



## **Implementation of marketing automation system**

Capturing and nurturing leads in long sales cycle investment goods business

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## ABSTRACT

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Implementation of marketing automation system: capturing and nurturing leads in long sales cycle investment goods business.

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This thesis was commissioned by Glaston Finland Oy. Thesis aims to study how to use inbound marketing and how company is implementing marketing automation tool to support their sales. Glaston is an industry-leading company committed to delivering technologies and services for the manufacturing of the high quality heat-treated glass. Their machines are used to create high-quality glass for use in architectural, solar, appliance and automotive applications. The study focuses on decision making and what should be taken into consideration when implementing marketing automation system and using it as a sales catalyst.

The theoretical discussion in this thesis focuses on defining marketing automation and content strategies as part of inbound marketing. Study discusses about creating content and content strategies as important factor next to marketing automation. The purpose for this research was to investigate how to generate leads by using marketing automation and increase sales by using this system.

The research was conducted in August 2016 through a research and an online-survey was sent to company's clients by using Webropol- internet survey program. The structure and the questions of the survey were planned in co-operation with the company representative. The survey consisted of structured questions but also open questions were used.

Results of the research have shown that customers are relatively satisfied for the current content. However, there were few areas for development. Company should invest more specific information about quality and tempering issues.

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Key words: marketing automation, lead management, content marketing, inbound marketing

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**ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS**

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
MUAS	Munich University of Applied Sciences
B2B	Business- to- Business
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
EMEA	Europe, the Middle East and Africa
MAS	Marketing Automation System
B2C	Business-to- Consumer
SALES LEAD	Prospective consumer of a product or service
SEO	Search Engine Optimization

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the study

The original idea for this thesis arose from author's personal interest in marketing and the need of Glaston Finland Oy, to examine company's current situation inside their marketing processes and customer management. The idea for this research came, when having a meeting with Glaston's marketing director. The thesis discusses earlier research on the topic, books, and online publications from the point of view of implementing marketing automation system as part of marketing strategy. Even though the company has succeeded in maintaining their position as a global leader in their business, they want to enhance their performance in a changing business environment. This paper aims at discussing the possibilities and challenges of using marketing automation tools in the context of a modern business-to-business (B2B) environment. The thesis focuses on studying technology from marketing and sales perspective.

Glaston Oy has recently started implementing their new customer relationship management (CRM) system that generated the interest for a research concerning how to use marketing automation system and focus on this technology. Marketing automation system have been put into operation beside the new CRM system of the company. During recent years marketing and attracting customers has changed significantly through digitalization and it is essential that a company is able to change quickly along customer habits. Today's technology and the volume of information has moved the power from seller to buyer. (Äppelqvist 2016.) Change in customer habits and development of online world has changed marketing. Marketing at the moment depends on how well customers find companies, not another way around. Further, marketing success depends on who can use digital marketing in a best way and provides the most interesting content is the strongest. (Odden 2012, 7-10; Halligan & Shas 2014, 4-7.)

Traditional process of purchase has changed. Customers know well ahead what they want, at what price and what is the added value of the products for them, due to doing information search on the internet and different other sources what are being used. According to Äppelqvist (2016) today, customers have made the decision to buy before even contacting Glaston. What kind challenges are faced and how to benefit marketing automation in a most effective way? When facing this new era, especially in business-to-business

field companies have to change their approach to adjust the status quo. Technology is developing rapidly; new applications and methods are invented every day. Essential is to know which ones are right to choose to avoid running after trends (Swezey 2014, 2). This research is topical, commissioner has been using marketing automation systems and they have used different system during spring 2016. This thesis analyzes customer behavior in the current marketing automation system, and pinpoints the customer's satisfaction in current situation. The research further analyzes the customer behavior and the content development.

## 1.2 Glaston Finland Oy

Glaston Finland Oy operates globally in the glass-industry. They specialized on servicing and delivering technologies for the manufacturing of the heat-treated glass. Company operations are divided into services and machines. Company has an experience of decades in manufacturing, processing and distribution of high-technology glass services and machines. The main factory and office are located in Tampere, Finland. They have been operating under name of Glaston Finland Oy since 2007. (Glaston 2016.)

The company is fortunate to be able to benefit from its past knowledge and current expertise in order to answer to the future demands and challenges. In the future demand for company's glass processing machines will be driven by increased use of glass and growth in demand of technologically demanding glass applications. Awareness of ecological aspects have risen through tightening energy-consumption and safety regulations.

There is more demand in the markets for different kind of glass solutions and developing new technologies. Their vision shows the biggest growth potential in architectural segment and implementation of solar energy as well. These segments provide an increased demand for Glaston's machines. Demand for glass processing machines varies between business areas and geographic point of view. Use of safety glass is expected to increase several percent's in the next few years. (Glaston 2016.)

Glaston has divided its market into three different categories. These areas are Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and America. They are operating worldwide among very different customer segments. Globalization and revolution of digitalization

have brought new opportunities for Glaston. (Glaston 2016.) Thus, they have been devoted to give digital solutions as a strong part in their strategy and functions. Äppelqvist (2016) states that they have been doing successful work in their industry and operational developments, but still there is always something new to learn and develop. This research focuses on Glaston's specific business environment and focus on recognizing how leads act and how to nurture them by using marketing automation system (MAS).

### 1.3 Study design

The objective of this thesis is to investigate the results of their content marketing strategy. More specifically how leads are managed at the moment and how lead management could be improved. The purpose is to clarify how the company can use marketing automation system in the most effective way and have perspective of their lead management. Possible recommendations and ideas for development will presented to the commissioner.

This research focuses on B2B environment and opens characteristics in area of long-sales cycle investments goods business. When using MAS in marketing investment products, there are many differences compared to normal B2B and business- to- consumer (B2C) environment. When dealing with investment products the sales cycle is longer and usually many people participates on the decision process. In normal B2B and B2C environment sales cycle is shorter and usually one person makes the decision of purchase (Äppelqvist 2016.)

The main research problem is:

1. How satisfied customers are on the current content and how to create more leads by implementing Marketing Automation System?

The above main thesis problem is opened by the following research questions

Research questions are:

1. What is a Marketing Automation System (MAS)?
2. What are the benefits of using marketing automation in lead management?
3. How to build attractive content for customers?

The scope of the thesis is to pinpoint the key figures of marketing automation and to discuss the benefits and challenges faced in lead generation. Research focuses on certain type of business environment, more specifically on B2B environment and long sales cycle in investment products. Research also focuses on company's customers and their behavior. One of the main aims is to survey which kind of content lure company's customers in a most effective way. The actual software development and differentiation between different service providers of MAS is out of the scope of this study.

#### 1.4 Thesis structure

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to the thesis in general as well the background of the case company. Chapter also includes a presentation of the main research problem and introduces a list of research questions. The theoretical framework (chapters 2 and 3) includes a literature review of key features of MAS and content strategies.

In the fourth chapter, methodology used in this thesis is described. The fifth chapter contains the results of research and analysis of the data provided by the research. This chapter will provide information how the research was done and gives analyzes the results.

The sixth chapter outlines key recommendations for the content and presents proposals for further development. This chapter summarizes the main research problem and gives proposals based on the conclusions.

## 2 THE NEW WAVE OF MARKETING

### 2.1 Definition of Marketing Automation System

The world of marketing has changed more in the last few years than in the past 100 years. Technology has revolutionized the world into a highly connected field and a new way in which people communicate, operate and search things. Technology and development have changed rapidly how people act and in the future the speed is going to accelerate. This constituent change has also given gain to entirely new and better ways to reach consumers. Marketing automation has become a seriously taken solution in B2B markets. In 2013 International Data Corporation predicted that marketing automation has grown from 3.2 billion \$ in 2013 up to 4.8 billion \$ in 2015. (Aquino 2013.)

The traditional role between seller and buyer is history. Sellers have earlier guided buyers through the buying process as we have used to. Nowadays prospects can take their cell-phone or any other device and search for content they need. The buyer rules the sales cycle, not the other way around. (Ginty, Vaccarello & Leake 2012, 182.) Marketo (2013) defines that marketing automation belongs to a category of technology that helps companies to automate, streamline, measure workflows and marketing tasks in order to increase operational efficiency and grow up revenue. When hearing of these systems, quick presumption might be that this solution will make everything automated. However, it is not that simple. Despite the fact that these systems will change way of doing business, it will demand resources, time and more thinking from sales and marketing departments. Marketing is not anymore just running a successful campaign; it is about building long-term relationships with customers (Lamont 2015, 13).

Marketing automation can be a significant investment for the company, but it has the potential to improve co-operation between marketing and sales by providing content and data about buyer's behavior moving along down the sales funnel. In this context funnel can be referred as the shape of the process where customer is guided to go into. MAS can also save resources from performing manual tasks, while in the meantime letting sales and marketing concentrate on more strategic initiatives. MAS is also able to give information of prospects by measuring, tracking and responding to buyer's behavior. (Ginty et al., 2012, 186.)

Marketo (2016) states that to implement MAS successfully company should have comprehensive strategy that merges the right processes, content, people and data. When using MAS it permits business to reach clients in an individual and scalable way, enhancing marketing effectiveness and revenue (Sweezy 2014, 1.) Estrada (2015) adds that popularity of MAS has exploded all of a sudden; numerous companies have been measuring how these tools can help to power their business.

As a term, marketing automation remains still infrequently studied, but it has strong foothold as a part of organizational marketing strategies all over the world. Äppelqvist (2016) states that MAS has been used in United States many years but had a quite slow landing to the Finnish business environment. According to Sweezy (2014, 7) the the concept was first used in late 1990s when some companies started combining their databases with automated code to simplify segmenting databases into more multidimensional segments based on more data. It has taken a long period to reach the point where MAS is now and today it is relatively familiar to marketing professionals and managers.

According to Sweezy marketing automation consist of three parts: Lead tracking, which consist of tracking a lead across all marketing channels. Secondly of automated execution, which enables you to have automated processes take place either as marketing campaigns or as internal changes based on these tracked actions. Lastly, of close-loop reporting for proving the value of your marketing efforts down to every dollar those efforts bring in. (Sweezy 2013, 8.)

If marketing automation as a concept should be described, it may rise confusion. Should it be referred to as a technology or way of marketing, it could be described as both. Marketing automation is a new tool that companies have never used before and a new way to do marketing. (Sweezy 2013, 9.) Ginty et al (2012, 182) defines marketing automation as a podium to design, engineer and optimize marketing campaigns and providing process for managing leads. The actual software can enhance marketing performance in three different sectors: segmentation, lead scoring and lead nurturing.

## **2.2 Inbound and Outbound marketing**

Firstly, the author wants to compare the difference between inbound and outbound marketing and after that, open the nature of inbound marketing. Gregg (2016) mentions that

outbound marketing can be seen as an old way to do marketing. It concentrates on interrupting and stealing people's attention in multiple ways. Outbound marketing seems not to work anymore, because people are annoyed of oversupply of commercials and spam e-mails. People have become more sophisticated in avoiding different kind of advertising, moreover technology has offered us all kinds of commercial blockers, junk e-mail tools etc. (Gregg 2016.) In recent years, marketing has changed a lot because of how we act as customers and new revolution has begun. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 41.)

When describing outbound marketing, Zac Gregg (2016) defines the term as follows: Familiar term for this is traditional marketing. Traditional marketing is what we have used to: TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, direct mail, billboards, event sponsorships, etc. The traditional outbound strategy is used in such digital distribution forms as email blasts, banner ads, PPC, and SPAM. (Gregg 2016.)

In other words, outbound marketing can be seen as an interrupting way to steal customer's attention by pushing marketing material to people in different ways. Through technology, people have become more sensitive in receiving commercial messages. Instead of interrupting people, companies should focus on technology, which helps clients to find them. This method is called inbound marketing which will act the role as modern marketing now and in the future (Halligan & Shas 2014, 13). Inbound marketing is about creating content which customers are interested in. In other words, in inbound marketing target is on being found, rather than continuously presenting the company in different places. The assumption is that potential customers find good content which company provides. Customer makes a comparison and contact the company and buy their products or services. Role of outbound and inbound marketing in today's marketing environment has changed and they are being used in different marketing strategies. In order to move from outbound to inbound marketing, the first step is to let people find you and your content instead of interrupting their valuable time (Halligan & Shas 2014, 41). Inbound marketing is more adjustable to the needs of today's people, it guides customers towards your company and lets them decide when and what they want (Gregg 2016).

Halligan and Shas (2014, 47) notes that creating noteworthy content is important for two reasons. First, good content attracts potential customers to your website, searching your products and raise awareness about your company. People use technology to search information to fulfill their needs. The most popular is search engine Google. There are 5.9

billion searches done every day around the world. People search for information, products or services. If a company has not paid attention on their online coverage, they might lose potential leads to their competitors. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 69.) Secondly, noteworthy content is easily shared in social media, such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. When succeeding to create content which people are interested in, it can increase coverage among people. It is important to observe the power of social media; it can give extra help to your business within your market. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 47). Why inbound marketing is so important in this context? Good content helps customers approach company via different channels, example social media, blogs etc. Good content works as fuel for MAS and without good and interesting content MAS is useless (Äppelqvist, 2016). It could be referred as empty Facebook page what a company has created, page exist but it does not create any added value. Halligan and Shas (2014, 14) outlines that having a presence in the web is essential for any business; in order to reach the customers you want you must invest on web coverage.

MAS is a tool, which helps marketers to perform better and acquire leads to sales. Pietilä (2015) describes customer's path in B2B-inbound marketing environment. Figure 1 illustrates how a customer is channeled through a sales funnel and describes how customer is positioned in inbound marketing. The success of transforming prospects into a lead might take a long time. Halligan and Shas (2014, 215) mention that depending on what type of business a company is involved, some inbound leads can close under 15 minutes, while in true B2B others can take three to six months or more. How often lead should be contacted? It depends on the length of the sales cycle, for example B2B-company with a complex sales cycle extending many months, contacting should be limited to two messages per month. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 129.) In inbound marketing, nurturing lead is long process and last long to succeed, the process with the customer is continuous (Äppelqvist 2016).

It is important to notice that the difference between normal B2B environment and B2B environment in investment products is the change in sales cycle length. According to Odden (2012, 6) longer sales cycle can also be explained with multiple information sources provided online. Customers now are expecting more than just to know what key features product includes or how good the product is. Customers want to know what is the benefit that the new product offers. This brings new challenges for marketers. Customer should be reached in a right time and in a right context. This means that better

content and visibility is crucial in all places where customers search. It also means that customer have positive experience with the brand and have positive consumer interactions. (Odden 2012, 6.) The environment, which deals with investment products, the sales cycle is longer and more complex. The amount of people who participate in the purchase varies between 1-20 different people. In this case, the product should raise interest inside the group and be supported by the majority. (Äppelqvist 2016.) Definition for this this group is a committee, that makes organizational purchase decisions rather than a single person. (Ginty et al., 2012, 21; Swezey 2014, 196.)

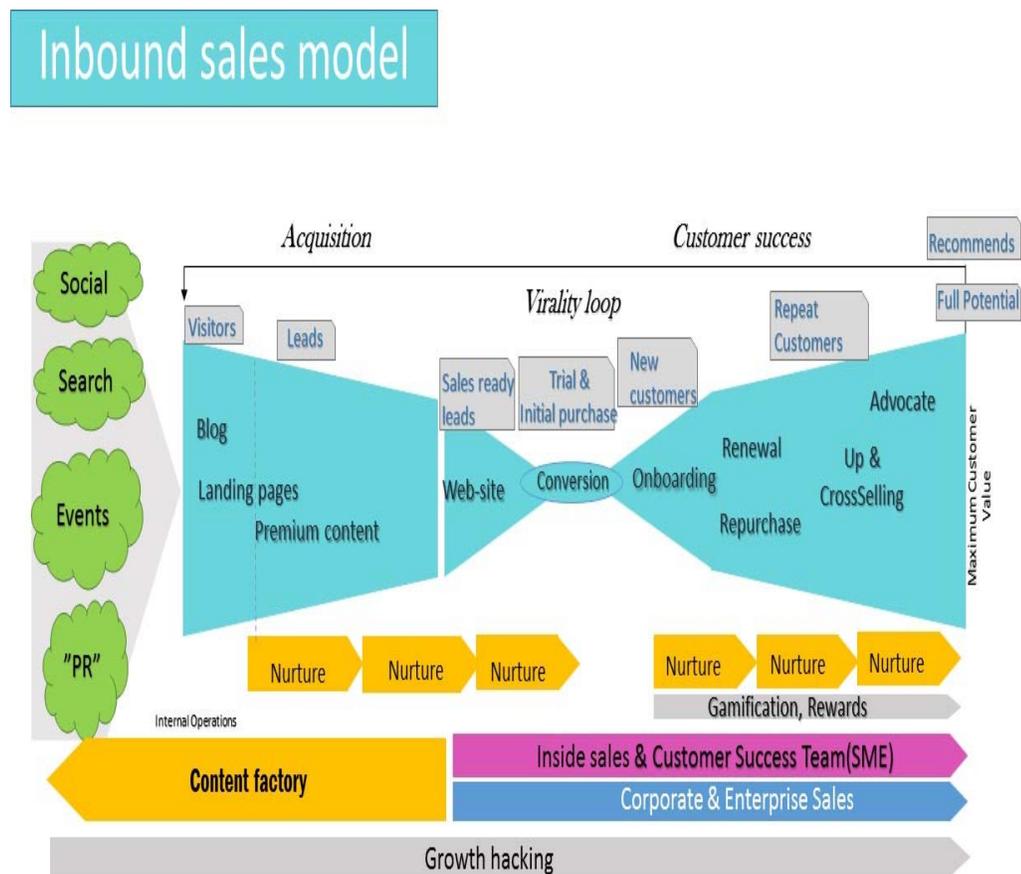


FIGURE 1. Inbound sales model (Pietilä 2015)

In inbound marketing a customer should be helped to take minor steps, guided forward without pushing. The first step is attracting customers. The second step is implementing online marketing in events and producing good PR. In the middle is an important phase

conversion, where lead transforms to a customer. This is the phase where the customer is willing to buy or thinking for a purchase. A customer or a lead must be nurtured all the way through the funnel. (Pietilä 2015.)

In Customer Success operation the new customer steps in and must be helped to get added value from the company's product. Idea is to grow the customer from a newcomer to a loyal customer. Finally, arrow goes back to customer acquisition funnel. This is described as a Viral Loop, when customers are suggesting your company to other customers. (Pietilä 2015).

### **2.3 Revolution of online era**

European study made in 2013 investigated marketing to the modern buyer. The survey shows that an average consumer spent 12 hours in front of the screen every day. (Sweezy 2013, 10.) Every day more than 2 million new blogs are published and over 294 billion e-mails are sent. According to Wall Street Journal report, 42 percent of holiday shoppers in 2013 did their holiday shopping online. In other words, the time what people spend online in today's world is huge, if you are not online, you will lose the competitive edge to your competitors. (Sweezy 2013, 10.)

As claimed before, the way business is done in overall has changed the way to approach customers. Revolution of internet and paradigm shift of sales has changed the world to a place where competition is tough and time is valued. Potential customers are spending numerous hours in front of some kind of device, using their working hours or their spare time. In other words, customers are searching information on their own, trying to seek for more value concerning their point of interest. This changes the role of sales management as well. Earlier it was reasonable to buy a complete list or give a list for sales department to contact, thus now leads are ready waiting in CRM. (Aaltonen 2014.)

Development of information technology creates huge potential for acquiring customers but at the same brings demanding challenges for vendors. Sweezy (2013, 9) supports this by saying out that majority of marketing campaigns are done online, which makes marketing faster and easier, but on other hand increase the number of technical difficulties when operations are more difficult to control. In the last years, the role of aggressive selling has turned to a consulting way to sell products. Earlier vendors tried to induce a

potential customer with rhetoric and good sales skills. Nowadays the main task for a seller is to map customer's status quo and find out why potential customers show interest and how to help them. When the interest has raised online, seller's main task is raft customer through the buying process. (Aaltonen 2014.)

Marketing automation and online marketing have an interactive link between each other. Marketing automation could be described as a continuation of online marketing. Online marketing is vital for that; hence marketing automation tool can boost online marketing to a completely new level. (Sweezey 2014, 9.) Ginty et al (2012, 21) maintains that B2B branding plays a big role when speaking about online impact to marketing and sales. Sales funnel illustrates how brand awareness affects to interest, follows through consideration until to the decision phase (figure2.)

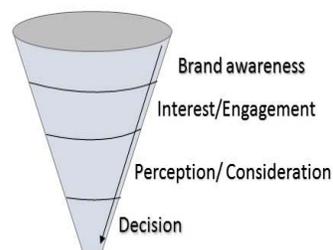


FIGURE 2. The stages of the funnel, from brand awareness to the decision (Based on Ginty et al (2012, 22))

Earlier, normal B2B marketing was done partly in tradeshows, giving brochures, keeping presentations, sharing thoughts between your potential customers and clients. The return on investment (ROI) of shared brochure has not been measurable. How much value this brochure actually had when given to a potential customer? Some of them ends to a trash bin and some on client's desk staying unread. (Ginty et al (2012, 4.) Halligan and Shas (2014, 27) mentions that biggest problem with these old fashioned marketing techniques

is that they have become less effective, people have less patience and time resulting in a lack of results. Thus, talking about online marketing, measurable outputs are becoming even more countable (Ginty et al (2012, 4). Ginty et al (2012, 4) adds that the amount of marketing budget, which is used on online marketing gives exact data and that data can be analyzed. It shows how many potential customers could be reached and which amount of them would end up as leads. These costs are measurable against its goals, whether those goals are getting more sales or acquiring more leads. (Ginty et al 2012, 215.) Briefly, marketing automation gives the opportunity to perform, track and measure under operating one application. With this software it is possible to measure the ROI of any digital marketing effort, earlier this would not have been possible. With the analytics provided by MAS, company can determine did e-mail, search or social share brought the customer on the website. (Lamont 2015, 13.)

## 2.4 Content marketing

In the world of internet where information and ideas are shared in minutes, change of attitude is required. Internet and the whole idea how information is shared has changed our lives and societies around the globe. (Garner 2012, 2.) Odden (2012, 5) adds that the revolution of information access has changed along the mass adoption of social and mobile web, these have changed sharing and publishing to a level never experienced before. The paradigm shift on business-to-business sales and marketing has been remarkable in recent years and the traditional ways to reach people are gone. Digital marketing has become an equivalent to changed business environment. (Ginty et al 2012, 2; Halligan & Shas 2014, 13; Walsh 2014, 67.) According to Holliman and Rowley (2014, 269) B2B digital marketing can be recognized as inbound marketing technique, which provides an alternative choice to change business from “selling” to “helping” way to interact with customers.

There are information and content flows in every direction for people, through different formats and devices. Along this revolution, companies must accept the change of how businesses are done in order to be successful in their internet marketing efforts. (Garner 2012, 2; Odden 2012, 5.) Garner (2012, 2) suggest that basic elements for this revolution are

- Searching and analyzing customer behaviors
- Real-time interaction and participation with customers

- Ability to think people as a group and as individuals
- Distribution of social network
- Accurate sharing of information, engagement and collaboration
- Promotion of the content

People search for information when they want to have more details or after they have made the decision of purchase. Usually searching is related to search engines. People follow their desire, they search, compare and after that rank results for the best answer. Things act in a same way when talking about B2B environment. At the same time when search plays an important part in what we need, the revolution of social web has made a global impact. When company recognizes the role of content marketing in addition to synergies between search and social media, it will help to enhance their ability to connect, engage and grow revenue. (Odden 2012, 6.) Damian (2014, chapter 1) underlines that digital environment offers new and multiple ways to connect with people in the growing market. Digital marketing is more than just understanding the technology, it's about understanding people and how they act in this environment. Understanding people, helps to unlock the whole potential of digital marketing. (Damian 2014, chapter 1.)

Customers should be described concerning why, when and how they act. In order to use content marketing in a most successful way different channels should be synchronized. A company should be the top performer in search, social media channels and offering interesting content. Content creation is about understanding people. When understanding customer behavior, it will help to build keywords in order to let customers find you. To make a difference segmented data should be developed as customer personas. Working with personas gives more practical and effective approach for dealing with customers. Understanding customer's needs and profile makes the interaction easier. (Odden 2012, 66.)

What is the main goal of content marketing? Ginty et al (2012, 22) notes that content marketing works as key when building awareness online. When producing content, it smooths the emotional side of the purchase making decision, at the mean time lifting the confidence of the brand that has been created. The goal of content marketing is to convince your customers, bloggers, analyst and prospects of your expertise. According to Pophal (2016, 14) goals of content marketing are broad. Even though he simplifies the main goal shortly "Gain new clients". According to Mary Ellen Slayter (Pophal 2015, 7)

who works as CEO of Rep Cap maintains that legit goals for content marketing will increase the increased amount of qualified leads or referrals from existing clients. Also decreased length of sales can be described as a good goal, but increased number of visits on a website cannot be referred as legit goal. (Pophal 2015, 7.)

MAS is equipped with many features that helps to track customers. One of these is called content repository. Company, which uses MAS, is hosting the content that they have been creating for customers. When a potential customer visits company website, uploading or just visiting, MAS records done actions and helps to segment customer in question and provide information to marketers. (Sweezey 2014, 119.) Sweezey (2014, 111) mentions that content is the fuel of marketing automation engine. Customers are being served by the content, they consume it and this consumption helps to recognize where prospect is in the buying cycle.

#### **2.4.1 Measuring results**

While content is extremely important, it is still problematic to measure how valuable content will be for the company (Martin 2016, 11). Martin (2016, 11) continues by saying that it is easy to summarize views, shares and likes what different channels have produced but translating those numbers to dollars is far from simple. Businesses are rapidly trying to change habits in order to quickly increase their marketing results with content marketing, they see value but the difficulty relies in changing the existing methods to do things (Rose 2014, 32).

Measuring the results when implementing content marketing can be problematic. The problem is that it does not have direct link to sales and it is hard to analyze which type content actually made the most positive impact on clients. One way of measuring the results could be observing how long people spent their time with produced content, how many visits on the web pages and how many times it was shared in the social media. It can also be observed how many visitors came on the pages after publishing and how they act during the visit. (Hemsley 2014, 1.)

## 2.4.2 Building comprehensive content strategy

When implementing content strategy, planning and development should focus on how to engage and attract chosen target group via content (Damian 2014, chapter 11). Pophal (2016, 14) compares content strategy building to business launch, it is not new but there are a lot of moving parts which have to be noticed in the early stage. The influencing factors can be technological challenges, competitors and rapid changes in consumer interest and behavior. Strategy helps to take suitable approach, supported by well-made preparations. When creating a content marketing strategy a few questions should be answered: What should be achieved, who should be affected and what is most important to the target group? (Pophal 2016, 14.)

According to Orndorff the importance of keyword search is vital. Online marketing channels give wide perspective and vital information about customer behavior. When marketers are analyzing this “digital footprint”, they can learn about customer desires. Key word research can tell information what the potential customers are searching for and the common trends inside the industry. These factors give good guidance when planning what kind of content should be created. (Pophal 2016, 16.) Garner (2012, 93) compares key word search to keyword demand and adds that the phrase works as code and the phrase reveals if there is demand for the searched content. Thus, for example there are many popular terms for searching and lot pages provide the content which reply for these searches. What marketers can do is capitalize and switch key word demand for fresher and newer terms in order to reach clients in smaller gap, to stand out from other competitors.

According to Damian (2014, chapter 11) an important question concerns what kind of what kind of content should be provided? He says that there are many kinds of options, however it depends on how strong is the brand, who are the customers that need to be reached and what kind of resources are available. General guideline is to create content customers prefer and put resources into it. (Damian 2014, chapter 11.) The importance of having effective content marketing strategy is vital. It reflects with good brand and if the brand is built well, it will likely shown as increased sales and loyalty (Hemsley 2014, 1).

In the end of implementing content strategy, rush should be avoided. Company should focus on key features like consistency and patience instead of thinking only ROI. It is

impossible to launch a content marketing plan and wait for quick results. The process is time-consuming and goals appear only in long-term. However, it helps to develop loyal customers, after they have been served with desirable content and building better customer relationships. (Martin 2012, 14.) Orndorff stresses the importance of creating buyer personas. When creating fictional representations of ideal customers these questions could be asked: what are their goals, who are they, how they act online and offline. More detailed and precise buyer personas help to create content strategy for these customers. (Pophal 2016, 16.)

### 3 COMPONENTS OF MAS SOFTWARE

#### 3.1 Lead management

Technology is playing essential role when talking about how marketing is done in today's world (figure 3). A study in which over 400 companies participated published by Customer Relationship Management- magazine describes what management initiatives are resulting in the best Return on Investment (ROI) for them when talking about lead quality and quantity. The findings of the study can be explained with transformation of inbound marketing and change in customer behavior. Technology is the crucial key for companies when doing marketing to their customers and prospects. (Dickie 2012.) On the top of the rank is email marketing, used by nearly 60 percent of companies. Every company has their own website. Webinars, categorized as top lead-generating programs by 25 percent, has increasingly amount of users as a cost-effective tool. Nowadays when buyer start their "buy cycle" on the internet, search engine optimization (SEO) and paid search are noticed solid investments as well. (Dickie 2012.)

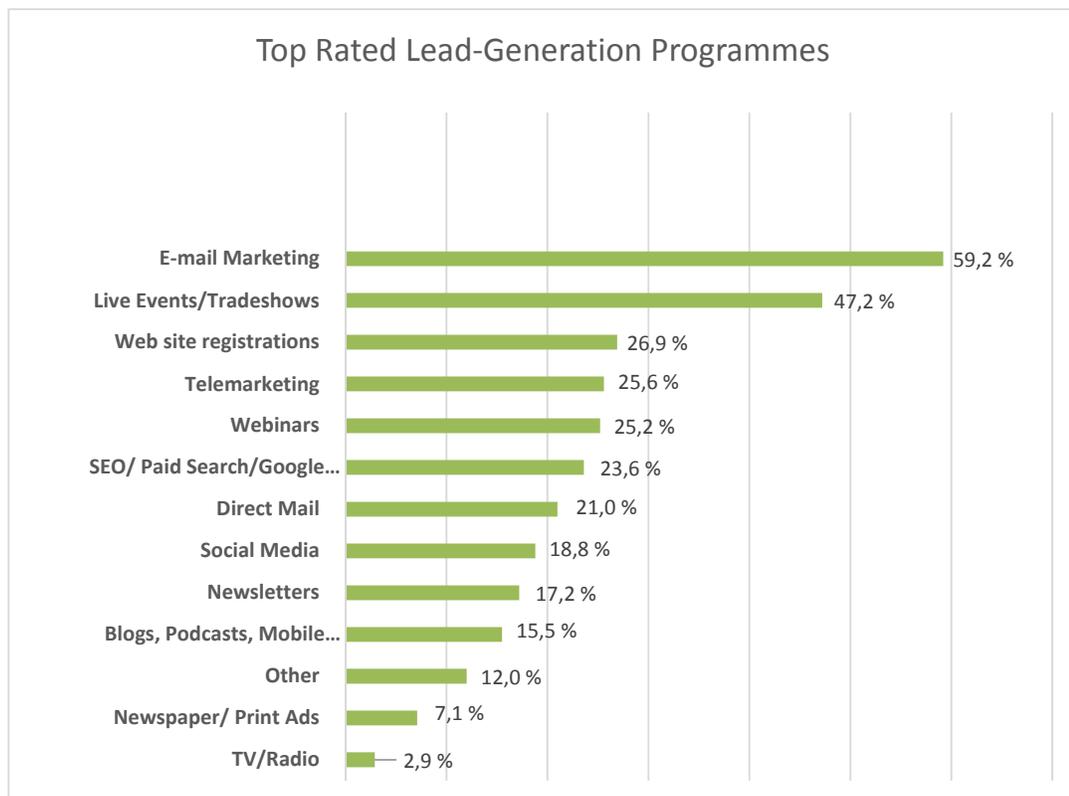


FIGURE 3. Top rated lead-generation programs (Dickie 2012)

Study presented by Dickie (2012) also reveals another issue; managing the leads after they have been created. Äppelqvist (2016) mentions the importance of lead nurturing along with dealing with the customer. Lead management can transform cold leads to hot leads, the difficulty lies in being able to recognize when lead is willing to buy. While having a rejection from a potential customer, building nurturing relationship with the customer might give positive answer later and he might buy in the future (Sweezey 2014, 257.)

### 3.2 Lead scoring

Lead scoring is an important phase when using MAS, it is essential to recognize when leads are ready to purchase. In other words, marketing should know when a lead should be moved to sales. (Ginty et al., 2012, 186.) Sweezey (2014, 195) defines lead scoring as follows: Scoring can be used as a method of assigning numbers to one or more actions or behaviors taken by a prospect or a customer. With lead scoring, it is easier to recognize varying levels of engagement with your marketing programs (Sweezey 2014, 195).

Technology offers possibilities to measure how well marketing campaign has succeeded and what results can be analyzed afterwards. In other words, how many leads were captured and how many of these were successfully transformed to a paying customer. The effectiveness of inbound marketing cannot be measured only by the quantity of leads that have been reached. In fact, the quality of those leads scales successfulness of how well marketing is conducted. In this context, quality can be referred to as leads that are probably becoming good customers. It is possible to get hundreds of leads every month, but if these leads are not converting to buying customers over time, something is done in a wrong way. Either the content, which have been created, is targeted to wrong people or the incoming traffic is uncontrollable. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 125.)

The first step in lead scoring is to define different attributes used in the scoring model. Before starting scoring and building scoring models, most important scoring goals should be understood (Sweezey 2014, 196). Sweezey (2014, 196) suggest that three most important are

- ✓ Sales readiness
- ✓ Product interest

✓ Cold lead indication

As mentioned also in chapter 2.2, organizational purchases demand decisions from many managers, in this case leads have to be recognized one by one. After leads have been identified with MAS, they can be associated with an account. While identifying members participating the decision making process and calculating their collective score, it enables to recognize the most sales-ready accounts. (Sweezy 2014, 197.)

The graph below illustrates how to identify the group of leads who participate in the purchase, can be combined under the same account. When having the information of the account, it gives data of multiple buyers at the same time and gives information of the group's sales readiness and helps to identify the best sales opportunities (figure 4). In this case is more important to recognize a group, instead of just recognizing the best individual leads. (Sweezy 2014, 197; Äppelqvist 2016.) This information is needed when dealing with B2B on investment products, because the purchase involves more than one people. Sweezy (2014, 197) calls this method as account-based scoring. Based on the grade, some of the leads are ready for sales department; other leads may still need more time to buy later (Halligan & Shas 2014, 128).

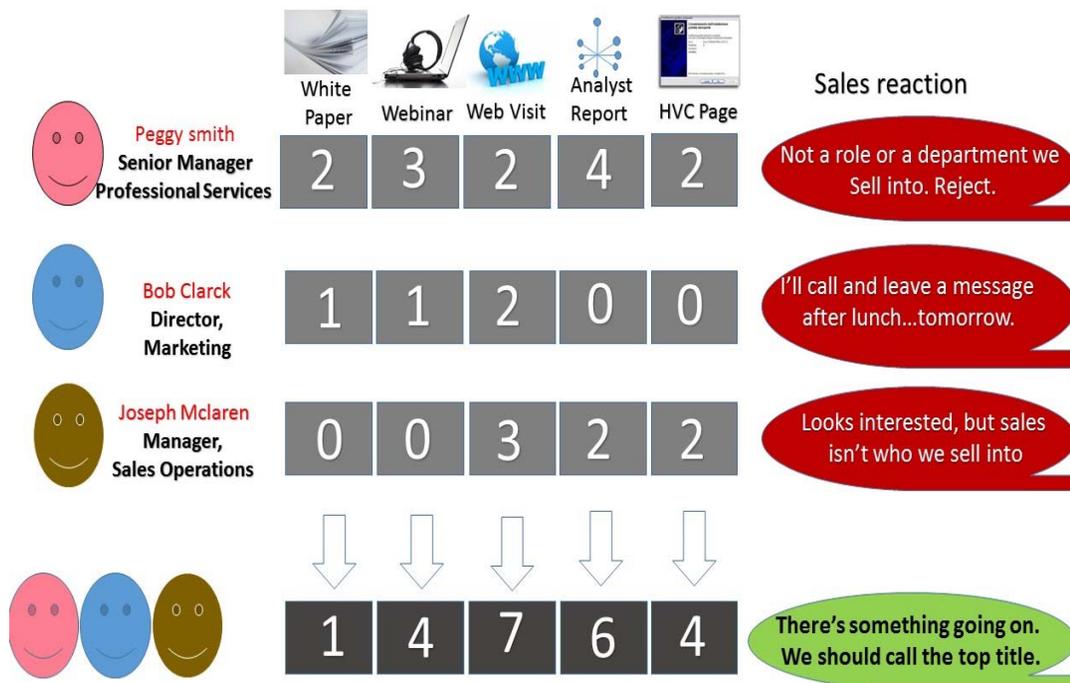


FIGURE 4. Account-based scoring model (Sweezy 2014, 198)

### 3.3 Lead nurturing

When talking about lead nurturing, Halligan and Shas (2014, 128) concludes the idea by saying that general thought behind it is to keep continuous communication and interaction with these leads. When they are ready to purchase, your product should be number one on their scale. Lead nurturing is often made only through e-mail, but should also be made with phone calls. (Halligan & Shas 2014, 128.)

Lead nurturing concludes the idea in how to affect cold leads, in other words leads who are not ready to buy yet. Many leads in internal database may be interested about company's products or services but still need further actions to be dragged more close to sales. By nurturing actions, it is possible in trying to build relationship with them. When succeeding to build a relationship with a lead, it is easier to move forward moving them closer towards purchase. (Ginty et al., 2012, 184.) According to Walsh (2014, 39) with nurturing company can avoid leads leaking out, without nurturing marketing will miss worthy opportunities.

### 3.4 Integrating MAS to CRM

Estrada (2015) mentions that skepticism against the importance of CRM has decreased in the last years, companies are trying to find effective ways to use their human assets and that has changed the role of CRM. MAS is dependent of which CRM- system company is using as part of their marketing strategy. MAS utilizes company's CRM database and uses the information gathered around their marketing processes.

Estrada (2015) suggest that marketing automation offers marketing teams wider perspective on how all information is related, also more detailed possibilities to see structure more clearly and reach their customers in a more effective way. (Estrada 2015.) Aquino (2013) adds that MAS is considered as an advantage when acquiring new customers, in other words helping in lead generation and growing customer base. MAS is usually used when focusing on external customers, instead of using MAS in selling to internal customers. However, internal customers are these most easy to sell. There is a huge potential that

might be missed and in order to avoid this marketing automation platform should be integrated to CRM system. This might be challenging but this is the crucial factor for getting the most out of these systems. (Aquino 2013.)

The development of CRM and MAS side by side can be noticed in the last years. This software is playing an important role in today's business environment, especially CRM. There are available many kinds of solutions and software for CRM system, thus companies should discover which one serve their purposes. MAS is powerless alone when having feedback or formulating information based on what happens when sales representatives operates with leads; that is possible only in a situation when MAS is synchronized with CRM platform. The parts of MAS that deal with lead flow cannot fully be optimized without this synchronization and for many companies this factor is essential reason to pull their sales and marketing teams or service teams together. (Sweezey 2013, 61; Estrada 2015.)

Pulling MAS and CRM together is not an easy operation to perform. In the implementation phase, a bad CRM connection is in the top three reasons for failure. What generates the problem is that every company uses a CRM system in a different way, and not always in a way that would be the most suitable option to achieve best results. If a company is willing to succeed with marketing automation, it is crucial what CRM system they have chosen. Many marketing automation tools are specifically designed for one CRM or another. (Sweezey 2013, 61.)

Dickie (2012) mentions that technology continues to play an important role in generating leads, but it is also obvious that CRM can be the key player when optimizing the controlling of those leads. Furthermore, marketing and sales persons should interact closely when using these systems to work with full potential to achieve potential customers and feed right content for right people. In other words, marketing people should continuously generate leads to sales department, funneled through the system.

Estrada (2015) states that when looking from CRM perspective, MAS has a more functional implication. When having a good marketing plan, company will reach target group and transform prospects enthusiastic about their products. Customers should be helped with giving solutions or selling products matching their needs. In the mean time it should verified what kind of information marketing automation is giving. Who is engaging and

why, when they are engaging and where they have this information. (Estrada 2015.) Ginty et al (2012, 205) adds that CRM integration can provide how marketers deeper insight of how well marketing campaign has been running. More value provides analyzation of reportedly data, for example, customer data and providing this information to sales. Sales can react if a lead is hot. Sales can recognize the lead being interested, after visiting the web site.

## 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Research methods

The research strategy used in this thesis was a case study. As a data sourcing method, quantitative method and online survey was chosen. In this thesis, data was analyzed from results received from the survey. Scientific approaches for basic research are divided in two methods, qualitative and quantitative research methods. Case study, action research and development study are usually observed as research strategies, these methods can be used in qualitative and quantitative researches. (Kananen 2013, 23.) Kananen (2013, 23) adds that case study is often a mix of these two methods. Internal data given by the company was analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative research methods and key findings are shown in chapter 5. Quantitative research focuses on company's customers and their responses in the survey.

While planning the thesis structure, a case study research strategy was chosen. The object of the research is topical and the research problem wide. When using a case study research, object of research should be a phenomenon at the current moment. Case study research is not possible to be made of something that has happened in the past, despite that theoretical framework reflects happenings that stand still and are documented. (Kananen 2013, 54.) According to Kananen (2013, 54) requirements for a case study are:

- “Phenomenon is topical.
- Research happens in natural context.
- Research material consist of multiple literature and methods.
- Aim is to have as wide perspective of the phenomenon as possible.
- Research objectives (event, case) can be one or more.”

In this research, author chose a quantitative research method. Quantitative research can be defined as a method, which gives a general picture about differences and relations between variables. (Vilkkä 2007, 13.) When using quantitative data sourcing method, research follows systematic guidelines of doing this kind of research, which is followed by exact laws used in statistics. The research problem is transformed to research questions. These questions are explained with the literature to solve the main problem. In the quantitative research, usually a survey is used as a data sourcing method. In order to build a survey, theory behind this should be clearly understood. (Kananen 2010, 74-75.) When

implementing a quantitative research, the structure of the report does not differ when compared to qualitative research. The basis of the research is different, because quantitative research requires theory and up-front knowledge of the phenomenon. The direction is to move from theory to practice (deduction) when the researcher tests how theory is reflected in real environment. (Kananen 2010, 75-76.)

Analysis of the results was done mainly by using quantitative methods and in open questions using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis can be divided into three different categories: conventional, directed and summative. In the summative content analysis approach is to compare and count how many times, specific word is mentioned, after that interpret the results in the underlying context. (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, 1277.) In chapters, 5.7 and 5.8 summative method was used to analyze open questions. Hsieh and Shannon (2005, 1278) adds that text under analyzation can be verbal, print, electronic, survey questions, interviews observations etc. Qualitative content is defined as a research method to interpret the content in the material by coding and identifying themes or patterns.

#### **4.2 Implementation of the study**

Purpose of the survey concerning Glastory.net- page measured the satisfaction of customers of the provided content on the pages. The page was published two years ago and this survey aims to study how satisfied customers are with the content on the pages and what should be developed. Company's web-page glastory.net was established to provide wide information about glass industry and give solutions for their company's customers globally.

The company has not done this kind survey earlier concerning the page and aim for it was to bring new kind of knowledge to enhance their operations. The survey called "development survey for Glastory.net" was created with the software tool called "Webropol" (webropolsurveys.com). It is a practical software tool and for performing customer surveys or marketing researches. The language of the questionnaire was English. A link to the questionnaire was created and shared via monthly customer letter to company's clients around the globe (Appendix 1). Sampling unit in this research were company's present customers. The survey link was sent to 8329 global customers by using Mailchimp e-mail tool. Problem in using this tool is that some of the junk mail programs identifies all the upcoming mails coming with Mailchimp as junk mail, because of this exact number of

receivers is impossible to know. This might decrease response rate dramatically. Response rate for this survey was 0,7% and the survey was opened and replied 62 times and 133 times without replying. Time for answering the survey was limited to two weeks. One reminder was sent after the first week.

The survey (Appendix 2) contained nine questions from which six were structured and three were open questions. In the beginning, the focus the survey was on getting background information of the customers and find out in which position they work in their organizations. Background information was limited to the current position of a customer. The company did not see customer gender or age as relevant information. The aim was to gather information of what kind of customer persona searches exact information on the page and why. After the background information, the respondents were asked to evaluate the current glastory.net – contents and tell how useful they feel the information provided on the web page. This part utilized Likert Scale to measure multiple opinions about execution of the Glastory-page. Customers were also asked which kind content company should provide in the future to help their customers in a most effective way and help them in their daily actions.

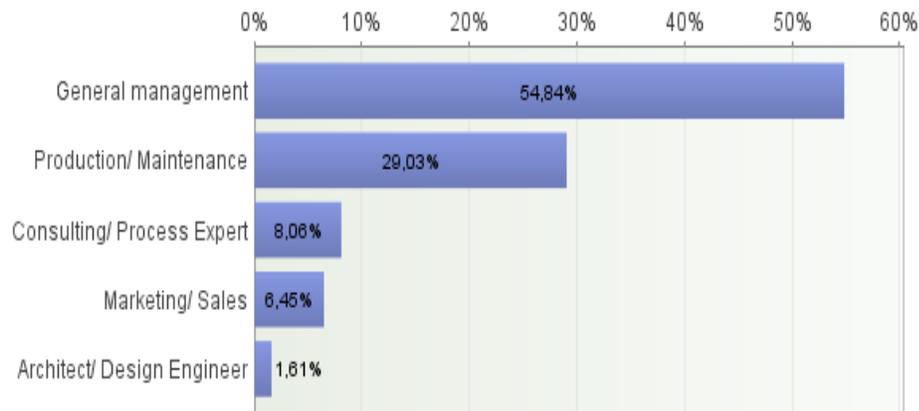
In the end, customers were asked with open questions about what kind of goals customers have regarding glass manufacturing. They were also asked what kind of content they would like to see in the future and specify of what field they would like to learn more about.

Analysis of the results were performed by using Webropol's own software, which is able to open results both by numbers and in written form. Target group for this survey was limited to Glaston's present customers. Company's customers are located around the world and could be reached by using online survey. When using online survey as data collection method there are few benefits to mention. Online survey is quick, costs are low and it gives respondent freedom to choose when and where to answer the survey.

## 5 RESEARCH RESULTS

### 5.1 Background of the customers

62 respondents answered the survey. In the beginning of the survey, background information of customers was collected. With one question, customers were asked about their current position in their company. Below figure 5 shows the distribution of answers.



*N=62*

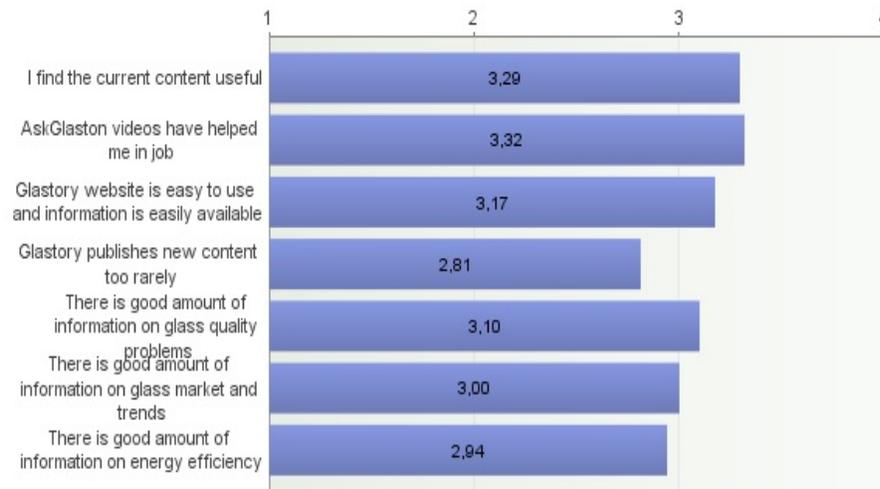
FIGURE 5. Responsibility area of respondents in their company

Figure 5 shows that the majority of the respondents, total of 34 answers showed that they were working in general management. The second biggest group were positioned in production and maintenance, in all 18 respondents. In the service of consulting and process were 5 respondents and responsible of marketing and sales 4 respondents. The smallest group was architects and design engineers, only 1 respondent.

### 5.2 Customer satisfaction for the current content in Glastory.net

In the survey, respondents were asked to give their opinion about the quality and structure concerning the Glastory web page. Response rate for this question was 62 answers. Below figure 6 illustrates the questions showed and the average range from totally disagree (1) between totally agree (4). It measured how satisfied customers were and how do they felt about using this page in order to help them in their industrial problems.

1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly agree



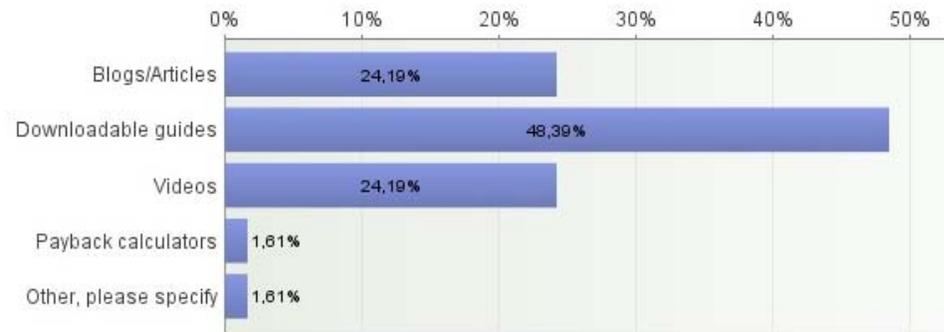
N=62

FIGURE 6. Customer satisfaction of the current content and structure

In this section, Likert Scale was used to measure how satisfied customers were with the current content. When analyzing figure 6 it can be noticed that customers are relatively satisfied with the current content. The average value of all opinions (1) strongly disagree and to (4) strongly agree is 3,1. There is two statements, where the average value is under 3,1. Observation regarding fourth statement *Glastory publishes new content too rarely* can be highlighted. The problem with this statement regards to a fact that it has been presented differently than the other statements. This may confuse the respondent and affect to reliability of this survey. In last statement *There is good amount of information on energy efficiency*, customers are less satisfied with 2,94 value and would like to have more information about energy efficiency in glass manufacturing.

### 5.3 Content that customers prefer

Company's customers were asked which content they prefer and what kind of content would help them in their work regarding glass manufacturing. Figure 7 shows distribution between answers.



**Other, please specify**

- All of above

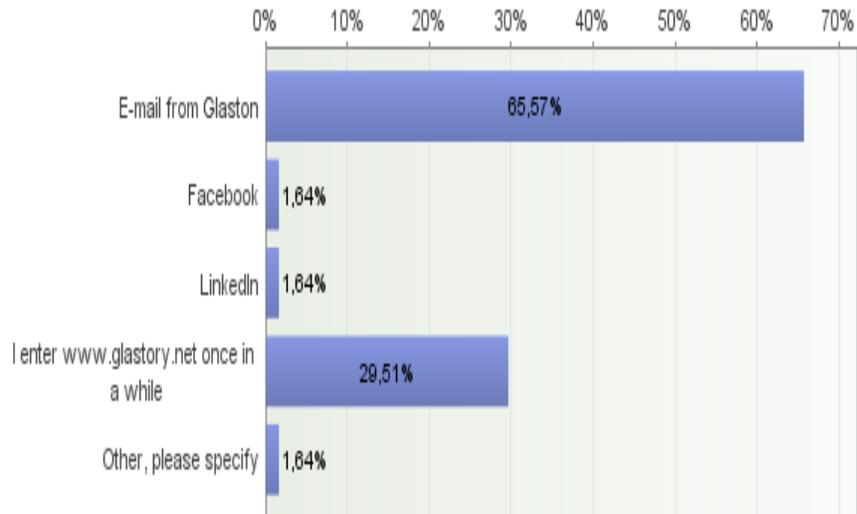
*N*=62

FIGURE 7. Answers of the respondents for the desired content

Almost half (48,4%) of the respondents felt that downloadable guides are the most helpful. In two answers nearly one fourth (24,2%) preferred company's articles and video publishing as equal important. Content that represents payback calculators and other content did not have big interest among respondents.

#### 5.4 Mostly used channels to read articles published in Glastory

Question number 4 inquired how customers usually find their way on Glastory-pages. Question was structured with different options and customers could pick their answer. Below figure 8 shows the distribution of answers



*N=61*

FIGURE 8. How customers usually find their way to the page

Majority (65,6%) of respondents answered that the most typical way to find and visit Glastory is through an e-mail from Glaston. Almost one of third (29,5%) replied that they entered Glastory- page randomly. Social media cannot be seen as typical way for Glaston's clients to find them, only (1,6%) of customers said that they find their way on the page when visiting Facebook or LinkedIn.

### 5.5 Finding the page

The next following question asked on how customers initially found their way to Glastory. Figure 9 presents the distribution between online search, social media or if someone recommended to use this page.

N=61

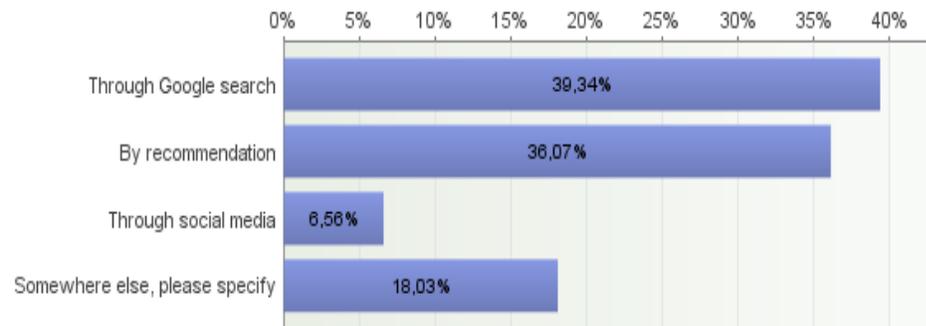
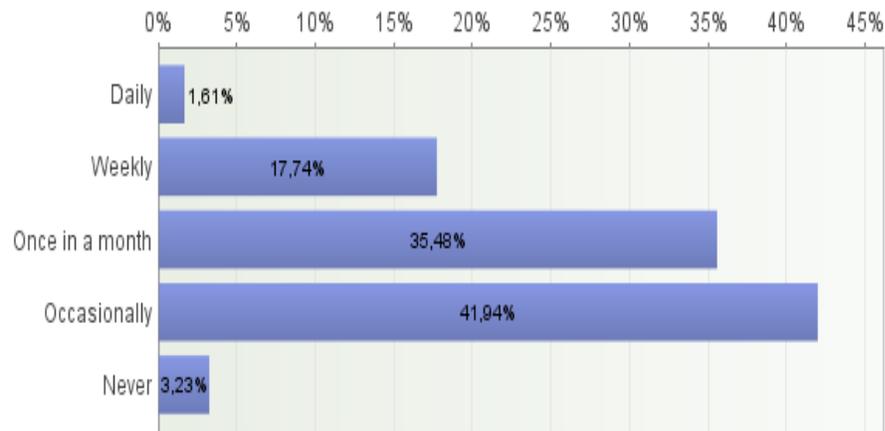


FIGURE 9. How customers found their way on the page at the first time

As the Figure 9 shows, most popular channels to find the page were search engine search and recommendation by a colleague. More than one of third (39,3%) of the respondents found Glastory via Google search and by recommendation (36,1%) of company's customers. In the last option offered to choose *somewhere else, please specify*, thus possibility to specify what channel they have used. Glaston newsletter was mentioned 3 times and Glass Performance Days (GPD) once. GPD is an exposition arranged by Glaston every two years in Finland, Brazil and China and is the biggest glass manufacturing exposition in the world (GPD 2016).

### 5.6 Density of customers visits on Glastory

Question number 6 was presented on how often customers visit the page to have more knowledge about their brand loyalty and commitment. As shown in figure 10 there were structured question including five different options to choose.



N=62

FIGURE 10. How often customers visit on Glastory- page

Most respondents (41,9%) visit the page occasionally and more than one third (35,5%) reviews it once in a month. 17,7% informed that they use Glastory weekly. Notable is that there is a customer group with 3,2% that never visited on the page.

### 5.7 Biggest challenges regarding glass processing

In this section, there was an open question regarding the challenges in glass manufacturing. Customers answered this question in their own words and specifying their problems. Open answers were analyzed by using summative content analysis method with calculating how many times certain words or their synonyms were used. Figure 11 shows the answers after analyzing the number of problems been mentioned. The chart shows most frequently mentioned challenges by the customers regarding glass manufacturing.

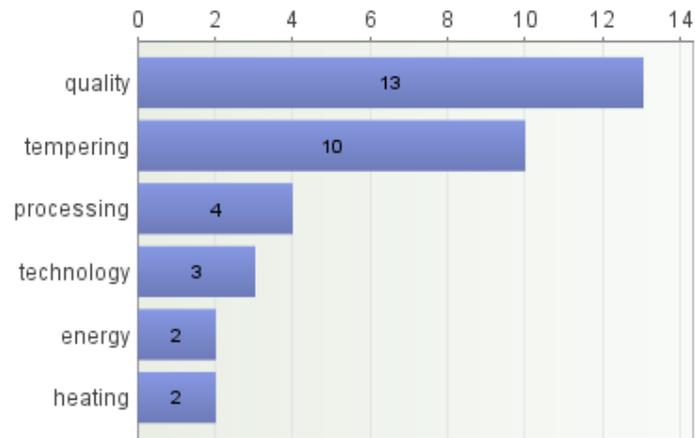


FIGURE 11. Most mentioned areas regarding the challenges in glass processing

Answering ratio for this question was  $N=41$ . Respondents mentioned problems with glass quality 13 times. Most common problems with quality were glass surface problems and keeping up the quality that is been required in high standards. Another frequently mentioned problem was tempering with 10 mentions. Usual tempering problems were dealing with tempering thick glass and meanwhile keeping the same quality in the glass furnace by avoiding waves or cracks on glass surface. Glass processing was mentioned 4 times and changing technology 3 times. Group with energy and heating issues were mentioned 2 times.

### 5.8 Developing and specifying content for the future

Question number 8 asked what kind content the customers would like to see on the pages in the future. Figure 12 illustrates how many times different content was mentioned in order to develop Glastory to serve their customers.

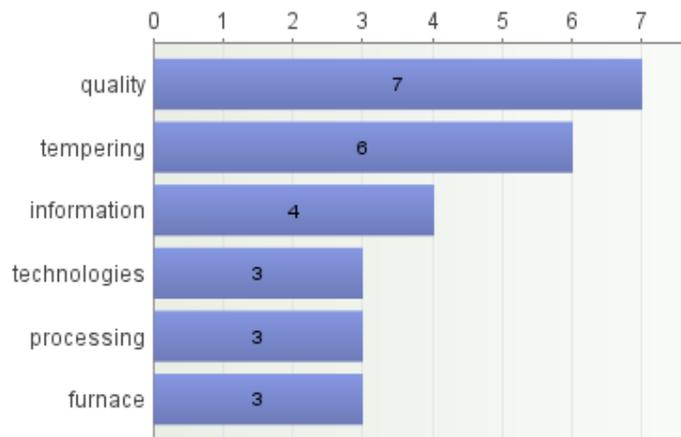


FIGURE 12. Desirable content in the future

Answering ratio for this question was  $N=37$ . From the graph, we can see that the most interesting content deals with quality issues, which was answered 7 times. Respondents replied that they would like to have more case studies of quality control and quality management. Secondly, tempering is an area, where clients would like to gain more knowledge. At this point it is worth noting that both quality and tempering problems were the most challenging areas mentioned by customers in question 7 (FIGURE 11) too. Respondents mentioned tempering 6 times. Most common tempering issues were how to maintain furnace and how mistakes could be avoided on the tempering phase. Respondents mentioned information 4 times, which in this case means more information on glass markets and trends. Respondents would appreciate more content about different technologies, giving examples on videos and introducing varied optional functions of Glaston. Respondents mentioned technologies, processing and furnace separately 3 times.

### 5.9 Customer feedback and satisfaction

In question number 9 respondents were asked to give general feedback. In this open question, answers were supportive and clients seemed to be satisfied with current situation. Glaston's clients are working in the industry around the world and it could be observed that they believe in the progress that the company is doing. Respondents replied that they are pleased with online education. Articles offer relevant and informative knowledge on glass industry and are topical on a fast changing industry. They wished Glaston team to keep

on doing good work and encourage them to show on how committed they are on their work.

## 6 DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Synthesis and discussion of findings

The findings of this study offer a wide overview about the role of content beside to marketing automation and inbound marketing. Content can be referred as the engine for the marketing automation. Without good content, the whole idea of marketing machine does not work, as it should be. Content is provided for the customers. For example, Glaston provides blogs, videos and downloadable guides as page content. Customers search for content and they can be helped with specifying their needs. According to Holliman and Rowley (2014, 269) B2B digital marketing can recognized as inbound marketing technique, which provides an alternative choice to change business from “selling” to “helping” way to interact with customers.

According to the survey, over half of Glaston’s customers responded that for the first time they found their way to Glastory through Google search. Remarkable content attracts potential customers to your web site. If company haven’t putted efforts to their online coverage, they might lose potential leads to their competitors. There are 5.9 billion searches done every day around the world (Halligan & Shas 2014, 47.)

Generating leads is an important issue for every company. In the research (Figure 3) Dickie (2012) shows about the most successful lead generation programs. E-mail marketing is rated as the most effective method to reach current and new customers. My study agrees that by showing that the commissioner reaches their customers most effectively by using e-mail marketing. Majority of their customers responded that they find Glaston’s content after having e-mail from them.

Based on the results of the research, important information about customer personas was received. This is important information for the company. They can build more customized content in the future. Odden (2012, 66) suggests to make a difference, segmented data should be developed as customer personas. Working with personas gives practical and effective approach for dealing with customers. When understanding customer’s needs and profile, makes the interaction easier.

The key of content marketing is to build brand awareness online. When producing content, it smooths the emotional side of the purchase making decision, at the mean time lifting the confidence of the brand that has been created. (Ginty et al., 2012, 22). Glaston has done this by building a whole page with content to help their customers.

## 6.2 Research limitations and challenges

As mentioned earlier, absence of importance aspect in the survey affects to the reliability of the research. Survey should conclude versatile statements, which offer better results for measurement. When performing statements that measure satisfaction and importance, it is essential to combine these two sections in the analyzation phase. The author considers this fact as limitation. One limitation relates to question number 4 in the survey. The question concerned on how customers find their way on Glastory. Fourth option *I enter www.glastory.net once in while* can be seen as disinformation. The option should be given *through glaston.fi* to give exact information.

Implementation of the survey happened in August, which, at least in Europe, is the main month for holidays and therefore may have affected the response ration. Usually in order to achieve high answering ratio, some kind of reward should be provided among the respondents. Company published this survey globally. This brought challenges for the survey implementation. Cultural differences may effect on people's willingness to answer this kind of surveys. Furthermore, nowadays working environment is hectic and people do not have so much time to answer surveys, if they don't benefit of it somehow.

## 7 CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Suggestions for further development

Overview from the theoretical part, data given by the survey and to the main research problem and the research questions are reviewed in this conclusion part.

The scope of the thesis was well limited from the very beginning and the main research problem was supported by the research questions introduced in chapter 1.4. When thinking marketing automation as sales catalyst, author focused on content strategy and content creation. Assumption was that interesting content increases lead generation. Additionally it increases sales as part on inbound marketing strategy, therefore content is playing essential role in marketing automation.

The main goal for the thesis was to answer to the commissioner's problem how satisfied customers are on current content and how to create more leads by implementing Marketing Automation System? Conclusion made from the results, Glaston's customers seemed to be relatively satisfied with content. Company has succeeded to create loyal and long-term customers. It is the key when using content driven marketing strategy. The goal of content marketing is to convince your customers, bloggers, analyst and prospects of your expertise (Ginty et al., 2012, 22). Damian (2014, chapter 11) adds that general guideline is to create content that customers prefer and put resources into it.

Marketing automation can be seen as an important part of their strategy. Results of the research have shown that customers are relatively satisfied for the current content. However, there were few areas for development. Company should create educational information on quality and tempering problems. General feedback was positive and encouraging.

The role between buyer and seller is history. The buyer rules the sales cycle, not the other way around (Ginty, Vaccarello & Leake 2012, 182). Marketing automation belongs to a category of technology which helps companies to automate, streamline, measure workflows and marketing tasks in order to increase operational efficiency and grow up revenue (Marketo 2013). However, how company can choose which solution is best for them?

The world of marketing has changed rapidly in the past years and it is essential that company can adjust along the development in order to compete in the market. Glaston have joined this modern world by implementing marketing automation as part their strategy. Company has tested few different marketing automation tools this year and realized the importance next to content creation. They have provided added value with the content for their customers, what the research approves. They are developing the pages, specified for their customers. Author recommends more presence on different social media channels.

Author's suggestions for further research would focus on, how to measure content effectiveness. Interesting study for further research would be related on comparing different marketing automation tools. What kind of results have been achieved with these tools, which have been manufactured for same purpose. How big role marketing automation is playing in the future in continuously transforming digital market place?

## 7.2 Evaluation of reliability and validity of the research

When using quantitative research method, author has to pay attention to the reliability for the done research (Kananen 2008, 79). According to Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (1997, 231) reliability of the research means that the research has been conducted in a way that the results of measurement can be repeated. Reliability shows how accurate the research results are, avoiding coincidental results. Reliability can be proved in many different methods. For example, if two different inspectors will reach the same conclusion, the research can be evaluated as reliable (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 1997, 231.) p

According to Hirsjärvi et al. (Hirsjärvi et al., 1997, 231) validity of the research means, that measurement and the chosen research method are right for the purpose. In other words, did the research measure issues what it was supposed to be measuring. Kananen (2008, 81) adds that validity can be confirmed by using right research method and carefully following scientific rules for the chosen method in order to solve the research problem.

After closely evaluating reliability and validity questions concerning this research, author made some observations. The structure of the survey may decrease validity of this research. In this research, survey measured how satisfied customers are on the Glastory-

page. Chapter 5.2 measured the level of satisfaction among respondents. When implementing customer satisfaction research, it is essential also ask importance of the given statements. The importance about presented statements was missing. The survey was focusing on satisfaction and the development on the page. It was challenging to create a survey, which would reach a satisfactory response ration and raise interest among customers. The case company gave instructions about the structure, and the general idea was to keep the survey simple. Aim of the survey was to find out general opinions for further development, avoiding too personal inquiry, which might affect negatively on customers.

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Äppelqvist, M. Marketing Director. Initial conversation and idea for the project. 3.2.2016

Äppelqvist, M. Marketing Director. Initial conversation about the thesis structure and discussion of methodology part. 11.5.2016

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Cover letter for the survey

Dear customer,

It's been two years since we launched Glastory.net - the place for learning and sharing glass processing know-how. We really appreciate your involvement in this joint community.

We want to develop Glastory to the next level and we hope you can help us in doing so. Since we really appreciate your time we only ask for 3 minutes from you. Below you can find a link to the 3-minute survey that will help us in providing more valuable stories and know-how for you.

Let's continue to learn, share and succeed together.

We hope that you could answer this survey at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you for your time

Link to the survey:

Best regards,

Marketing Director,

Glaston Corporation



## Glastory.net development survey

### 1. Your responsibility area

General management

### 2. How would you rate the current content in Glastory

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I find the current content useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AskGlaston videos have helped me in job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Glastory website is easy to use and information is easily available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Glastory publishes new content too rarely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is good amount of information on glass quality problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is good amount of information on glass market and trends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is good amount of information on energy efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 3. Which type of content you prefer

- Blogs/Articles
- Downloadable guides
- Videos
- Payback calculators
- Other, please specify

### 4. How do you usually find Glastory articles

- E-mail from Glaston
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- I enter www.glastory.net once in a while
- Other, please specify

**5. How did you initially find your way to Glastory**

- Through Google search
- By recommendation
- Through social media
- Somewhere else, please specify

**6. How often do you visit in Glastory**

- Daily
- Weekly
- Once in a month
- Occasionally
- Never

**7. What is your main challenge related to glass processing at the moment****8. What kind of content you would like to see in Glastory in the future (e.g you can specify detail quality, market or business issues that you'd like to learn more about)****9. Open feedback to Glastory team**









