

Bachelor's thesis

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Giulia Gocciadoro

# Establishing a sales organisation for a restaurant

– Case Pizzeria Via Tribunali



Opinnäytetyö (AMK) | Tiivistelmä

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Giulia Gocciadoro

## Myyntiorganisaation luonti ravintolalle

- case Pizzeria Via Tribunali

Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli luoda ravintolalle myyntiorganisaation. Työn toimeksiantajayrityksenä toimii ravintola ketju Pizzeria Via Tribunali. Nopean ja laajan kasvun vuoksi toimeksiantajayritys koki myyntiorganisaation luomisen tarpeelliseksi.

Opinnäytetyö koostuu teoriaosuudesta, toiminnallisesta osuudesta, johtopäätöksistä ja suosituksista.

Teoriaosuudessa käsitellään aiheet ovat myyntiprosessi, myyntiorganisaatio ja merkittävimmät erot B2B ja B2C myynnin välillä. Toiminnallisessa osuudessa on kuvailtu myyntiorganisaation luonnin vaiheet. Viimeisessä osuudessa on esitelty opinnäytetyön tulokset, arvioitu myyntiorganisaation luonnin vaiheet sekä on annettu tulevaisuutta varten vinkkejä jatkoon.

Asiasanat:

Myyntiprosessi, myyntiorganisaatio, B2B, B2C, ravintola-ala

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## Establishing a sales organization for a restaurant

- case Pizzeria Via Tribunali

The goal of this of this bachelor's thesis was to create an efficient sales organization for a restaurant. The commissioner of this bachelor's thesis was the restaurant chain Pizzeria Via Tribunali. Via Tribunali grew a lot as a company in the last three years, opening many restaurants around Finland. Because of this growth, the company felt it was the right time to establish a sales organization for it.

This bachelor's thesis is divided in three major sections. The theoretical section, the operational section and finally the conclusion and recommendation sections.

In the theoretical section three important concepts are presented. The importance of a sales process and its different steps, how a sales organization can be arranged and the main differences between B2B and B2C selling.

Keywords:

Salesprocess, sales organization, B2B, B2C, restaurant

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# 1 Introduction

The topic of this bachelor's thesis was chosen out of interest on both sales and food service industry, more specifically in restaurants.

The purpose of this bachelor's thesis was to establish a sales organization for the commissioner company, Pizzeria Via Tribunali. Pizzeria Via Tribunali is a Neapolitan pizzeria chain based in Finland.

This bachelor's thesis is divided in three major sections. The theoretical section, the operational section, the conclusion section and the recommendation section.

The theoretical section will cover three major concepts. The importance of a well structured sales process, the different stages of a sales process, different ways to arrange a sales organization and the main differences between B2B and B2C selling.

The operational section will go through the process of establishing a sales organization for the commissioner company, and everything involved with it.

Therefore in the final section, conclusions and recommendations about the completed work will be made.

## 2 Sales process

For the majority of companies, the main source of income are sales. This is why sales are very important for businesses. Selling is a transaction, where customers exchanges their money for a service or a product. (Prater, 2020)

Business and selling are evolving constantly but the main changes happened during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the demand was higher than the supply itself, therefore salesmen were considered more as an intermediary. During the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, salesman's job was to persuade the clients in buying products. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century happened the biggest evolution in selling, they started to co-operate with marketing. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

Because of the digitalization, in today's world it has become easier and easier for a customer to buy products. Using internet they can find in matter of minutes everything they need to know about the products and even compare the prices. This is why it is of great importance that the salesman is capable of giving extra value to the customer's buying experience, one that he could not get from a session of online shopping. But what can give the customer extra value to the experience? It would be good for the salesman to be able to understand the bigger picture and to present himself to the salesmeeting well prepared about the selling product but also about his customer. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

When the new potential customer is found, a process begins between customer and salesman, the sales process. The sales process is a plan that will help the salesman, and therefore the company, to achieve their sales goals. It involves a series of stages, from the first contact with a customer to the final sale. (Jordan & Kelly, 2015)

This process should to be clear and easily understandable for the whole salesteam and it would be good for it to go hand by hand with the asset value of the company itself. It is also very important that the sales process is made thinking about the customers and their buying behaviours in that specific company. Companies that have a well structured sales process are more prone to generate a better revenue. (Jordan & Kelly, 2015)

*“The sales process is similar to developing a relationship with someone new. When you first meet, you get to know each other, learn what they like and determine their goals. Along the way, you decide if you can work together and whether you are a match. If this is the case, the relationship can proceed and grow”. (Gargaro, 2023)*

## 2.1 The stages of a sales process

As Rahman et al write a sales process is usually divided in seven steps, as seen in figure 1. (Rahman, 2020)



Figure 1, Visual representation of the sales process (Rahman, 2020)

As seen in Figure 1, the seven steps of a sales process could be prospecting and initial contact, qualifying, needs assessment, sales pitch or product demonstration, proposal and handling objections, closing and following up, repeat business and referrals. All these are detailed below.

## Prospecting

To be able to sell something to someone one has to first find this someone. This process is called prospecting. A business needs to know what it's searching for in a customer, therefore creating an ideal customer profile is very important. Using the information from the ideal customer profile, it is then easier to identify those ones who might be potential clients. (Gargaro, 2023)

*“This first step has an outsized impact on the success of the rest of the sales process. It's important to build clear customer profiles for the reps so they know how to assess leads and determine whether they're interested in what the company is selling” (Bauer, 2022)*

## Initial contact and qualifying

In the second step of the sales process an initial contact has to be made with the prospected leads. The goal of this first contact with the clients is for the salesperson to gather important information to determine if the clients are a good match for the sold product or service. The requirements are usually related to budget, authority, need and timeline. (Rahman, 2020)

Hänti et al write about how crucially important is the first impression the client gets from the salesman. The same happens in normal life, when we meet someone new. We try to give our best at our first meeting to in order to give a good first impression of ourselves to the new person we just met. At the first salesmeeting, the seller is selling himself and the company to the customer, rather than a product or a service. The salesman has to be able to build a relationship based on trust with the customer. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

## **Needs assessment**

In the needs assessment step, salesperson maps out the needs of the customer via open ended questions. The goal of assessing the needs of the customer is to understand the present state of the customer, estimate possible problems and/or difficulties he's having and therefore be able to give them resolutions by selling a specific product or service. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

According to different studies, those saleperson that ask questions, are the ones that most frequently succeed in closing the deal. This happens because the client feels that the salesman is actually interested in them and is ready to give the best possible solution for their problems. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

## **Sales presentation and/or product demo**

A sales presentation is a meeting where the sales team presents the product or services, along with reasoning why it would be the best selection, to the client. (Pipedrive)

Chunawalla declares that the crucial task of selling is communicating the product story to the buyer. A typical sales presentation follows the AIDA approach - attract the attention of the buyer, create an interest in the product, so that the buyer desires to possess the product, which ultimately results in buying action. (Chunawalla, 2008)

A statistically proven method to help client remember and relate to the brand is to use storytelling during the sales presentation. Stories move, teach and persuade their audience. (Pipedrive)

The sales presentation also is the right place to demonstrate the product or the service directly to the customer. The participation of the customer is very important in order to sell the product. (Chunawalla, 2008)

If all the prior steps of the sales process are done properly, this will help to reduce the actual time of the presentation, and it will make it easier to make one effective enough to generate better results. Still, an effective presentation is not always an end by itself, but more likely a preliminary step for actually closing the sale. (Chunawalla, 2008)

### **Proposal and handling objections**

The sales proposal needs to be done based on the customer needs, challenges and motivations. (Rahman, 2022) A well prepared salesperson is good to be always ready to asset the possible objections raised by the customer during the buying journey. (Chunawalla, 2008)

Objections are any concerns or questions raised by the customer. Some objections are an expression of confusion, doubt or disagreement with the statements or information presented by the salesperson, still objections should not always be viewed with concern. Many of them are simply a clue that the client might be actually interested on the product. What the client is asking for is further information because they are invested in what the salesperson is explaining. The presented objections highlight the issues that are important to the client. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 251.)

There are many ways to adress to the objections raised by a customer. The most important thing to do is to listen to them. Even if the objections might not sound relevant. Listening to these concerns gives the salesperson the opportunity to once again understand even better the needs of the customer. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

## **Closing**

Closing a sale is needed to be done effectively to achieve successful sales result. All customers are different, some will take time and other are sold in a matter of minutes. (Chunawalla, 2008)

There are many different type of closing techniques. Knowing many different options of closing a sale can give the salesperson more self-esteem. Also it will help to adapt in different sales situations. (Clay, 2003, p. 197-199)

The most common closing techniques can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Different closing styles (Clay.,2003, modified)

Type of closing	Example
<b>Direct close</b>	The salesperson asks directly if the client wants to buy. "Would you buy?"
<b>Alternative close</b>	Two or more buying alternatives are given to the customer to choose between. "Would you like to be sent the yellow or the red sofa?"
<b>The "Assumptive" close</b>	The salesman assumes from the beginning of the salesprocess that they'll close the deal. Trough assuming good intent and beign aware of the client and their needs the salesperson will be able to guide them through the sales process. (HubSpot Marketing, 2019)
<b>The "Half Nelson" close</b>	It's similar as the direct close but it is preceeded by a question. "If I can mach that price, will you then buy?"
<b>Cost benefit analysis</b>	The salesperson makes the benefits of the deal clear to the customer.
<b>"Trial"</b>	The salesperson attempts to close the deal as soon as the client seems ready and asks a direct question that leed to closing, for example: "Would you like the dishwasher to be installed directly by our staff next monday?"
<b>The "Sympathy" close</b>	The salesperson uses their sympathy towards the client in order to make them buy.
<b>The "Lost Sale" close</b>	This closing style is used when the client has refused to buy. By asking where did the salesperson did wrong they might have a chance of over coming the objection.
<b>The "Deadline" close</b>	"This price is available only until December 12 <sup>th</sup> ."
<b>The "Referral" close</b>	During this closing technique the salesperson refers to the customer another company who was in similar situation with the deal.

Being able to time a closing right, is an important trait that a salesperson should have. A general rule could be to try to close the deal as soon as the client shows high interest or a doubtless intention to buy the product or service in question. The salesperson therefore should be able to recognize the buying signals and act accordingly. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 258)

### **Following up, repeat business and referrals**

This is the final step of the sales process. This step is necessary to guarantee that the customer is satisfied with the purchase and to build a longtime relationship with the customer. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 261)

The follow up step of this cycling sales process, is for most companies the hallmark of success. This plays also a huge role in showing actual interest in the customer from the salesperson. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 261) Post-sale action can consist of installation of the product, instruction on the use of the product and proper servicing. These services when guaranteed to the customers, give them reassurance and will to buy again from the same company. (Chunawalla, 2008, p. 30)

It is important for a salesperson to ensure the satisfaction of the customer. It's the right moment of the process for the salesperson to try to build a positive relationship with the customer, if this happens, the customer will almost certainly buy another time the product or the service, and/or recommend the company to other colleagues. If something negative happens, for example some problems with the shipping, the salesperson must react promptly, even overreact a little when trying to resolve the issue. This is important because as many studies have shown, a discontent customer will tell about the negative experience to way more people than a satisfied one. (Hänti, et al., 2016)

### 3 Sales organisation

There several methods as how a salesforce can be organized. It can be organized for example on product basis, on customer basis and on geographical basis.

#### Geographic organisation

As it can already be understood by the name of this organizational structure, the salespersons are assigned to specific geographic areas. The salesperson will have responsibility for the sales achievements done in area assigned to them. This organization structure is quite simple and has relatively low cost. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 419)

There are also downsides for the geographical organizational structure. For example, since only one salesperson is responsible for selling the full range products of the company to one area, they should have a deep technical knowledge about each product. But that is a lot to ask. That kind of expertise can be developed if the salesperson is given a specialized role. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 421) Therefore the salesperson working in this kind of organizational structure will know superficially every product but hardly anything specific about them.

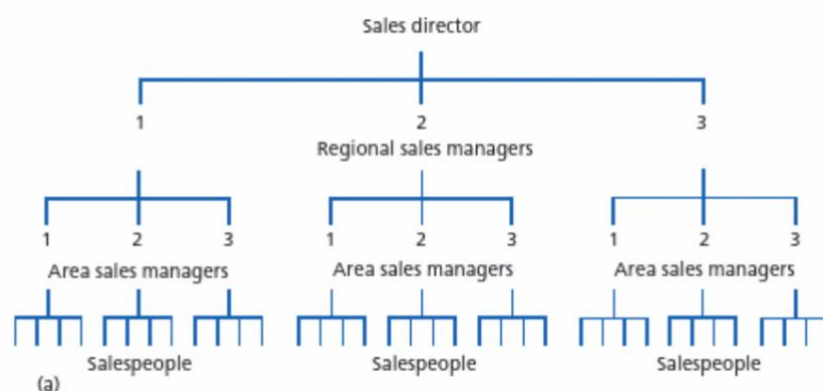


Figure 3 A graph of a geographical structure (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 420)

## Product organization

The next organizational structure in question is the one based on the product. This organizational structure allows the salespeople to become experts on specific products or services that they are selling. As a consequence they will be way better in communicating the values and use to the customers. (Brudner, 2021)

If a company decides to use this form of organization, it's usually because they sell a large variety of technically complex and diverse products. Nonetheless this structure also implies some risks if not used correctly. Customers can be mistakenly be called many times a day from different salespeople of the same company. This misuse of this organization type can arise customer annoyance. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 421)



Figure 4 a visualisation of what a product organisation might look like (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 420)

## Customer organisation

Nowadays more and more companies are organizing their businesses around their customers. Most of the resources of the companies are used to finalize that objective. This structure, which focuses on the customers, is used when the products are the same but there are a wide variety of customer categories that require different abilities from the salespeople. (Chunawalla, 2008, p. 164)

Some customers are very valuable to companies, because they might have been customers for a long period of time and/or they buy on average a lot of products. This is why some companies structure their salesforce by account size. Usually the senior salespeople are specialized in dealing with major accounts. The salespeople with more experience usually are able to withstand sophisticated arguments and to manage the different buying habits of these large accounts. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 422)

Some organisations will go for a three-tier system, where senior salespeople are negotiating with key accounts, ordinary salespeople are selling to medium-sized accounts, and the telemarketing team is dealing with small accounts. (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 422)



Figure 5 the three-tier system (Jobber et al., 2015, p. 422)

To conclude, nothing is always nor black or white. Many companies use either one system, a mixed one or use many of them at the same time to better organize their sales.

## 4 The main differences between B2B and B2C

B2B stands for business to business and it is a business model where companies sell services or products directly to other companies. On the other hand, B2C stands for business to consumer. When using the business to consumer business model, companies sell their product or services directly to the consumers. (Rumberger, 2022)

These two business model differ from one another in multiple ways. The main differences are listed in below in Figure 6.

	<b>Business to business</b>	<b>Business to consumer</b>
<b>Target audience</b>	Companies that buy product and services to use in the production of other goods and services or to be able to resell or rent them to other, making profit. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020)	Individuals or households that purchase products and services for personal consumption. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020)
<b>Marketing</b>	It involves strategies to promote the services and products to other businesses, like content, inbound, event and partner marketing. The goal is to build trusting and long-term relationship with other companies.	The aim of B2C marketing is to attract the attention of the consumer and to motivate them on pursuing a quick purchasing decision.
<b>Sales process</b>	Longer customer journey and sales cycle.	Concise sales cycle.

<b>Customer relationship</b>	The business customer needs long-term solutions to their problems, therefore the customer relationship is more personal, long and strategic.	The individual customer requires a quick solution for immediate needs. The relationship remains more transactional.
<b>Number of stakeholders</b>	Companies have numerous decision-makers that has to be consulted before closing a sale deal. Therefore the process is longer. (Chuck, 2015)	Often the customer gets through their buyer's journey on their own. When considering an expensive purchase they might consult people close to them. (Rumberger, 2022)
<b>Buying behavior</b>	Complex, long and formalized. The buyer and the seller depend on each other. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020)	It is influenced by four factors, cultural, psychological, personal and social. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020)

Figure 6 Main differences between B2B and B2C

## 5 Case Pizzeria Via Tribunali

Pizzeria Via Tribunali is a Neapolitan pizza restaurant chain based in Finland. There are 8 Pizzeria Via Tribunali around Finland. Six of them are in Helsinki, one in Turku and one in Äkäslompolo. The first restaurant was opened in the heart of Helsinki, in front of Helsinki's Cathedral, in spring 2017.

The most important value of Pizzeria Via Tribunali was, and still is, to bring authentic Neapolitan pizza to Finland. The art of Neapolitan pizza making, is in the list of UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2017)

Via Tribunali is very dedicated to maintaining the traditional Neapolitan pizza, for example they use in all pizzeria Valoriani ovens, that come straight from Italy and fresh ingredients, that mostly come from Italy as well. After a few months of hard work, the restaurant of Sofiankatu was awarded with the AVPN, Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana certificate. (Pizzeria Via Tribunali, 2024)

The AVPN association, is a non-profit association whose mission is to promote and protect the true Neapolitan pizza, in Italy and around the world (Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, ei pvm).

In 2021 "Viisi Tähteä", a media platform dedicated to restaurant, food and drink culture, included Via Tribunali in the "top 50 restaurants of Finland" classification. Via Tribunali was ranked 42th by professionals in the hospitality and gastronomy. (Rislakki, 2021)

In 2022 50TopPizza, ranked Via Tribunali in world's top 50 pizzachains as number 25, the year after, in 2023, it was ranked 33rd. (50TopPizza, 2022)

This company has faced a significant growth over the past 3 years. In 2022 were opened two restaurants, same as the year after that, 2023.

Because many restaurants were opened in a short time frame, the amount of staff notably grew. The revenue grew gradually year after year. The business results were during 2022 were low, this might be affected by the many new restaurant openings.

This growth was one of the main reasons why the company started to consider the possibility of establishing of a sales organization.

Usually, the main revenue source for restaurants are the “walk-in” clients. Walk-in clients will just show up at the door, without a table reservation, and the service process starts from there. Then there are the reservations of small and big groups, the preorders (take away) and for examples giftcards. These last ones can differ from one restaurant to another, based on what services they offer.

In Pizzeria Via Tribunali at the time, it was possible to reserve tables for large groups only from three of their restaurants, Kallio, Turku and Katajanokka. When a customer wanted to book for a larger group a table, they had to fill up a form, from the restaurant’s website, with the specifics of the reservation. Then this form was sent to the email of the restaurant at issue and the restaurant manager would take care of the reservation from that point forward. The restaurants used to put the reservations up on Google calendar, where they marked the name of the person accounted for the reservation, how many people were coming and any extra information about them.

This system worked well for some time. As soon as the amount of large reservation requests started to grow, the restaurant managers simply did not had enough time to handle the requests. Each restaurant manager that handled the reservation requests had their own way of handling them. This arose the need of a common working approach for every unit. This would be important also to emphasize the fact that Pizzeria Via Tribunali is a chain, where every unit work in the same way.

This issues, along with the growth of the company, brought up the need of an additional person that would specifically take care of reservations, preorder and giftcard selling. Therefore we started to establish a sales organization for Pizzeria Via Tribunali.

## 6 Practical part

The goal of this thesis was to design sales organization so that one person would be responsible for all sales. Besides the few rules that the restaurant managers followed when taking care of the big group reservations, everything else had to be done from scratches.

### The beginning

The first three days of the practical training were spent in Helsinki. There, the restaurant managers of each restaurant gave a tour of Kallio and Katajanokka. They showed everything, from the main floor to the kitchen. Gave examples of previous reservations and events they have had, how many people to fit in what tables, and so on. At the time the menu of each restaurant were different from each other, therefore I got to know the products each restaurant was selling. These three days were very important in order to be able to sell these venues and products to large groups, since it is important to know the place in question. If a salesperson is prepared and knows about what they're selling, the client gets a feeling of reliability and the chances of closing deals are higher.

The restaurant of Turku was already familiar since I had been working in the floor side for over a year. This aspect also helped me a lot when booking reservations for that specific restaurant.

In the beginning we started to create a salesprocess that would fit the company and the products that were being sold. Mainly the communication between salesperson and customer happened through email. Customers were the one that firstly contacted the company to request a service, this sales method is also known as inbound selling. This was the reason why our salesprocess did not require the first two steps of prospecting and qualifying.

### Next step

The first and important step of the new salesprocess was the assessments of the needs of the clients. As soon as the client sent an email about wanting to reserve a table, we started to discuss about the specifics of the reservations as could be

for example the budget, the catering they were interested in, possible allergies and the nature of the reservation. Knowing all of these details made everything easier for everyone, and the client developed a feeling of trust towards the salesperson and the company.

To facilitate the customer and the job of the restaurant itself, we created, along with the COO and the restaurant managers, different food and drink packages.

There were six packages in total, three for the food and three for the beverages. The content of these packages was limited, and with a lower price than choosing directly from the menu, in order to be worth for the customer to book for a larger group of people.

After the reservation were handled, the customer received an email with a feedback form to fill in. These feedback form granted us a handful of important information about what had to be done differently and about what the customer was satisfied about through the whole sales process.

There were also many requests for larger take away orders of pizza. For those large take away orders the delivery had to be arranged also. Since the restaurant did not offer a delivery service, usually a taxi for the pizzas was booked beforehand and therefore paid by the customer.

During Christmas time, a lot of giftcards were sold to companies and their employees.

There were weekly meetings with the restaurant managers about the upcoming week and its reservations. To better manage our interactions with the customers, we started to use Trello as a CRM tool. Every contact with customers and potential ones were marked on Trello. They were divided by location, size and type. When a customer wanted to cancel a reservation, on Trello was marked the date and the reasoning.

## **7 Outcomes and conclusions**

At the present time, every reservation request is handled by the sales representative at Pizzeria Via Tribunali. Since the time the sales organization was established, three new restaurant have been opened.

As there was no sales process before, there was the possibility to test the efficiency and the adequacy of every working method we came up with. Some of them worked and some of them not. The customer feedback forms were an useful tool to gather informations about what were cosutomer satisfied woth and what had to be improved.

Since before every restaurant manager took care of the reservations in their own way, we thought was important was to create a clear system, with policies and rules that are the same for every unit.

### **7.1 Conclusions**

At the end the journey of establishing a sales organization for the commissioner, Pizzeria Via Tribunali, many conclusions were made. As was mentioned on the theory section of this bachelor's thesis, it is very important that a sales process is made to fit the values, the product and the needs of the company. This was proven when used on the field. The salesperson has a huge role in assuring the customer that their needs will be fulfilled and that they will be satisfied with the purchased product or service. The customer feedback had very important role in figuring out the working sales process for the new sales organization.

The result of this bachelor's thesis' work is a sales organization for Pizzeria Via Tribunali, that still is working at this day and has a clear sales process path made prioritizing the needs of the customers.

## 7.2 Recommendations

Based on the work done in this bachelor's thesis there are a few recommendations that are to be made in order for the sales organization to work even better. During these three months, the salesperson worked mainly via computer by answering at the emails send by customers that wanted to make reservations. This was the method that was thought to be more efficient, since the restaurant were very distant from one another. I would rather recommend to try to give to the customer more a fysical presence of the salesperson. When needed actually have face to face meeting, for examples to show the venues beforehand to the customers.

While working as a sales representative, I noticed the importance that the weekly meeting with the restaurant managers had on my work, I recommend that those would still be kept at least once every two weeks. That would make sure that everyone knows what happens and when, so to limit poor communication mistakes.

During the establishment of the sales organization, client themselves were the one to first contact the company, that means that it was maily an inbound sale type. I'd recommend to try also the outbound sale type and to therefore contact the potential client. Also to collaborate more with other businesses in order to get more visibility.

## 7.3 Evaluation of the thesis work

The goal of this bachelor's thesis was to create for the commissioner company a working sales organization. That goal was fully reached. As of today, if clients of any tipe want to reserve a table or place a takeaway order, they have to contact the sales assistant of Pizzeria Via Tribunali.

I think my work was reliable and it left the commissioner a great resource to be able to grow even more. Also it made the job of the restaurant managers easier.

Studying as a business administrator and having already experience of working at that precise restaurant made my work better and easier. I learned a lot during this process and I will always be grateful to the commissioner company to have enabled me to embark in such a meaningful journey.

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