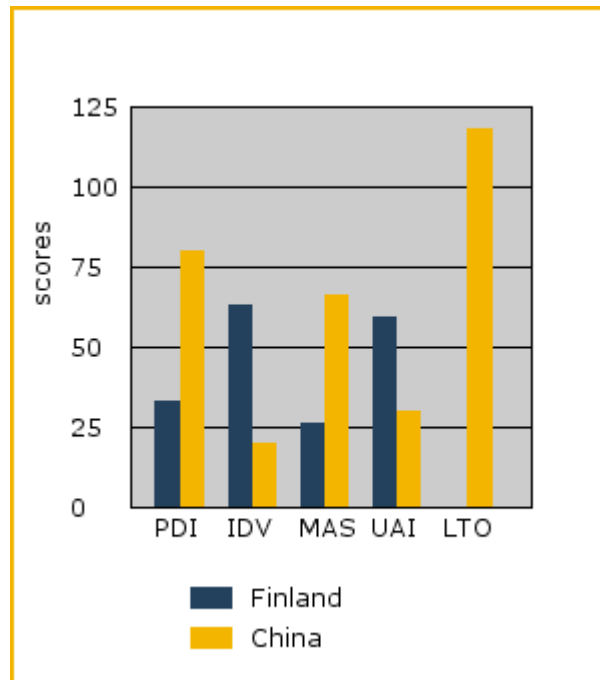
Power Distance Index (PDI)

This index shows how the less powerful members of the target group (e.g. organization or a family) accept that power is distributed unequally. It is important to note that the viewpoint is perceived specifically from the eyes of people not holding the power. Through this, we can study how power and inequality correlates, and what the differences in our target countries are.

Finland is a very equal society. There aren't that much hierarchy or discrimination between women and men. Power is very evenly distributed and decision making is democratic. In China, however, the situation is almost the opposite of Finland. Women are less powerful than men and different social groups and gaps between "haves" and "have nots" separate more clearly. Power is distributed more hierarchically and those who have power show it more aggressively. Chinese Power Distance ranking is among the highest in the world. Some of this imbalance of power can be explained by the Chinese cultural heritage. (Hofstede 2009)

Individualism (IDV)

Individualism versus collectivism within the group. The idea of individualism represents a person who is expected to look after oneself and his immediate family. In individualistic societies the ties between individuals are loose. Collectivists on the other hand are societies which want to be part of a bigger group. People are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups from birth such as extended families which they share a bond of unquestioning loyalty.

Here we have a clear difference between the Finnish and Chinese cultures. The Chinese want to be part of a bigger group and system and feel that it takes care of them if they put their effort into it. The Finnish on the other hand are more of an individuals who take care of their own business and want to decide their own stand. The Finnish individualism ranking is well above the average, while the Chinese ranking is among the lowest in the world. (Hofstede 2009)

Masculinity (MAS)

This dimension deals with masculinity versus femininity in society's gender roles. The IBM study done by Geert Hofstede shows that women's roles differ less than the roles of men among societies, while men's roles vary more from one country to another. The masculine side is more competitive and assertive, and the feminine side is more modest and caring. A high masculinity ranking suggests that the gender roles are more differentiated while a low masculinity ranking means that the gender roles are not as clearly defined.

In Finland, men can take the feminine role and women the masculine role quite often, so the roles are not very differentiated, whereas the Chinese roles are very strictly defined. In China, men take the masculine role and women the feminine role. This results in Finland having a below average masculinity ranking and China having a slightly above average ranking. (Hofstede 2009)

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

This dimension measures how the society tolerates uncertainty and ambiguity. It shows how comfortable or uncomfortable members of the society feel in unknown, novel or surprising situations that differ from the usual. Countries with a high uncertainty avoidance ranking institute strict laws, rules regulations and control to reduce uncertainty. Countries with low uncertainty ranking are less rule-oriented, accept changes more readily, and take more risks.

The Finnish are more uncertainty avoiding than the Chinese. Finnish people like making things with as low risk as possible or at least research the situation thoroughly before a decision to avoid unpleasant surprises. Finland's UAI ranking is in the same level as the world average. In China the change is rapid and they are used to taking risks especially now that the economy is on the rise. They accept new rules and laws, and adapt to the new system. China's UAI ranking is therefore below the world average. (Hofstede 2009)

Long-Term Orientation (LTO)

Long-term orientation versus short term orientation. Values associated to long-term orientation are thrift and perseverance. Values associated to Short-term orientation are respecting tradition and taking care of social commitments, and not losing one's face.

China has the highest scores in LTO of all the world's countries. They have long traditions that they respect and it is seen in everyday life. Losing your face or putting someone into situation where someone loses his/ her face is the worst thing a Chinese person can do. In the Finnish culture the loss of one's face is not as great a catastrophe, as Finnish people are also more economical and persistent. (Hofstede 2009)

2.2 Doing business in China

Tradesman Tmi wants to give guidelines to someone who might follow its footsteps and seek business opportunities in Hong Kong and mainland China. Tradesman ended up doing business with a small firm that manufactures tailor made clothes. The firm has two outlets, one in Hong Kong and the other in Shenzhen. There are approximately 10 employees and some parts of the manufacturing process have been outsourced. The reason why the partner company is described is that it makes a difference whether the company is large or small and whether they have done business with foreigners before. A small company and outlet had to be chosen (not a factory) because they listened to customers who wanted to order smaller quantities. Bigger companies of a similar nature would only listen to offers of approximately 10 000 suits and for Tradesman Tmi this was impossible, as the company couldn't establish a warehouse. The reason the partner had to be from mainland China was that the price level there is half compared to Hong Kong. The forthcoming chapters will explain what kind of problems the company faced, and explain some facts about the Chinese business etiquette and culture.

2.3 Language barrier

The first challenge a foreigner comes across is the language barrier. When entering to Shenzhen the taxi drivers don't even understand Hello, you have to say Ni hao in Chinese after which they greet you. Especially in mainland China the level of English skills is not very high, and a foreigner has to finger point and improvise a lot just to get the normal daily needs fulfilled e.g. ordering a meal. So if a person wants to seek business opportunities he or she needs to prepare very well, and if possible get a Chinese friend who helps you when you face language problems.

At the beginning a foreigner might become desperate because people just try to sell all kinds of merchandise and don't get what is really wanted. It is recommended to print all kinds of material and study some key words in Chinese just to give them a more of an idea what kind of business you want to run. Usually the Chinese people just want to have a hit and run type of business relationship and sell whatever they can, instead of

having a longer term business relationship. The reason for this is a combination of misunderstandings, language barrier and lack of trust from both sides.

A good way to get over the language barrier is to learn the basics from the language the other party is using. All you really need are the basic words. If you want to use Putonghua as a business language you have to study it so long that before you learn it all you will become bankrupt. Just learn how to greet somebody, say thank you, maybe some numbers and a few phrases that make people laugh and the other person sees that you have seen the effort to try and study a bit of their language. This shows that you might know a bit about the culture as well. Try to emphasize your good mood and clarity of your voice rather than trying to explain something difficult in a language you don't have a clue about.

The best way to break the language barrier is to have bring a Chinese friend who is on your side. This friend should of course have fluent English skills so you can tell him exactly what you want. When entering a business situation where you partner explains your needs, what should you do? Be active, but not pushy. The conversation should be interactive between all the three parties even though two of them don't understand each other. This way the business partner also forms trust towards you, not only towards your spokesman, which is very important. Chinese will only do real business with you if they trust you and know you. This of course is valid wherever there is business but here you will find it even more important.

If you don't have a spokesman or one is not available, ask the spokesman or some other local person to translate everything you want to say on a paper. This gives you confidence to face the person, and the other party sees that you really have seen the effort and you mean real business. (Seligman, 1999)

2.4 Yes might mean no, or I don't know

Chinese tend to say yes even thought they don't understand what you have asked. This is a problem if one doesn't realize it and make sure somehow that they really understand what was agreed on or asked for. This problem usually exists mostly with small-

er business partners who haven't done business in English. A foreigner learns how to deal with this in everyday life in China. A good example is when you ask guidance from a stranger e.g. where some place is? Chinese don't say: I don't know, because they think it is ruder to say no than to lie a bit and direct someone to a wrong direction. If you feel insecure about the answer, just ask more politely and make your own conclusions based on those.

Yes might also mean just no. When a person is asked to do something and he knows that he is not going to do it, he might just say yes and not do it. This is usually the case when the other person doesn't exactly understand what you have asked him to do and just wants to be polite and leave from the situation. You can avoid these types of situations by sharing enough information to get the other party interested, and to understand what it is you want and why do you want them to do it. If the request and the task are too confusing the other party is not going to do it. Emphasize why they are doing it and how both will benefit from it.

In China and in Asia overall, respecting elders is very important. You can be yourself but bear in mind this aspect, and if you can show it in your own way somehow, do it. There are some etiquette rules for this but those are mainly about how to address a person and how to speak to them, but when there is a language barrier just try to show it some other way that you are aware that this person is above you.

2.5 Language

China has a two language types: Putonghua (also known as Mandarin Chinese) and Cantonese. In Hong Kong and some small parts of China people speak Cantonese, and everywhere else they use Putonghua. If you want to learn Chinese, Putonghua is the way to go. Through Putonghua a foreigner also learns much about the Chinese history and understands better how the Chinese see things and think. When you start studying, think beforehand what kind of situations you might end up in and where some sentence might help you the most. When you use it in those situations, you will remember the sentence for the rest of your life.

2.6 Bureaucracy

A person should try to minimize the use of bureaucracy, or in other words try to avoid it. In mainland China it is quite difficult to take care of paper work if you don't know the language. People don't understand what you want or you don't understand them. In Hong Kong it is more likely that you get it done, but it will still be quite difficult.

The process of avoiding bureaucracy starts from the very beginning of founding the business. Try to keep things simple and manage to find products and logistical methods that don't require much paperwork. For example, Hong Kong post office offered a good service, so after a few parcel shipments Tradesman Tmi decided that this is the best and easiest way so far. All the other methods were quite difficult to use or more expensive. Through Hong Kong postal service the company sent single small parcels just like normal people send their goods. Everything is planned to be very simple for normal consumers, so the bureaucracy is minimized.

It is also easier to handle products that don't require special permissions or any other special attention. For example, if you begin to sell electronics, you need to make sure that devices are certificated in the destination country and how to handle guarantee or malfunction cases. There are also many tariff and taxation rules one should consider when deciding what to import or export.

When it comes to handling the payment and banking, the company should have thought more thoroughly how to deal with bank issues before leaving Hong Kong. Now every small task takes weeks to deal by letters because a company representative can't visit the bank's office. The bank is not allowed to take any actions before an identification and several signed documents have been presented.

3 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

In the modern world of business the emphasis has shifted from acquiring new customers to retaining the ones that already exist in the customer base of the company. Customer Relationship Management is a very important part of business today, and it

should also be implemented in the operating principles of this company. The source of this CRM information is the book "Principles of Customer Relationship Management" by Roger J. Baran, Robert Galka and Daniel P. Strunk.

3.1 General overview

Customer Relationship Management comprises of several different sections, each of which add to the common goal of forming an enduring relationship with the customer and aim to develop this relationship in the benefit of both the customer and the company. These can be divided roughly into technological, ideological and managerial parts. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

From the technological perspective, Customer Relationship Management is all about using the technology such as computer software and systems to collect and store customer data for cross referencing and analysis. This helps the company to learn more about the needs and buying behavior of customers and customize their services accordingly. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

From the ideological standpoint, a change in the traditional corporate culture is vital for Customer Relationship Management to work smoothly. Every member of the company from the management to the staff members must support the goal of shifting from transaction focus to a customer centric one. This may require some retraining of the workforce, as the CRM failure in an organization tends to be a result of cultural instead of technological issues. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

The managerial aspect of Customer Relationship Management consists of managing demand and creating a company strategy cycle that focuses on customers and creating lasting relationships of mutual benefit between the two. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

3.2 Customer-centric view

The foundation of Customer Relationship Management lies in four main points: Firstly, customers need to be treated and managed as important assets. Without them,

no company could remain in business. Secondly, not all of the customers are equally desirable. It is very important to learn to recognize the customers who can benefit the business, and to convert those that don't. Thirdly, customers are all unique and vary in their needs and preferences, as well as in their buying behavior. This leads to the last tenet of the CRM: By understanding their customers better, companies can tailor their offerings to maximize their overall value. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

The importance of customer retention

The importance of a customer-centric view is emphasized furthermore by the data presented by Baran, Galka and Strunk: If customer retention is improved by 5 percent, the profitability in net present value will improve from 20 to 85 percent. Furthermore, the cost of obtaining a new customer is usually five to ten times more than keeping an existing one. Placing the customers and their needs at the center of a company's business activity and recognizing them as the most important part of the business, is a very wise choice in a modern business world. However, this change in mentality must be company-wide and influence all company decisions to be truly effective. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Another positive result from a well implemented CRM effort is increased customer satisfaction, which is directly related to customer retention. CRM helps the company to respond to customer needs more timely, improves and smoothens the sales process, and improves the forecasting and performance so that the correct solutions may be made at the right time. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

The importance of customer loyalty

An important aspect of customer retention is the type of loyalty and trust a customer feels towards the company and its products and services. Choosing a loyalty strategy to increase this aspect is vital to CRM. The customers can be divided into four categories by their buying behavior:

The four categories of customers:

	Short Term Customers	Long Term Customers
High Profit	Butterflies	True Friends
Low Profit	Strangers	Barnacles

A company's loyalty strategy should always aim to keep the high profit, long term customers, their true friends, close, and try to convert the low profit stranger and barnacle and short term butterfly clients into true friends. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Another way of categorizing the four types of customers is by their loyalty: Loyalists are the most satisfied of the company's customers and can be compared to the "True Friends" presented above. These people become apostles of the company, and recommend its services and products to their friends and acquaintances. Mercenaries are only loyal to the low prices and deals, they are short term customers who have no intentions of ever returning. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Hostages are people who are stuck with the company as long term customers for a variety of reasons, but are not happy about it. They tend to complain and cause problems in the customer-company relationship without bringing much positive aspects into it. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Finally, there are Defectors, who are former customers that have become dissatisfied and cut their ties with the company for various reasons. These customers are ideal targets for winback strategies. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

A loyal customer is always more profitable to the company: A customer's number of purchases increases as his or her loyalty to the company increases. Loyal customers also have the tendency to "trade-up" i.e. they upgrade already owned services or products into more premium ones and create a cash flow in the process. They also become less price sensitive over time because of focus on convenience and purchase efficiency. Additionally, the cost of servicing a loyal customer is usually lower as the customer data collected by a CRM system will speed up and smoothen the sales process. Fi-

nally, extremely loyal customers will actually improve sales by word-of-mouth referrals they give to other prospects. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Winning back lost customers

Losing customers while managing a modern company is virtually unavoidable so it is recommendable to plan a winback strategy to recover the customers when it happens. A winback strategy, also referred as regain management concentrates on winning back customers who have either given notice to terminate or have already ended a business relationship. With the winback process the company tries to revive the relationship with a lost customer. Baran, Galka and Strunk present research results which indicate that a company has a 60-70 percent chance to repeat-sell to an active customer, 20-40 percent chance to repeat-sell to a lost customer, and only 15-20 percent chance of successfully closing the sale on a brand new customer. In the light of this data it is obvious that a company would do well to use a winback strategy before attempting to replace the lost customer with a new one. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

3.3 Technology, databases and their utilization

The technological aspect of Customer Relationship Management revolves around databases, collecting and storing data and converting the collected data into information which can be used to improve sales action. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

The most essential information stored by CRM systems includes the following: Buyer preferences, process requirements, purchase cycles, contact dates, contract information, customer service information and forecast sales. All this data translates into information that helps improve future product and service assortment, pricing and promotion decisions to maximize sales, and customer retention. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

3.4 Marketing and sales interaction

Marketing is closely connected to the technological aspect of Customer Relationship Management. Indeed, it's the departments of the company which directly interact with customers that benefit from CRM, the information collected by its systems, the most. With this information sales forces know how to deliver the right offer, to the right customer at the right point in time. The information supplied by CRM systems is also important to logistics, customer service, accounting and finance departments when they act as a customer touch point. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

3.5 Applying Customer Relationship Management in our company

In our company the implementation of a Customer Relationship Management inspired business strategy will be extremely valuable, as all business interaction with customers is still transaction focused. At the moment most customer relationships of the company can almost be perceived as accidental. Clearly, it would be very important for the company to form lasting relations to its customers straight from the beginning to minimize costs and secure steadier profits, especially since the company is still very new and trying to build up its customer base. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

Customer data collection

The company's interaction with customers is quite complex at times, as can be expected with a product such as made to order clothing. As product returns are not possible with a product of this nature, the ordering process has to work accurately, efficiently and swiftly. Customer Relationship Management systems and databases will enhance this process greatly with its collected data and stored information. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

To utilize the CRM database as efficiently as possible, we need to decide what type of data will be collected and stored. Some of this information should be editable by the customer, as clothing measurements, shipping addresses and requirements, and payment information may change over time. Other important information stored in the

database would be clothing color, style and material preferences. This will help us find out what type of products the customers would like to purchase. A record of a customer's previous purchases is also very useful as it helps us identify returning customers and monitor their buying behavior. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

A critical aspect of the data collection process, however, is respecting the customer's privacy while collecting and utilizing data. We need to implement an opt-out possibility into the system so that customers can remove themselves from our mailing list, and avoid receiving newsletters and offers if they wish. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

CRM in marketing

The information received by utilizing a CRM system will be invaluable when categorizing our customer base into Butterflies, Strangers, True Friends and Barnacles. Once this has been done, we can pinpoint which customers to target with different marketing strategies. The best customers, or True Friends, are ready for strong relationships while the other types of customers need to be targeted with development strategies. Additionally, customer research opens up a possibility of cross-selling and up-selling products as well as defensive marketing i.e. spending the majority of our marketing power into targeting our existing customers instead of acquiring new ones. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

In addition to being able to recognize customer needs quickly, we are able to recognize and reward those customers who stay loyal to the company by offering them free shipping, discounts, or other benefits. We can also encourage customer loyalty by adding a question box in the order form asking if the customer found our company through a recommendation of an existing customer. Offering a small reward to the customer then, will increase the efficiency of word-of-mouth advertising between customers and prospects. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007)

4 GUERRILLA MARKETING

In the modern business world reaching customers by any possible means has become increasingly important as the competition for market shares becomes more intense. Guerrilla marketing is a popular style of marketing that is being embraced by an ever growing number of businesses today. Some aspects and ideology of guerrilla marketing should also be implemented in our company's marketing strategy. Articles and publications of Jay Conrad Levinson, Jonathan R. Aspatore, Debra Kahn Schofield, Audri Lanford, Jeff Ready, Charles Rubin and Bill Gallagher have been used as sources of this information.

4.1 General overview

Above everything else, guerrilla marketing is a lifestyle and a state of mind. It uses the same ideas and strategies as traditional marketing styles, but adds relentlessness and outside the box thinking into them. This in turn makes the marketing style very effective and rewarding for a patient and hard-working guerrilla marketer. Ideas of guerrilla marketing are partly intertwined with the ideas of Customer Relationship Management which will become clear when we study its main points a little closer.

The ideology and mindset

One of the most important qualities for a guerrilla marketer is creativity. With a creative mentality a marketer can find many non-traditional ways to market his or her product, such as viral marketing through internet discussion forums and other social networks. In addition to non-traditional solutions, guerrilla marketing offers a low-cost, highly effective way of marketing to a creative individual. (Levinson 2009)

One of the most important processes utilizing creativity for a company is coming up with a meme or a self-explanatory symbol which uses words, actions, sounds or pictures to communicate an entire idea that a company wants its customers to know about itself. It is a basic unit of communication, charged with emotional power that can alter a person's behavior and change his mind about the company's service in an instant.

Vital meme characteristics should be longevity and consistency, which guarantee that the ideas represented by the it will be perceived as characteristics of the company it advertises for a long time. (Levinson 2001, 2009)

A creative and efficient meme would be very valuable to an internet based company as it would also boost the offline marketing side of business by keeping the company in the memory of potential prospects, reminding them about the primary benefits offered by the company, and motivating them to visit the website. (Levinson 2001, 2009)

Another important quality for a guerrilla marketer is the ability to work hard and patiently to achieve goals that have been set. A guerrilla marketing campaign should never stop improving, instead it should be constantly growing and progressing through experimentation. A guerrilla marketer should always strive to reach the customer base through e-mail, regular mail and advertising of multiple styles. He or she should always attempt to find new ways to "pick their customers' brains" to understand them, i.e. their wants and needs better. This way the guerrilla marketer can choose the "favorite ones" from individual clients and tailor their marketing specifically to them. (Levinson 2009)

Finally, a guerrilla marketer should be able to know the benefits of applying basic understanding of human behavior in his marketing strategy. Customers may be skeptical toward a new product or service, and they like to take their time in making decisions and building relationships with the company. A guerrilla marketer should be able to find a way to convince customer prospects despite these adversities. (Levinson 2009)

Improving marketing effort by careful planning

Guerrilla marketers need to have knowledge about various aspects related to their work to be able to create an effective and successful marketing plan. Here are some of the most essential ones that need to be studied diligently: Guerrilla marketers need to know what makes their product or service different and better than the competitor's one. They need to find out how to make it desirable to the customers, and how to improve it periodically and add extra value such as additional benefits, affiliate programs, guarantees and after-sales service. When all this is reflected in the marketing

plan, the image of a superior product will reach the company's customer base. (Scho-field 2009)

The market and industry are the next aspects that need to be researched thoroughly. Guerrilla marketers need to know how their marketing decisions and products or services are related to the market that is an ever changing and living environment. The buying habits of different markets may vary drastically from each other. Additionally, knowing and seeing the industry as a whole will help a guerrilla marketer spot their competitors' vulnerabilities and opportunities that will help them improve their position in the industry. Every success and failure offers something to learn from. (Scho-field 2009)

Learning everything there is to know about customers and prospects is the main idea of Customer Relationship Management, and it is also a vital part of guerrilla marketing planning. Identifying and locating customer prospects by using information collected from studying the existing customer base will help the company improve its market share. However, the research is not limited to the marketer's own customer and prospect base: Discovering as much information as possible about competitors' customers will also help the marketing effort immensely. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007, Schofield 2009)

Lastly, a guerrilla marketer should master the different forms of media and technology to reach as many customers as possible and incorporate the different strengths and weaknesses into the marketing plan. Television, internet and paper media advertising all have unique characteristics that need to be taken into account when using them for advertising. (Levinson 2009)

4.2 The importance of customer relations

Like with the Customer Relationship Management, guerrilla marketer's greatest assets are the customers. Especially in a down economy, it is wise to utilize defensive marketing tactics that target the existing customer base which provides referral and follow-up business. (Levinson 2009)

After a relationship has been established with a customer, collecting information to aid future marketing endeavors is a wise decision. Do the customers have a need for or an interest in other products or services that could be added into the company's selection? Do the customers have suggestions for utilizing the company's products or services in some other environment or market that haven't been realized by the company itself yet? (Linton 1995, Aspartore 2009)

It is also profitable to keep an eye out for different phenomena that may influence the customer base in the future. Will something change the market landscape in the future that the company should prepare for? Will it create a certain kind of demand for certain kinds of products or services? Would it be profitable to start product development early in preparation for this phenomenon? (Aspartore 2009)

Customer retention

Guerrilla marketing can be combined with customer retention by finding the most loyal long term and high profit customers and offering them frequent buyer benefits, making them "valued members." These "True Friends" can then be targeted with newsletters and mailing list marketing. Utilizing differentiated marketing by favoring the most profitable customers will save resources and make most out of the marketing effort. (Baran, Galka, Strunk, 2007, Levinson 2009)

In addition to favoring the most valuable customers, it's very important to do an after-sale follow up and make sure that everything has gone according to the plans. Otherwise the company may risk losing the customer because of a simple issue that never came to the company's knowledge. By doing everything to care for the customer relationship before and after the sale the company ensures this won't happen. (Levinson 2009)

4.3 Online solutions

For the guerrilla marketing, the age of internet has opened countless new opportunities. Instead of traditional offline marketing, it is now possible to run a company, its advertising and marketing online without having virtually any offline operations aside from shipping and logistics.

Utilizing websites effectively

The biggest reason people go online is that they want to accomplish a task of some sort, whether it is collecting information or ordering an item. If a web browser has found his or her way to a company's website, chances are that it didn't happen by accident. They are already prospect customers and the company should make sure that they can keep the visitor's attention once they have been able to capture it. This is accomplished by offering prospects straightforward information, and data about the company and its products and services instead of trying to dazzle them with colorful graphics and busy animations. (Levinson 2009)

To maximize the website's potential it's wise to create advertisements that lure people into visiting it. By adding the site's address in every brochure, commercial and e-mail the guerrilla marketer can increase the chance that people will visit it and be exposed to more information about the company and its offerings. It is much easier to create customer relationships and offer them individualized services via websites than television commercials, brochures and phone calls. (Levinson 2009)

Some important facts that need to be remembered when using a website technology are that websites need to be marketed, just creating one won't be enough for customers to discover it. A website needs maintenance and updating, both software and content based. A number of website hits doesn't automatically translate into a number of visitors: Some visitors visit the website multiple times and sometimes a software malfunctions may increase the number of hits. The outlook of the website needs to be clear and brief. Lastly, sound and video tend to draw attention away from the actual website

content and annoy the visitors, so it's wiser to refrain from overusing them. (Rubin, Levinson 2009)

Selecting the correct website content

It's critical to use some time to decide what exactly is the website's purpose and what the guerrilla marketer wants to achieve with it: What is the action a visitor should take after arriving to the website? Is it purchasing something, or just gathering information or both? How about for the long term? Should the visitor create an online account or create a customer profile? Is the site open for everybody or just a select group of people? What kind of information should be available at the website to support your aim? Do you get asked the same questions over and over again, maybe the site needs a frequently asked questions section? How are you coping with the competitors, and what does their website look like? Maybe there is something that can be learned from them? Is it possible to offer "internet specials" to stimulate the website visits if it doesn't seem to get much hits? All these questions will improve the website's effectiveness in fulfilling its purpose. (Ready 2009)

Website content maintenance and updates

Maintaining and updating the website content makes it more interesting to the visitors and increases the chances that they will revisit it later. A good way of doing this is to feature stories and news on the site, publish a periodical newsletter and offer weekly specials that only website visitors are able to access. (Ready, Rubin 2009)

If the website features a catalog of products it is important to remember the following things: Above everything else, the online catalog has to be logically arranged so the customers can find what they are looking for quickly and efficiently. It is also smart to include a search function to further speed up catalog browsing. Finally, it's best to keep item descriptions brief and to the point and product images and graphics conveniently sized and placed. (Rubin 2009)

User convenience

Convenience is an important website characteristic that can easily become the reason why customers keep using the company's web based service over competitors' services. Instead of associating a slow and dreadful browsing with the website, they remember how quick and fluent it was to use, and keep coming back. (Rubin 2009)

Information requests are an interaction type between the customer and company which can destroy a budding customer relationship completely. If a customer receives a reply weeks after requesting information or worse, not at all, he or she is not likely use the company's services in the future. The company should be ready to respond to information requests as effectively and quickly as possible. The customer should be notified that their request has been received by using an automated response such as "Thank you for your inquiry, we will respond to it as soon as possible." Additionally, it's wise to check the automated system's server log every now and then to see who is requesting information. This information may be used in the future to improve the company's services. Finally, appointing a person to handle these requests and gather the needed information might be a wise choice as a specialized person will be able to process information requests much faster and comprehensively. (Rubin 2009)

If the online service has an ordering system, it is wise to consider where the customers are located and what are their most used payment types. If the company sells its products internationally, payment methods such as internationally accepted credit cards as well as services such as PayPal should be included in the types of payment. Also, shipping and handling rates need to be recalculated for international shipping. They should be adjusted so that international customers pay their share of the shipping while not being penalized unfairly. Making the best possible deal on shipping will translate into more orders, so finding a shipping firm that can offer the best deal can be very profitable. (Rubin 2009)

When the shipping process commences, it's important to keep the customer informed. An e-mail confirmation about shipping should be sent out within 24 hours from processing. The confirmation should include a tracking code of the shipment to de-

crease chances of any confusion in the delivery. In most cases the order should reach the customer within a week, but it's wise to offer multiple shipping options with the product, for example, express, standard, overnight and insured shipping. The effect of convenience increases when customers know they can choose the option that suits their needs the best. Finally, inside each shipping package should be a company's latest newsletter or a product catalog, a reclamation form in case something has gone wrong during shipping, and instructions about the company's return procedure. (Rubin 2009)

The last part of the sales transaction that can benefit from increased convenience is repeat business. As it has been discovered, repeat business is more profitable than new business because of its decreased costs and established customer relationships. It is important that customers feel they benefit from their status as repeaters. Reminding them about their status can be accomplished by sending them a newsletter or product catalogs periodically. Online, encouraging repeat business can be achieved by making the purchases following the initial one easier. A customer should be assigned an user account that will store their credit card information, address, wish list and other useful information. Repeat customers should be able to order a product with just one click, if all the crucial information is already at hand in their account. (Levinson, Rubin 2009)

Periodical tasks that keep online business running smoothly

Just like a car, an online system needs routine checkups to run smoothly. Some of these checkups need to be done daily, some weekly, and some even less often. Daily tasks should include updating new customer e-mail addresses into mailing list's database if this isn't done automatically, and responding to customer information requests as soon as they are received to make sure the customer's interest isn't lost. In addition visiting the website's storefront to make sure everything is working is also a smart idea, as is sending a test e-mail to the automated e-mail system. (Rubin 2009)

Weekly tasks include reviewing responses created by online ads and banners, to see which ones are bringing in most hits. Certain types of advertisements as well as certain environments they are placed in tend to work better than others. Also, adding new in-

formation to the online business storefront in the form of a newsletter and reviewing its server's activity log should be done each week. (Ready, Rubin 2009)

Other tasks that don't need as much attention include creating advertisements that underline the company's online service availability and create more website visits, seeking new link and directory listings for the site, coming up with periodical promotions to be featured online, optimizing the online storefront's layout and sending e-mail newsletters or promotions through mailing lists. (Rubin 2009)

Online security

In the age of online business, the importance of online security has increased explosively. Indeed, the customers may disregard an online company completely if they feel that their private information may be compromised. There are multiple ways to earn the trust of online users and make them feel safe about using the company's online service. (Rubin 2009)

The online storefront needs to be implemented on an encrypted server, but that isn't enough. The webpage visitors need to be told that as well. Not all internet users know how to find out if the transactions are encrypted, so it is smart to announce it at a visible area of the page with bold letters. (Rubin 2009)

In the vein of customers not knowing everything, the website should also explain the most important security processes such as clearing online forms and browser cache after use so that security won't be compromised if the online service is accessed via a public internet access. Many customers are afraid of giving their credit card information online, so it is wise to include a statement about the relative security of the process on the site. (Rubin 2009)

Communicating with the customers will alleviate many worries about security. Sending a confirmation e-mail after a customer has updated his or her personal information, after receiving an order and after shipping the product make the online environment feel less like an unknown and unreliable shopping option. Striving to process every-

thing as quickly as possible and keeping customers informed about unforeseen circumstances is vital to online business transactions. It is also very wise to offer tracking codes that will allow the customer to follow the delivery process himself. (Rubin 2009)

Finally, to make the customer feel as secure as possible about shopping online the company should offer a guarantee of some form. If a customer knows that he or she can exchange a faulty product or return it within a certain number of days, he or she will be much more confident about ordering a product online. (Rubin 2009)

4.4 The marketing campaign strategy

Marketing ideology

Marketing in its essential form is the way customers perceive the company. Needless to say, that perception has to match the reality or the company will be in trouble. All ads, promotions and website content should primarily convey company identity. What separates a traditional marketing campaign and a guerrilla marketing campaign is the relentlessness and thinking outside the box. A guerrilla marketing campaign should never stop, instead, its marketing effort should be maintained and evolved constantly. A guerrilla marketer has to always keep an eye on narrow niches in the market share which the larger companies haven't noticed. These are the lifeblood of guerrilla marketing strategies. (Levinson 2009)

Business names and their importance

The name of a company affects its image greatly, which is something that not every founder realizes when coming up with one. The company's name has to hint a customer what its field of business is. It is also convenient to imply a benefit at the same time. The name should also be expandable, as it isn't wise to choose a name that makes the company stuck with only one product or service. Another unwise decision is to go with a trendy name, because trends pass but the name has to have longevity. Other good features of the name are easy spelling, pronunciation and short length. It has to

fit into a logo which will improve the chance that people remember it later on. Finally, it might be a smart choice to choose something from the beginning of the alphabet to position the company's name better in the yellow pages and other listings. (Gallagher 2009)

Guidelines for efficient marketing

To be able to market any product or service, a marketer has to find an unique selling point, or USP, for his or her offering. An unique selling point is exactly what the name implies: An unique feature of the product or service that no other competitor can offer which makes the product more attractive in the eyes of the customers. Almost everything can be made into an unique selling point; A product's efficiency, durability, ease of use or even its guarantee. The marketer has to find a way to alleviate the customer's fears and anxiety about purchasing the product with a promise of satisfaction. However, an USP shouldn't promise something that it can't deliver. If a product or service is marketed to multiple market segments, it can have many unique selling points to communicate benefits to each of them. This is also an useful way to find out which of these market segments are most profitable. (Schofield 2009)

To make a product or service desirable, the marketer has to use the USP and translate it into a meaningful benefit for the customers and state it as believably as possible. It doesn't matter if the company has the most revolutionary product in the world if they seem insincere in their sales pitch. To be able to succeed in the marketing effort, people's attention needs to be reached. The easiest way to accomplish this is via advertising, be it in the newspaper, online or in television. What the advertisement has to be able to do, however, is motivate its audience to purchase the company's goods or services. One of the guerrilla marketing's conditions for success is that people need to know exactly what is expected from them. The guerrilla marketer must make sure that the benefits communicated by the advertisement are understood clearly, and that no one in the audience gets the wrong idea about the company's offerings. (Schofield 2009)

Direct Response Marketing

Direct Response Marketing is a special form of marketing where a company uses media, such as television commercials or website banners to get customers to contact them directly. To succeed in this type of marketing, the offer which accompanies a presentation has to be extraordinary. An uninteresting offer accompanied by superior presentation will still have difficulties in attracting customers. It is also important to choose the target market for this type of marketing carefully. If the target market is not interested in the product or service, the marketing effort will go to waste. The more people have been exposed to the company's marketing in other media, the more readily they will accept the direct marketing message. This is called 360 degree marketing, where presence and activity in a form of various marketing channel visibility improve the marketing message's chance of success. Finally, planning the campaign budget for direct response marketing will require great care to achieve maximum profits and should be thought out thoroughly. (Levinson 2009)

The rules of proportion for allocating resources

The rules of proportion help a marketer allocate their resources efficiently between budgets which can end up swallowing huge amounts of money without giving any results in return. With some careful planning a marketer can locate the most important areas for investing. (Levinson 2009)

The 10/30/60 Rule helps a guerrilla marketer allocate resources between the three main markets. The first market, and also the least profitable one is the whole populous within the area of marketing. This group of people means everyone in the company's marketing area, whether or not they match the customer profile. A marketer should invest 10 percent of the marketing budget in an attempt to move these people into the second largest market, the prospects. (Levinson 2009)

The prospect market contains people who do fit in the company's customer profile but aren't yet its customers. They create more profits than the first market but not as much as the main market. 30 percent of the marketing budget should be invested here in an

attempt to move the customer prospects into the third market which contains the company's actual customers. (Levinson 2009)

The existing customers are the most important and most profitable market. A guerrilla marketer should invest 60 percent of the marketing budget to this market. As it costs only one sixth as much to make a repeat sale to an existing customer compared to a non-customer and the market produces the majority of profits, it is wise to invest most of the budget here to maximize the total marketing investment. These are the main ideas behind the 10/30/60 Rule. (Levinson 2009)

The 1/10/100 Rule underlines the importance of communication between the company staff, the trade and the customers. According to the rule, one dollar spent communicating with the company's own staff equals ten dollars spent communicating with the trade and hundred dollars communicating with the customers. Therefore, the time and money spent communicating with the company's own employees is used most efficiently and should be the first area to attend to, before moving to the trade and customers. (Levinson 2009)

The Rule of Thirds deals with online budgets that are an important part of every company's operation in this day and age. The rule states that online investment should be budgeted evenly into three parts: One third of the budget should be used into website design so that it's easy to use, attractive to look at and simple to find. Another third of the budget should be invested into attracting visitors to the website to stimulate the online activity. The final third of the budget should be used to update and maintain the website so that it stays fresh and interesting to the visitors. By following these rules, a marketer makes sure that the company's online operations run smoothly and efficiently. (Levinson 2009)

The 80/20 Rule is more related to the lifestyle and nature of the business than marketing. It states that 80 percent of achievements come from 20 percent of time spent working, 20 percent of a company's products account for 80 percent of the sales, and 20 percent of the company's employees contribute to 80 percent of its profits. The 80/20 rules apply to most things in life, not only to the world of business. It is impor-

tant to find out which 80/20 rules apply to the company's profits and success, and learn how to use them efficiently to make wise decisions. (Levinson 2009)

Marketing mistakes

There are many ways to ruin a perfectly good marketing campaign. The most common mistakes that a marketer can do are related to impatience, overconfidence, and lack of research. It is dangerous to have a strictly result centric view that limits a marketer's knowledge of what is happening in the market. However, it is also dangerous to get stuck with "analysis paralysis" that will prevent any course of action. (Levinson 2009)

Failure to get the marketing campaign noticed at launch is a surefire way to give it a bad start and possibly doom it completely. A marketer should use every possible way available to make his or her campaign noticed to make sure that customers and prospects are listening. While presenting the marketing message to the target market, a common mistake is to focus on the company instead of the customer. It should always be remembered that the customer is the most valuable asset out there and should be treated as such. (Levinson 2009)

In online marketing, spamming the customers with advertisements is a huge mistake. Spam mail gives a bad image to the company as much of the spam is about fraudulent offers. The damage given to the company image is much worse than possible profits that could be gained from spamming. To make matters worse, most e-mail providers offer spam filters that remove e-mail before it even has a chance to reach the customer. If the spam mail actually manages to find its way to the receiver, there is a chance that he or she will just feel offended about the junk mail and start to dislike the entire company. Some of the most infuriated people may even campaign against it. (Lanford 2009)

Not knowing the target market well enough is another way to ruin the marketing effort. People who aren't interested in the product or service will not make the purchase. Pinpointing the exact targets and directing the message to them will make the marketing process much easier to carry out. Objectives for the marketing campaign need to

be thought out and specified before starting it. Everything else will just be a waste of money. (Levinson 2009)

When selling the product or service, it is a mistake to feature the price before the benefit and even before the offer. The customer will not care if the company's price is the lowest until they know what is being offered to them and how they will benefit from it. When it's finally time to set the price, it has to be a correct one. Setting the wrong price means that it wasn't researched and tested enough. Knowing the price level is a vital part of knowing the market. Failing to test anything usually leads to a catastrophe: Price points, benefits and sales pitches need testing to find out which ones will work best and which ones won't work at all. (Levinson 2009)

4.5 Marketing solutions in our company

In our company we must find solutions to fluently carry out some basic business processes to efficiently market our products. A good idea would be to automate some of the online communications with customers to decrease uncertainty associated with online ordering and information requests. Notices of shipment, changes in order status and tracking could all be automated with e-mail notification.

Communication in the form of feedback is also very important to us. We need to find out what improvements our website needs, and encourage the visitors to leave feedback that can be used to improve the convenience of use. Only a small percentage of customers ever complain, even if they are not satisfied. This means that we need to find a way to reach their critique to continue improving our service: A "feedback box" could be implemented in the website design to collect visitors' thoughts about its functionality and look.

For our business, the after sale follow up is crucial to keep a customer relationship alive. A follow up plan needs to be devised to keep us in the customer's memory and let them know that we are still available for more business. A periodically published e-mail newsletter could be the answer for this task. The newsletter shouldn't be sent out

too often, otherwise customers might feel like they are spammed. An interval of quarterly publishing would probably accomplish this.

Other online tasks that need to be implemented are increasing the online security of our business as much as possible, while implementing new payment options such as PayPal and negotiating new shipping arrangements to be offered in relation with the purchase process. In addition, implementing a "Frequently Asked Questions" section as well as setting up a quick response system for customer inquiries are two important updates that our online service has to be improved with. Our online budget will be optimized by using the rule of thirds to allocate resources evenly among website updates and maintenance, promotion and design

Of the challenges that still need solving, coming up with an effective service recovery plan is one of the most urgent ones. What we need to accomplish is offering a satisfying recovery after a customer has become displeased, but still be able to prevent abuse of this service. As the nature of our products makes them unreturnable, other course of action is required. Other challenge we face is offering new distribution channels in addition to the online trade. We need to find business partners that can provide us with storage and shelf space. Finally, we need to find a way to efficiently manage the geographical structure of our business to make communication and processes between Finland and China as fluent as possible.

Competing with larger companies

Competition is a part of any business activity and our company is no different. Many of our competitors will have more mass and resources than us so we need to find a way to compete with what we have. Luckily, internet as a business platform gives a voice to anyone that can utilize it. Web based business is relatively cheap to maintain and with careful planning it can achieve massive exposure nationally and even globally. (Levinson 2009, Schofield 2009)

Cost wise our company should be able to achieve everything our larger competitors can do as long as we are ready to put effort and hard work in our performance. Most

solutions that large companies use large sums of money on, such as web page development and maintenance, can be achieved inexpensively if all available options are researched thoroughly. In addition, our overhead costs are much smaller than in larger companies, so our business can keep running on smaller profits. (Levinson 2009, Schofield 2009)

PK Tradesman Tmi business idea

The company is a consequence of many things that were found and discovered during an exchange period in Hong Kong. The idea came from tailor made suits that were made in Shenzhen, mainland China, and that is where the whole idea began to be developed. The idea is to sell custom made clothes at a reasonable price for those whom it is time consuming and difficult to find properly fitting clothes. Clothes come from a tailor from mainland China and are to be sent to Hong Kong, where they are packed and sent by airfreight to Finland. Customers can place their orders either through internet or later on at a shop, where a professional takes the measurements. At the moment there are 2 people working as part time to get business running. We have had negotiations with a clothing store that is interested in selling our clothes. There are still some things we have to sort out and develop before the business starts to run properly. To overcome these obstacles we have established a plan.

The development plan

For some of the dilemmas we need to have more consumer opinions. We also need to solve the general price level of the clothes and have more consumer opinions about the business idea itself. For this we are going to implement a questionnaire. For marketing we need to study guerrilla marketing. This is the way our customers will reach us. In order to keep our relationship with the manufacturer and other interest groups, we need to study CRM.

5 GENERAL PRICE LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE

We needed to gather information to improve Tradesman Tmi's pricing and sales process, and a questionnaire with fixed response alternative questions seemed like the best way to find out what people thought about Tradesman's products. The main things we wanted to find out were the general price level people would be willing to pay, the age and gender of the target market, and people's attitudes towards buying products of this type in the internet. The questionnaire was quantitative in nature and the research was conclusive and descriptive, as we sought to describe market characteristics and analyze the collected statistics. The questionnaire was conducted through personal interviewing. A sample size of 50 interviewed people was set as the goal of the re-search, within the frame of adult men and women. We hoped to interview roughly an equal amount of both genders. (Malhotra, Birks 2007)

5.1 Questionnaire event on 14 Feb 2010.

The questionnaire was implemented in Akseli Shopping Mall in the heart of Mikkeli city. There are approximately 50 stores in Akseli, so the chance of coming accross enough people was high. The questionnaire was implemented by handing out the question form to the interviewee and if needed, the interviewer offered additional guidance. Our pretesting showed that it only takes 2 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. We wanted to keep it quite short and simple and stick to the point. Every person who answered the questionnaire could take part in a draw for the prize of a men's suit or womens pant- or skirt suit.

The questionnaires can be found in appendix.

5.2 Questionnaire content

There were 6 questions in the questionnaire, all quantitative. The main goal of the research was to find out the price level and whether or not people would be willing to order this type of products through internet or would they only place the order through a storefront. The questions followed a pattern and progressed in a logical order. We

also researched the following points; Whether or not this person was in our target group, would they order the product and how, how often would they order, what is the price image they have, and how serious they were with the price estimates.

Eventually we decided to redefine age groups in order to be able to analyze the data better. Now there are three age grups: Younger than 20 years old, 21-40 years old, and above 41 years old.

5.3 Results: Men

Age distribution of the male questionnaire respondents:
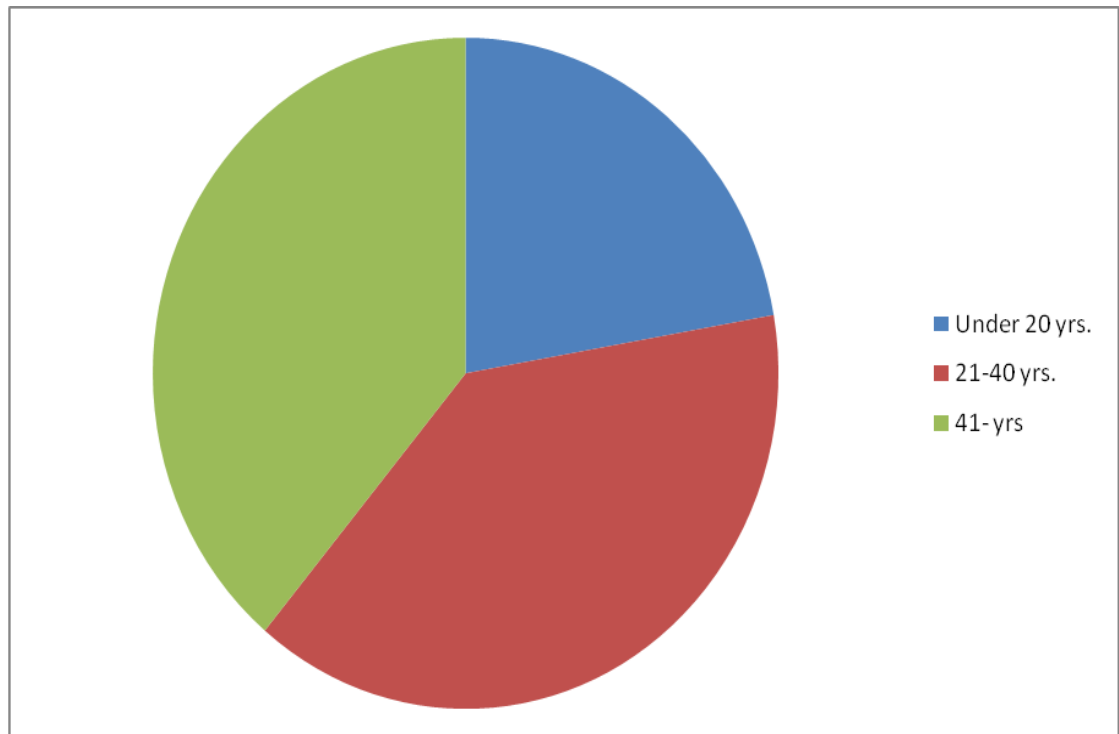
The average price from all male participants was 220 Euros.

The total amount of answers among men was 18. Four were under twenty years old, seven were between ages 21 to 40, and seven 41 years or older. Men weren't that eager to answer the questionaire compared to women, so we weren't able to reach our goal of 25 male questionnaire respondents.

Ages 20 and under

This bar graph represents male answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in the age group; 20 and under.
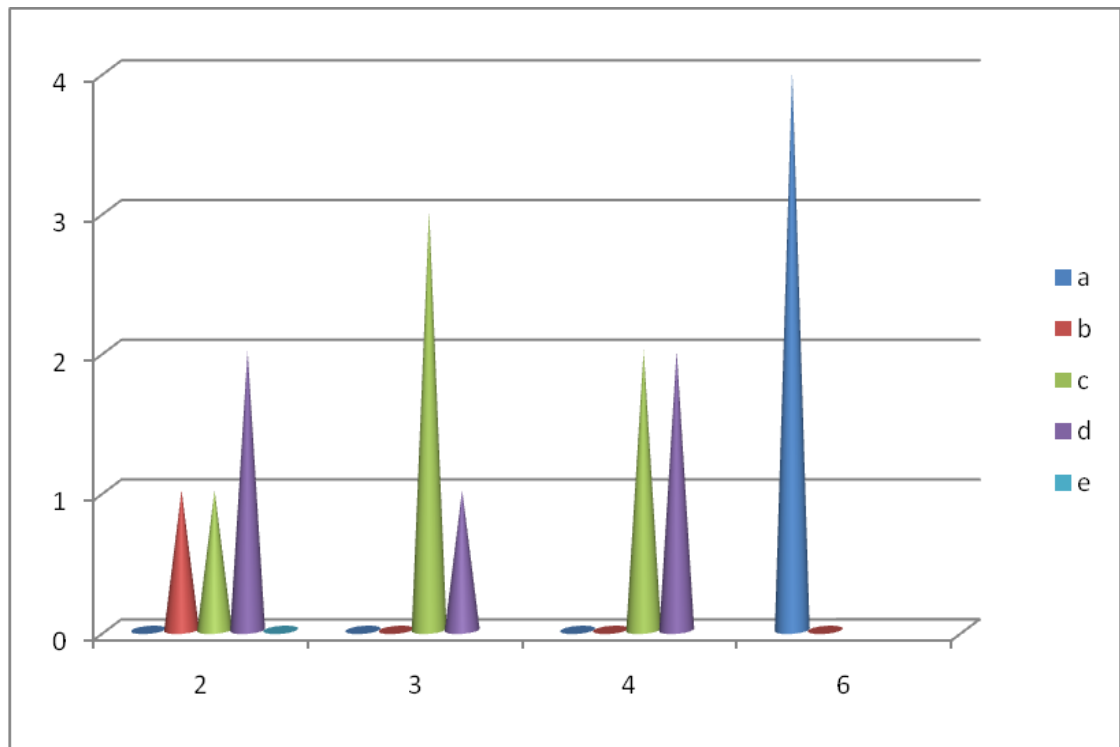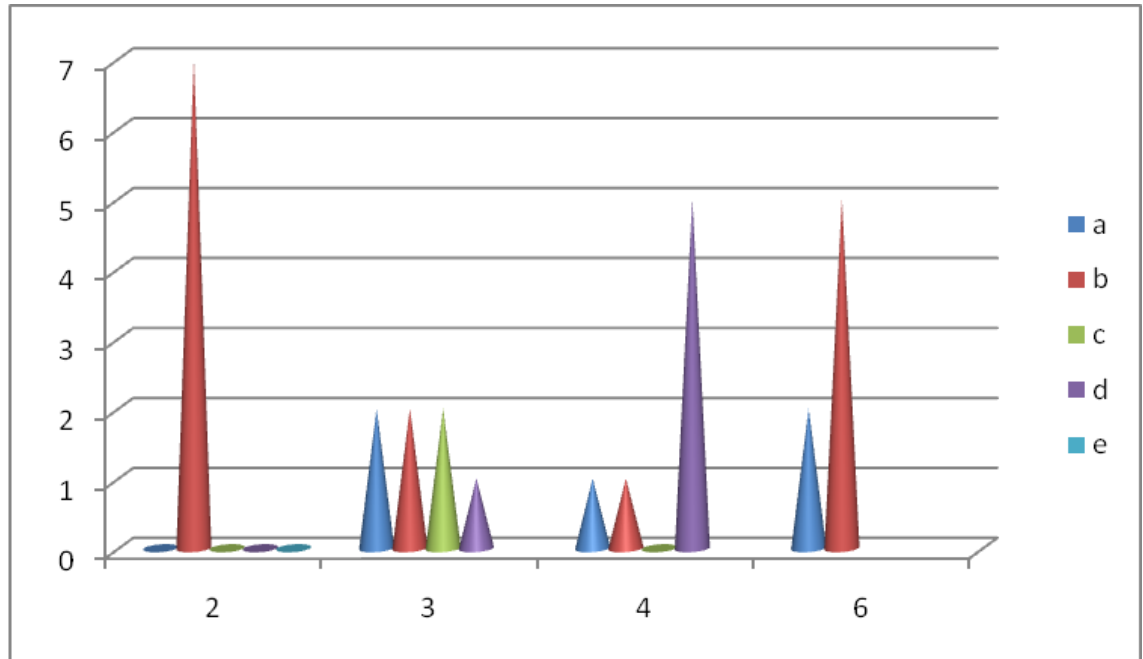

The average price from male respondents of age 20 years and under was 200 Euros.

This chart shows that young men use suit sporadically. None of them used a suit every day. In this age group men would not buy any clothes without seeing the final product first, which is not possible when dealing with made to order clothing. To solve this problem in the future, we believed that if the customer would be able to see a sample of how the final piece of clothing might look (e.g. sample cloth made of same fabric), it would help the customer to make the decision to order. Half of the respondents would order custom made clothes online if it was easy and fast, and the other half would only trust that they received quality products if a professional took their measurements in the store. The average price the respondents would pay for a custom made suit is 200 Euros and all of the respondents were ready to purchase the product for the price they declared.

Ages 21-40

This bar graph represents male answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in age group; 21-40 years old.
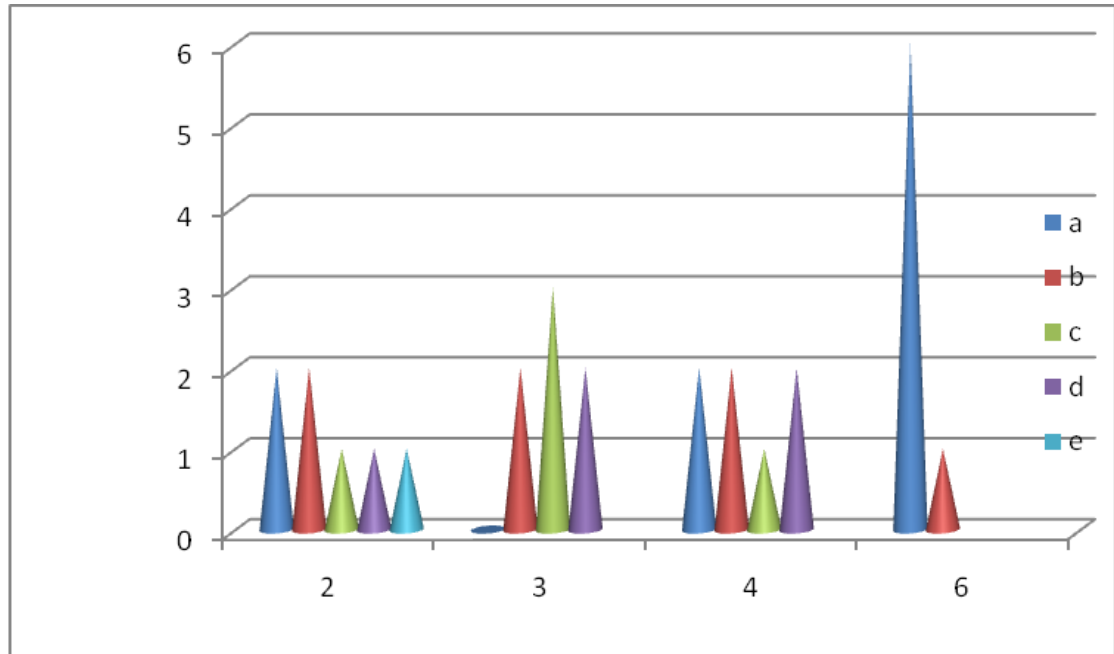

The average price from male respondents age 21 to 40 years was 271 Euros.

We believe this age group to be our most important target group. Men who answered the questionnaire wear suit only when it is mandatory e.g. weddings and similar events. From question three we couldn't find a strong opinion, there were answers evenly in all options. Men in this age group would not order any custom made clothing online. This matter might strongly affect our decisions when choosing distribution channels.

Ages 41 and above

This bar graph represents male answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in age group; 41 years old and above.
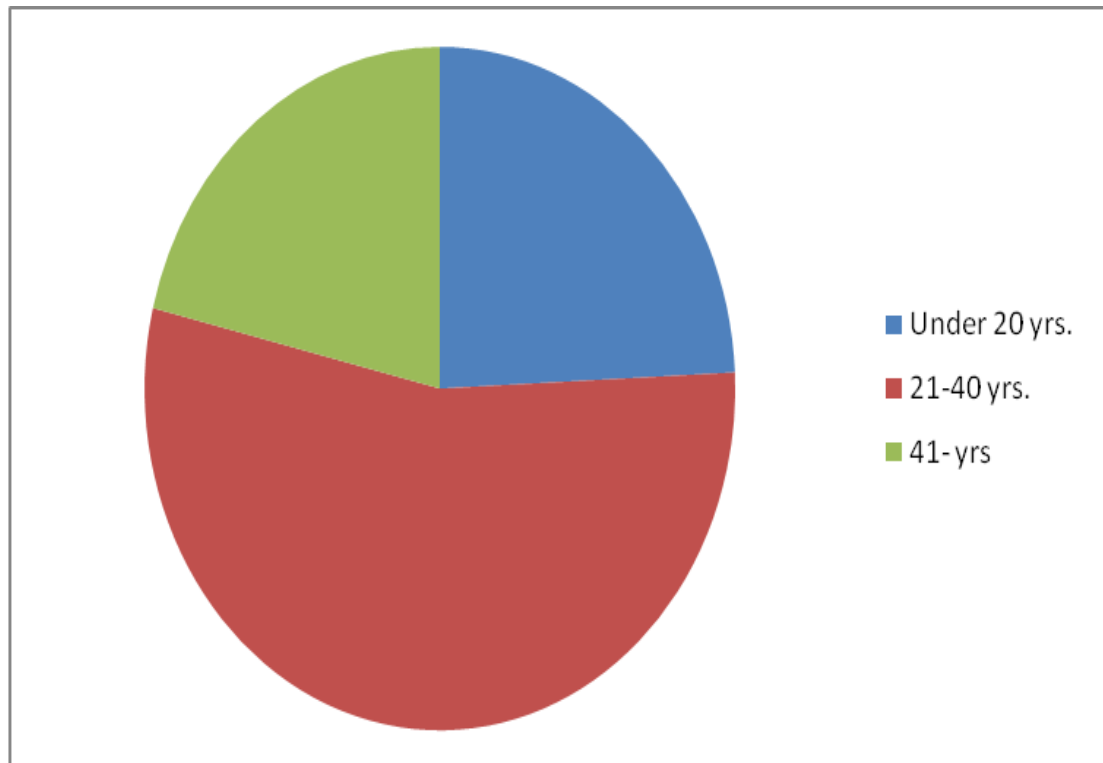

The average price from male respondents age 41 years or older was 190 Euros.

This age group uses internet least of all of interviewed age groups so it is not absolutely important to analyze whether or not they would order custom made clothes in internet. It can be seen that people are interested in this type of products and would buy them from a local store where a professional would take the measurements. The average price was 190 Euros and the majority of the respondents were ready to purchase the product for the price they declared.

5.4 Results: Women

Age distribution of the female questionnaire respondents:

The average price from all female respondents was 181 Euros.

The total amount of female respondents was 33 people, eight of which were under 20 years old, 18 were between ages 21 to 40, and seven were 41 years or older. The amount of female respondents was much larger that of men, so we were able to reach our desired sample size of 50 interviewees.

Ages 20 and under

This bar graph represents female answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in the age group; 20 and under.
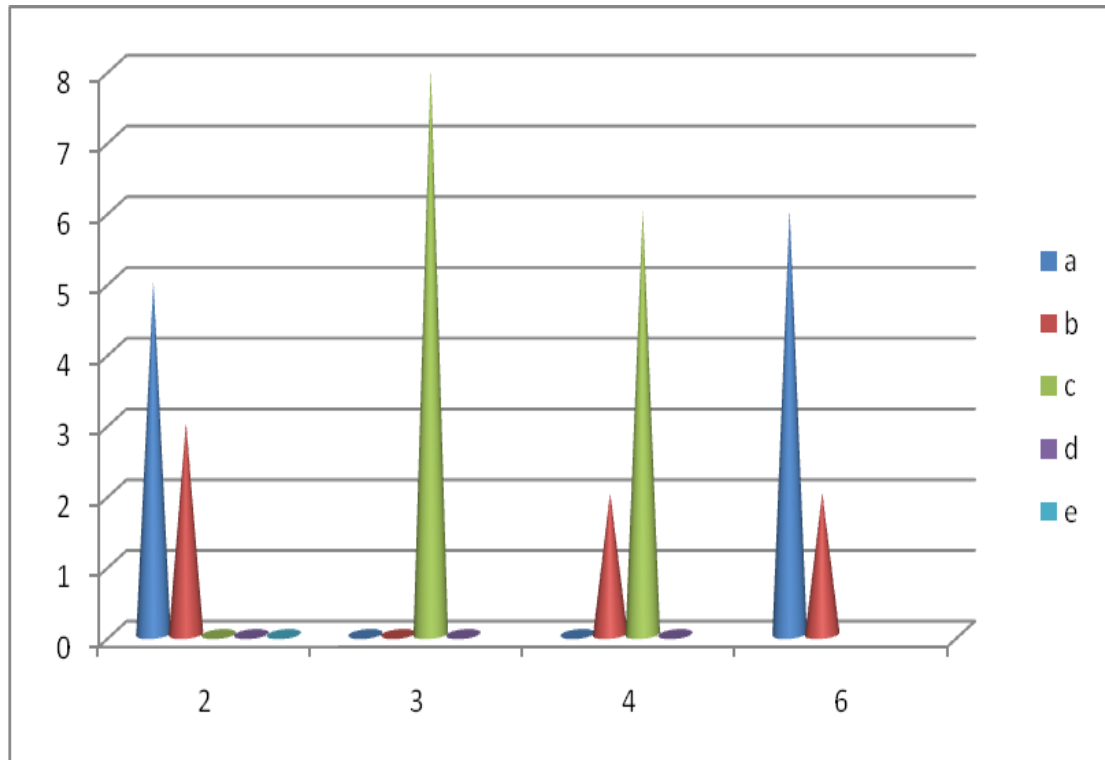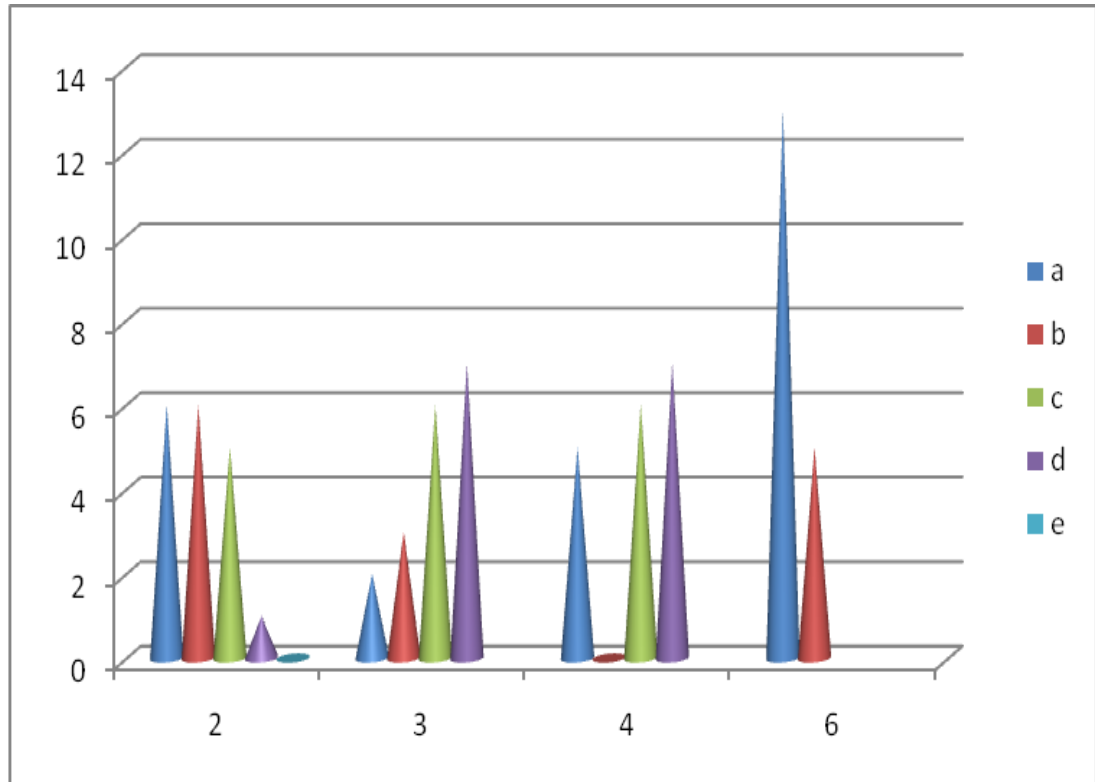

The average price from female participants age 20 years and under was 127 Euros.

The average price in this group was the lowest among all groups. In addition, respondents never used suits or used them only when it was mandatory. Everyone that participated was interested in acquiring made to order clothing if it was cheaper. 75 percent of the participants were also ready to take the measurements themselves if it was made simple enough. The same percentage would order the product for the price they declared.

Ages 21-40

This bar graph represents female answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in age group; 21-40 years old.
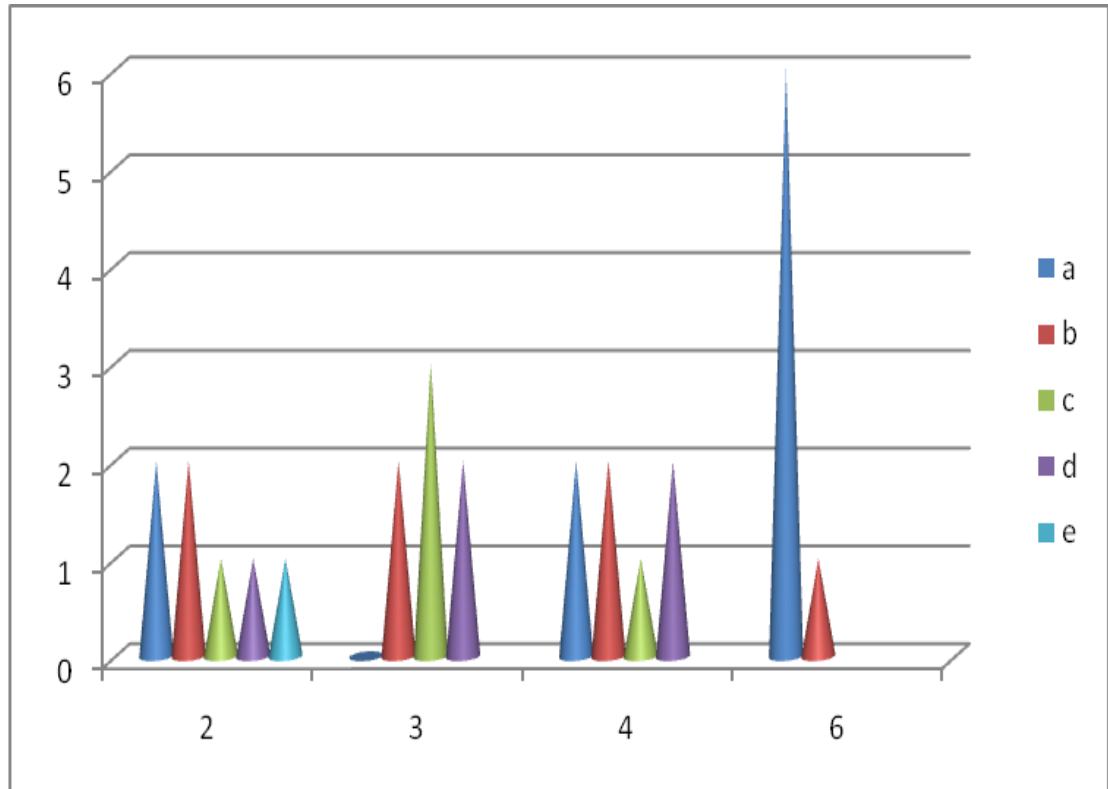

The average price from female respondents age 21 to 40 years was 207 Euros.

In this age group the answers were spread quite evenly in all options. One third of the respondents used a suit at least once a month. The majority of the participants were very interested in acquiring a suit shown in the enclosed appendix. However, the majority of respondents would would buy them from a local store where a professional would take the measurements. The average price was 207 Euros and 75% of the respondents were ready to purchase the product for the price they declared.

Ages 41 and above

This bar graph represents female answers for questions 2, 3, 4 and 6 in age group; 41 years old and above.

The average price from female respondents age 41 years or older was 179 Euros.

The answers were spread quite evenly on all options in this age group as well. The majority of the respondents were interested in purchasing a made to order suit but thought that they were too expensive. Only one respondents was interested in taking the measurements herself and ordering online, all the other respondents were against ordering made to order clothes online. The average price was 179 Euros and the majority of respondents were ready to purchase the product for the price they declared.

5.5   Summary

All in all the general price level questionnaire was a success. The total amount of answers was 51, of which 18 respondents were men and 33 respondents were women. The average price declared by all 51 respondents was 200,5 Euros. We were able to gather enough data to confirm our initial impressions about the price level.

The average of price estimates from men were higher than from women. Interestingly, the average prices were similar in the way that the highest average price was declared by both age groups of 21 to 40 years old (271 Euros for men and 207 Euros for women.) In addition, the average price seemed to drop in the age group of 41 years and above. Surprisingly, women who were 20 years old or under were not ready to spend much money on made to order clothing while men in the same age group were almost polar opposites; They were ready to spend a healthy amount of money and all respondents were ready to purchase the product for the price declared.

Seven respondents wouldn't order anything online, and nine wouldn't be interested in a service which sells made to order clothing online. This may indicate that we need to find another distribution channel that can reach the potential customers who are not ready to use internet to purchase our products.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

As the general price level questionnaire so demonstrated, the average price estimate from all respondents was over 200 Euros, it is safe to assume that products priced on this level would sell as expected. Lowering the price 5-10 percent below this value would boost sales slightly and provide desired coverage. The average price estimates were higher for men than women, but since the costs related to women's clothing are lower, their price level can be set lower as well. This does not pose a problem business wise.

Age wise, it would make sense to target both men and women in the 21 to 40 year old category as the main target market. These people were ready to spend the most money out of all six categories. As the main market segment is quite broad, further research on it is recommended. Additionally, men who were 20 years old or under were ready to spend quite a lot of money while women of the same age group were not as eager to do so. This leads us to believe that it would be wise to target adult men who are 20 years old or under as a secondary market.

As a substantial amount of participants was against ordering products through internet, it would be beneficial to set up a storefront as a distribution channel so that people may see the products and make the decision to order after being convinced of the quality offered. One solution to this would be setting up a partnership with an existing clothing store. This way the measurements can be taken by a professional which increasingly relieves concerns that a potential customer might have about ordering made to order clothing.

Further points of interest

In the future, Tradesman Tmi has to make sure that its online services will be optimized to their full potential. As the company relies heavily on its website for the sales process, it has to ensure that customers are as comfortable using it as possible. Website updates, security, special offers, payment process and ease of use need to be coordinated and tested so that they will offer fast and consistent user experience. Addition-

ally, the website should be able to save customers' information in a database to improve reselling process and help preserve customer relationships.

Another future point of interest for Tradesman Tmi is improving the fluency of communication with its partners both in Finland and in China. The largest communicational barrier the company has in China, is the lack of English speaking and Chinese understanding employees. If the company will be able to hire a few bilingual employees, it will be able to communicate instructions both ways much easier.

Finally, a possible future problem with doing business in China is the slow transaction speed of payments. At the moment, a payment may take as long as one week to process. A faster international transaction process would require a corporate account which the company has to acquire if the business was to pick up. However, this does not pose a problem to the company at the moment.

7 CONCLUSIONS

All in all the subject of this thesis was very convenient because so much work had already been done to support the company itself and we had quite a bit of knowledge about what should be improved even without conducting thorough testing. It was very interesting to execute the questionnaire process and analyze the data. We found it rewarding to see that our estimates about the general price level is correct.

Difficulties faced during the process

Due to work obligations both us couldn't work on the thesis full-time. We found out that fitting both of our schedules together to work on the thesis was harder than was expected at first. Because of this, we couldn't use our time as efficiently as possible. We made most out of our work effort, however, and were able to progress on time. Another difficulty we faced during the thesis process was the lack of time during the questionnaire data collection. It would have been better to collect a larger sample of questionnaire answers, but all in all we were very satisfied with the outcome.

What could have been done differently?

In hindsight, if we could change something in the thesis process, we could schedule the time spent on working with the thesis more precisely. We would also spend more time collecting data for our price level questionnaire to increase sample size. In addition, we could split the 21-40 year old age category into two smaller ones as it is now quite broad and does not offer as accurate information as possible. Finally, we concentrate more on the webpage and details of online business as it is the main sales channel of the company.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 / 4

Forms of the price level questionnaire

Hei arvoisa vastaaja!   Miehille.

Vastaamalla kysymyksiin voit osallistua 150€ arvoisen tuotepaketin arvontaan. Tuotepaketti sisältää yrityksen tuotteita, joita kysely koskee. Arvomme palkinnon maaliskuun 15. päivä.

Kyselytutkimuksen toimeksiantaja on Tailorman Collection, joka maahantuo miesten mittatilauspukuja sekä naisten mittatilaus business- ja vapaa-ajan asuja. Työn toteuttaa kaksi Mikkelin Ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijaa, jotka liittävät tutkimuksen osaksi lopputyötänsä.

Kysymykset :

1. Minkä ikäinen olet - ympyröi jokaisesta kysymyksestä yksi vaihtoehto

   a) alle 20   b) 21-30   c)31-40   d)41-50   e) yli 50

2. Käytätkö pukua

a) en koskaan   b) vain pakollisissa juhlatilaisuuksissa pari kertaa vuodessa

c) kerran kuukaudessa d) viikoittain   e) käytän pukua miltei päivittäin työasuna

3. Näet kuvissa pukuja jotka on valmistettu mittojen mukaan, lisäksi niihin on kirjailtu puvun omistajan nimi povitaskuun. Liite 1.

a) Uskon löytäväni yhtä istuvia ja vastaavan tasoisia pukuja vaateliikkeistä

b) En ostaisi mitään vaatetta näkemättä valmista tuotetta ensin   c) Olen miettinyt, että mittatilauspuku olisi hieno saada, pidän niitä kuitenkin liian kalliina.

d) Wau! Tällainen pitäisi löytyä minunkin vaatekaapistani – istuvaa puku on vaikea löytää.

4. Olisitko valmis ottamaan mitat itse ja tilaamaan puvun internet- kaupasta?

a) en olisi kiinnostunut tällaisesta palvelusta b) en tilaisi mitään vaatteita internetistä c) jos mitat on helppo ja nopea ottaa niin kyllä   d) ostaisin mittatilauspuvun vain liikkeestä, jossa joku siihen perehtynyt ottaa mitat

5. Jos olisit hankkimassa pukua, mikä olisi sinusta sopiva hinta Liitteessä 1 olevalle puvulle, joka on tehty mittojesi mukaan, valittavanasi on 20 eri kangasvärivaihtoehtoa. Kirjoita summa viivalle. Summan tulisi olla välillä 80-300€

------------------ €

6. Tilaisitko puvun antamallasi hinnalla? Tämä ei ole myyntitilaisuus eikä pukua voi tilata tässä yhteydessä.

a) kyllä   b) en

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Jos haluat osallistua arvontaan, täytä alla olevat kentät.

Nimi:

Puhelinnumero:

S-posti:

Hei arvoisa vastaaja!   Naisille.

Vastaamalla kysymyksiin voit osallistua 150€ arvoisen tuotepaketin arvontaan.
Tuotepaketti sisältää yrityksen tuotteita, joita kysely koskee. Arvomme palkinnon
maaliskuun 15. päivä.

Kyselytutkimuksen toimeksiantaja on Tailorman Collection, joka maahantuo miesten
mittatilauspukuja sekä naisten mittatilaus business- ja vapaa-ajan asuja. Työn toteuttaa
kaksi Mikkelin Ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijaa, jotka liittävät tutkimuksen osaksi
lopputyötänsä.

Kysymykset :

1. Minkä ikäinen olet - ympyröi jokaisesta kysymyksestä yksi vaihtoehto

    a) alle 20   b) 21-30   c)31-40   d)41-50   e) yli 50

2. Käytätkö housu- tai jakkupukua

a) en koskaan   b) vain pakollisissa juhlatilaisuuksissa pari kertaa vuodessa

c) kerran kuukaudessa

d) viikoittain   e) käytän päivittäin työasuna

3. Näet kuvissa vaatteita jotka on valmistettu mittojen mukaan, lisäksi niihin on
    kirjailtu puvun omistajan nimi povitaskuun. Liite 1.

a)   Uskon löytäväni yhtä istuvia ja vastaavan tasoisia vaatteita vaateliikkeistä

b) En ostaisi mitään vaatetta näkemättä valmista tuotetta ensin   c) Olen miettinyt,
että mittatilauspuku olisi hieno saada, pidän niitä kuitenkin liian kalliina.

d) Wau! Tällainen pitäisi löytyä minunkin vaatekaapistani – istuvaa pukua on
vaikea löytää.

4. Olisitko valmis ottamaan mitat itse ja tilaamaan puvun internet- kaupasta?

a) en olisi kiinnostunut tällaisesta palvelusta b) en tilaisi mitään vaatteita
internetistä c) jos mitat on helppo ja nopea ottaa niin kyllä   d) ostaisin
mittatilauspuvun vain liikkeestä, jossa joku siihen perehtynyt ottaa mitat

5. Jos olisit hankkimassa pukua, mikä olisi sinusta sopiva hinta Liitteessä 1 olevalle puvulle, joka on tehty mittojesi mukaan, valittavanasi on 20 eri kangasvärivaihtoehtoa. Kirjoita summa viivalle. Summan tulisi olla välillä 80-300€

------------------ €

6. Tilaisitko puvun antamallasi hinnalla? Tämä ei ole myyntitilaisuus eikä pukua voi tilata tässä yhteydessä.

a) kyllä   b) en

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Jos haluat osallistua arvontaan, täytä alla olevat kentät.

Nimi:

Puhelinnumero:

S-posti:

Measurement and ordering forms for consumer and retail use

The measurement form is a very important part of the ordering process. It is created in coordination with the manufacturer of the made to order clothing. Usually there are twenty separate measurements that need to be measured in order to create a made to order suit.

However, we have simplified the process by including only the most important measurements required. This decision decreases the amount of human error significantly in measurement process. This measurement form has already been used as the basis for many successful made to order clothes.

The first form has been created for purposes online ordering for the customer. In the future revised to fit retail use. The second form has been developed for manufacturer order purposes. As there are people with varying language skills accepting the order forms, they are offered in both Chinese (Putonghua) and English.

MITTAKAAVA - Tailorman mittatilausvaatteille.

Samaa kaavaa käyttävät sekä naiset ja miehet. Seuraa kaavan ohjeita tarkkaan ja ota mitat vartalon mukaisesti(ei vaatteista) saadaksesi täydelliset vaatteet. Normaalit ohuet vaatteet voivat olla päälläsi kuten t-paita, housut. Mitta jota käytät olisi suotavaa olla mittanauha, jossa on yksiköt senttimetreissä. Täytä kaikki kohdat 1-10. Huom kohdat 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 ja 9 ovat ympärysmittoja. Kohdat 2, 6 ,8 ja 10 ovat mittoja kohdasta toiseen. Seuraa kuvien esimerkkiä. Merkitse ottamasi mitat seuraavelle sivulle.

1. Kaulan ympärys : [   ] cm   Ohje: Mittaa kohdasta johon kauluspaidan kaula-aukko sijoittuu.

2. Käden pituus: [   ] cm

Ohje: Mittaa käden pituus olkapään kohdasta jossa kulma alkaa aina kohtaan asti jossa peukalon ja etusormen väli alkaa. Katso apua kuvasta. Kun etsit kohtaa olkapäästä voit käyttää apunasi mahdollisesti nykyisessä paidassasi olevia saumoja tai tunnustella missä terävä kohta olkapäässäsi on. Pidä käsi suorana kun otat mitan.

3. Rintakehtän ympärys: [   ] cm

Ohje: Mittaa rintakehän ympärys paksuimmasta kohdasta. Elä vedä keuhkoja täyteen ilmaa. Vain hieman. Koita olla mahdollisimman normaalisti.

4. Vyötärön ympärysmitta: [   ] cm

Ohje: Ota mitta kohdasta jolla pidät vyötä. Jos pidät vyötä/housuja puvun kanssa korkeammalla kuin vapaa-ajan housuja, ota mitta kohdasta jossa pidät puvun housuja.

5. Lantion ympärysmitta, takamuksen kodalta: [   ] cm

Ohje: Ota mitta paksuimmasta kohdasta. Seiso normaalisti.

6. Lahkeen pituus: [   ] cm

Ohje: Ota mitta vyön kohdalta kohtaan jossa jalkapohja alkaa. Jos sinulla on kenkä jalassasi, kohta on se jossa kengän pohjallinen alkaa. Jos pidät puvunhousuja korkeammalla kuin vapaa-ajan housuja niin ota mitta vyön kohdasta, jossa pidät puvun housuja.

7. Ympärysmitta navan kohdalta, ylempi vyötärön ympärysmitta: [   ] cm

Ohje: Mittaa vyötärö ympärysmitta navan kohdalta. Seiso normaalisti.

8. Haara : ▢ cm

Ohje: Mittaa haarojen välistä halutusta vyön korkeudesta edestä taakse. Jos pidät puvunhousuja korkeammalla kuin vapaa-ajan housuja, niin ota mitta kohdasta jossa pidät puvun housuja. Jätä väliin halutun verran tyhjää. Kuten housuissa jotka tuntuvat sopivalta sinulle

9. Reiden paksuus: ▢ cm

Ohje: Mittaa ympärysmitta reiden keskiosasta.

10. Hartioiden leveys: ▢ cm

..

Ohje: Mittaa olkapään kulmasta toiseen. Kulma on kohta jossa tuntuu terävä kohta olkapäässäsi. Jos paidassasi on saumat, niin voit käyttää niitä apunasi. Mittanauha kulkee niskasi takaa.

Haluan vaatteeni: A: taysin istuvana- slim fit   B: vähän väljää   C: väljänä

Ohje: Jos otat A-vaihtoehdon vaatteet ovat mahdollisimman kehon myötäiset ja istuvat.

B-vaihtoehto lisää hieman väljyyttä ja mukavuutta.

C ei yliväljä, mutta hieman reilumpi. Hyvä jos on paljon painon vaihtelua.

Valintani on vaihtoehto:

Pukuun ja paitoihin tuleva nimi/nimikirjaimet

> Ohje: Esim. Timo Tyylikäs. Pukuun tulevat sekä etu-ja sukunimi
> kokonaisuudessaan ja paitoihin nimikirjaimet. Mikäli et halua nimeä tai
> nimikirjaimia, ilmoita se toivomuksia kohdassa viimeisessä kentässä. Jos
> tuotteisiin tulevat eri nimet tai nimikirjaimet imoita siitä toivomuksia
> kohdassa.

HUOM!

Kaksiosaisille vaatteille(puvut, jakkupuvut, housupuku) tarvitsemme kaksi
toimitusosoitetta. Esim: tutun, kaverin, naapurin omasi lisäksi. Tämä siksi, että takki
ja housut/hame lähetetään eri osoitteisiin jotta yhden paketin arvo alittaa alle 45e.
Lisäksi jokaisella yksiosaiselle tuotteelle(vyö, paita) eri toimitusosoitteen, jos
tilauksen arvo ylittää 45e. Eli paidan 24,90e ja vyön 11,90 voit tilata samassa
paketissa yhteen toimitusosoitteeseen, koska arvo ei ylitä 45e.

Kaikki tämä siksi, että lähetämme tuotteet alle 45 euron arvoisina pakettia kohden
jolloin tulli ei peri niistä arvonlisäveroa eikä tullimaksua. Lisää tietoa sivultamme
Usein Kysytyt Kysymykset. Kaikki tämä siksi, että tuote olisi sinulle mahdollisimman
edullinen ja saisit sen mahdollisimman nopeasti ilman tulliselvitystä.

Toimitusosoite(et)

1.Etu-ja sukunimi:

Osoite:

2. Etu-ja sukunimi:

Osoite:

3. Etu-ja sukunimi:

Osoite:

4. Etu-ja sukunimi:

Osoite:

Kankaan koodi pukuun:

Ohje: Löydät koodin tuoteikkunasta. Jos olet tilannut monta pukua samoilla
mitoilla laita tähän kaikkien kankaiden koodit. Esim: 6993948, 6991648

Kankaan koodi paitoihin:

Ohje: Löydät koodin tuoteikkunasta. Jos olet tilannut monta paitaa samoilla
mitoilla laita tähän kaikkien kankaiden koodit. Esim: 19920, 17562

Toivomuksia:

Lähetä lopuksi tämä dokumentti sähköpostin liitetiedostona osoitteeseen:
asiakaspalvelu@tailorman.fi Tuotteiden toimitus kestää normaalisti 9-15 päivää. Kiitos tilauksestasi!

Measurement and ordering form for the manufacturer

<u>MEASURE FORM</u>. For tailor .

Women and men use the same form. Measures are taken from body not from clothes. All the measures are in

CENTIMETERS, cm. Picture gives guide where the measure has been taken from.

男女共**用**同一份表。所有量度是从身体，不是从衣服。量度单位是

厘米(cm)。请根据以下的量度制造。

1. Neckline颈围 :   n   Measure is taken round the neck.

从颈绕一圈**量度**

2. Arm length臂长: cm

From shoulder seam to point where thumb and forefinger cross. Watch from the picture above.从肩膀接合口到拇指跟食指接合口。

3. Chest胸部: cm

Chest measure from the thickest point. 从最厚的部份量度。

4. Waist腰: cm

Around measure point where the belt is.从带腰带的地方量度。

5. Bottom臀部: cm

Round measure from around the bottom. 从最厚的部份量度。

6. Trouser length 裤长: cm

From belt to ground if you don't have shoes and if you have shoes then to the point where heel starts.
没有穿鞋的时候，从腰带到地面量度。如果穿了鞋，就从腰带到鞋跟量度。

7. Round measure around the waist from belly button high 从肚子的按钮水平绕一圈:
cm

8. <u>Crotch</u>胯部: cm

9. <u>Round the thigh</u> 从大腿绕一圈: cm

Measure around the thigh from the thickest point. 从最厚的部份量度。

10. <u>Shoulder length</u>肩宽: cm

Shoulder length from seam to seam. 从两边的接合口量度。

11. <u>For ladies only: Skirt length</u> 只供女仕:裙长: cm

Measure from waist to knee.从腰到膝部量度。

12. For men only: Overcoat length只供男仕: 大衣长度: cm

The length of an overcoat. From lower collar seam to the length desired. 从衣领底部和大衣接合口量度。

<u>Name to be put into the jacket 外套上的自订姓名</u>

There is a badge in breast side of the jacket that says: Specially Made For and the name above. 外套里面有一个标记，特地设计以写上姓名

Fabric code编织号码:

Customer number 顾客号码:

Please put this into the package when you send it to Hong Kong.

请将这表一同寄到香港。
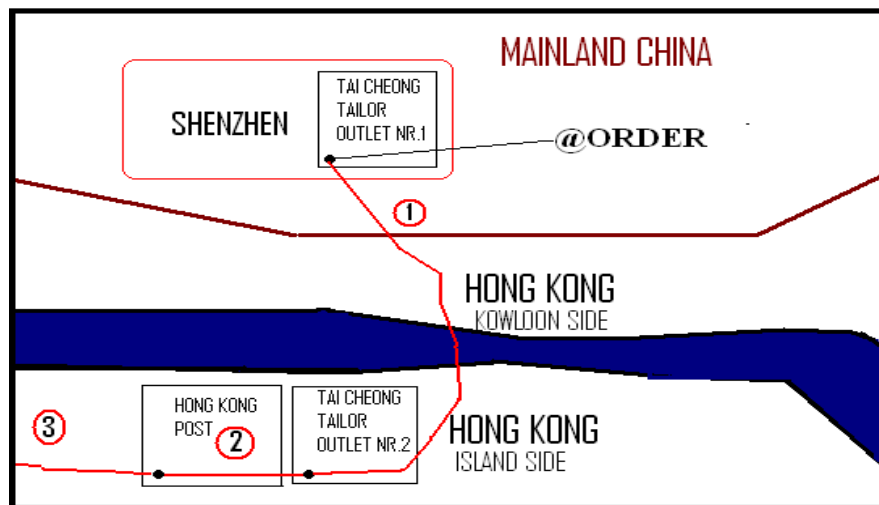
PowerPoint presentation for a prospect partner Uniikki K

Through a business acquaintance I ended up having a meeting with a local garment specialist Uniikki K. The meeting's agenda was to present the business idea and find out possibilities for future cooperation.

Logistiikka

Mittakaava

- Mittojen ottaminen perustuu mittakaavaan
- www.tailorman.fi
- Vaatii lisää testausta ja koevaatteita.
- Jälleenmyyjä mittaa? Ei nettitilauksia? Jatko auki.

As the business idea was not familiar to Uniikki K beforehand, the plan was to clarify the origin and manufacturing process of the products. In addition, our task was to define the role of Uniikki K in the supply chain.

Hinta

- Uudet neuvottelut hinnoissa.
- RMB ja HKD vahvistuneet.
- Valuutoiden hinnat vaikuttavat katteisiin.
- Arvioitu nettohinta puvulle n.100e
- Volyymin noustua lisää neuvotteluvaltaa hinnasta.
- Ulosmyyntihinta voisi sijoittua välille 180-250e?
- Naisten asut hieman edullisempia sisäänosto/rahti
- Kyselytutkimus lauantaina 13.2.2010

Yhteistyö- Uniikki

- Jälleenmyynti, jälleenmyyntikonseptin kehitys.
- Ainoa Mikkelissä
- Mittojen otto
- Korjaustyöt

In order to make the business proposition desirable, we had to give them an idea of the general costs and pricing strategy. The representative of Uniikki K was very interested in business cooperation. It was decided that Uniikki K would be the only representative of Tailorman Collection products in South Savonia region. They were also willing to offer retailing, measuring and modifications to the clothing.