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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY IN B2B – CASE COMPANY:
AWARA GROUP

Thesis
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<p>Title Customer satisfaction in B2B – Case Company: Awara Group</p> <p>Commissioned by Awara Group</p>	
<p>Abstract</p> <p>Currently, the number of companies who use third parties for outsourcing is rising. Legal issues are significant components of any business and can cause problems when ignored. Consequently, legal service providers have become very popular in the business world.</p> <p>This thesis covers three goals. Firstly, it determines the business customer satisfaction of legal services provided by the Awara Group. Secondly, it defines possible gaps which can occur in the service delivery process. Thirdly, the set of final recommendations serves as guidelines for further improvements. The research is in several parts, including the planning of a survey programme, implementation and the analysis of results.</p> <p>The research, which identifies customer satisfaction, loyalty and values, is a significant contribution to the company's further development and growth.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In the early 21st century, many companies found a benefit from outsourcing. The outsourcing of manufacturing activities was highly popular, and less developed countries such as China were destination points. (Osmond 2000.) The labor costs were cheaper; consequently, companies could use saved money for other important purposes, i.e. investments. Thus, financial savings motivated companies to outsource.

Later, companies started to outsource not only manufacturing, but other business activities as well. According to Overby (2007, 1 - 9), “businesses could perform well in core competencies and reduce shortage of skills and experiences in the area, where they want to outsource.” However, currently, passing out business activities to a third party does not always tell about a company’s willingness to save money. There are various reasons (e.g. variable capacity, lack of in-house resources, access to innovation and IT), which encourage third parties to take control.

Nowadays, getting a high quality result is more reasonable than extra savings. Thus, in order to accomplish goals as well as save time and money (in some extent), companies use professional third parties.

Legal issues are one of the difficult areas, especially in Russia. Foreign companies which are willing to enter the Russian market face a lot of difficulties with complicated legislation and rules. It can be related to any sphere of business operations: accounting, tax, labor migration, marketing, management and other issues. For a better understanding of Russian rules, legislation system and avoiding problems, foreign firms prefer to cooperate with Russian consulting companies.

Awara Group is a leading consulting and outsourcing company, which provides variable services. The department of legal services is one of the strongest and popular. Actually, Awara Group also consults businesses concerning marketing, accounts and other activities.

1.2 Aim of the study

This thesis studies the business customer satisfaction of a consulting company – Awara Group. The study covers only legal services provided by the company. Professional legal services are a strong area of Awara Group; consequently, it could be considered as a core business. Currently, the company is rebranding. The main goal is to create a new brand - Awara Law, which will represent the legal services of the company. Basically, this paper unites three goals, which contribute to the development of the new brand.

1. To determine the satisfaction level of customers who use legal services
2. To define gaps existing in the service delivery process
3. To create a list of recommendations which contribute to raising strengths and company awareness on the market

1.3 Awara Group

Awara Group is a leading consulting and outsourcing service provider in Russia. The company has headquarters in Finland, Sweden, the Ukraine and Russia. The Russian market is one of the strongest and most lucrative for the company. The offices in Russia are located in Tver, St. Petersburg, and Moscow. Legal services are one of the key areas, although the company is also a provider of accounting, audit, IT- solutions, marketing, management, trainings - outsourcing.

In Russia, clients of the company are foreign firms who are willing to operate in the market and avoid mistakes related to regulations and legislation. Russian companies which are willing to get consultancy are also clients of the company. That is why legal services remain one of the most important issues. It is important to highlight that customer satisfaction is directly connected to B2B (Business to Business) satisfaction, i.e. the satisfaction of business clients.

Currently, Awara Group is willing to rebrand and consequently enhance awareness of its strongest side – legal consulting services. Awara Law will unite the legal services of the company. Awara Law will offer high quality services at reasonable prices. It will be positioned as highly professional among mid- level businesses.

In this paper, the name of case company is Awara Group. It is important to highlight that this thesis concerns only the legal services when using the name. Awara Law is also used, but in the role of potential brand name for the legal service department.

1.4 Methodology

In order to determine the level of customer satisfaction, both primary and secondary research were applied. The research is done for the legal outsourcing services of Awara Group, but the theoretical part covers general factors affecting customer satisfaction in a B2B context, which can be utilized in similar surveys.

The primary data covers surveys and interviews (Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3). The main purpose of gathering primary data is the necessity to find out the level of general customer satisfaction of legal services provided by Awara Group.

The secondary data is gathered from professional literature, articles, governmental statistics as well as previous surveys. The sources of secondary data also include the company's information from reports and publications. Previous studies are utilized in order to distinguish the main characteristics of customer satisfaction in the B2B concept.

1.5 Outline of the report

The study consists of three parts.

The first is a theoretical part, which covers customer segmentation and the principles of customer satisfaction in the B2B context (Business-to-Business). Customer segmentation defines clusters consisting of clients of the company, which are characterized by certain features. The principles of customer satisfaction give an overview of the factors affecting the satisfaction of customers in B2B.

The empirical part relates to methodology and covers detailed information regarding tools, which were utilized in the survey process, sampling size and data collection. Reporting on the results is the vital part, where the survey outcomes are presented.

Finally, there are recommendations, which include potential solutions for the development of the service delivery process. Basically, the company is rebranding by considering the findings of the research.

2 SEGMENTATION OF BUSINESS CUSTOMERS

2.1 Business customers and B2B concept

Customer satisfaction in B2B has special features. The clients of Awara Group are companies. At this point, all customers of the company can be considered as partners. There are several principles, which distinguish B2C and B2B customers.

In general, B2B relationships are more complex. In B2C (Business-to-Customers) markets, only one person makes buying decisions. Nevertheless, in B2B markets there are many “parties” taking part in the decision-making process. Those parties are groups of people who have different interests and motivation.

For example, if a company is willing to buy a plant, then production managers set a price range and characteristics. Executives demand safety in transactions. Marketing managers wish for the plant which is better than that of the competitors. Thus, each aspect has to be considered, and after that a decision has to be made. According to Hague (2015, 1) and his colleagues, “B2B marketers demonstrate a high level of expertise in all interaction.” As a consequence, a more professional level of purchase takes place. (Hague 2015.) The group of authors gives a lot of examples, where the complexity of B2B relations is obvious. The authors claim that B2B customers are more demanding and careful at the same time.

Overall, B2B customers are more rational since a mistake could lead to business failure. In this case, a seller should provide and deliver a really good product and services, which are also more complex in B2B.

2.2 Customer segmentation of Awara Group

Awara Group serves many business customers by providing legal consultancy and outsourcing. According to the company’s publications (LinkedIn 2016) the regional offices serve about 100 companies in total. All customers belong to certain KAMs (Key Account Managers). Additionally, there is good networking among all managers. Figure 1 represents the networking of KAMs. As can be seen, all KAMs

are cooperating and connecting with each other. There are several partners of Awara Group also positioned as the Key Account Manager.



Figure 1. The networking of Key Account Managers
(Source: World Press).

For this study, customers were segmented into three groups according total turnover. There are valuable customers, average customers, and minor ones. As an outcome, there is a list of KAMs and their customers. Each KAM has different types of customers to serve. Figure 2 shows the customer segmentation. The names of the companies as well as revenue range are confidential information and cannot be published in this thesis.

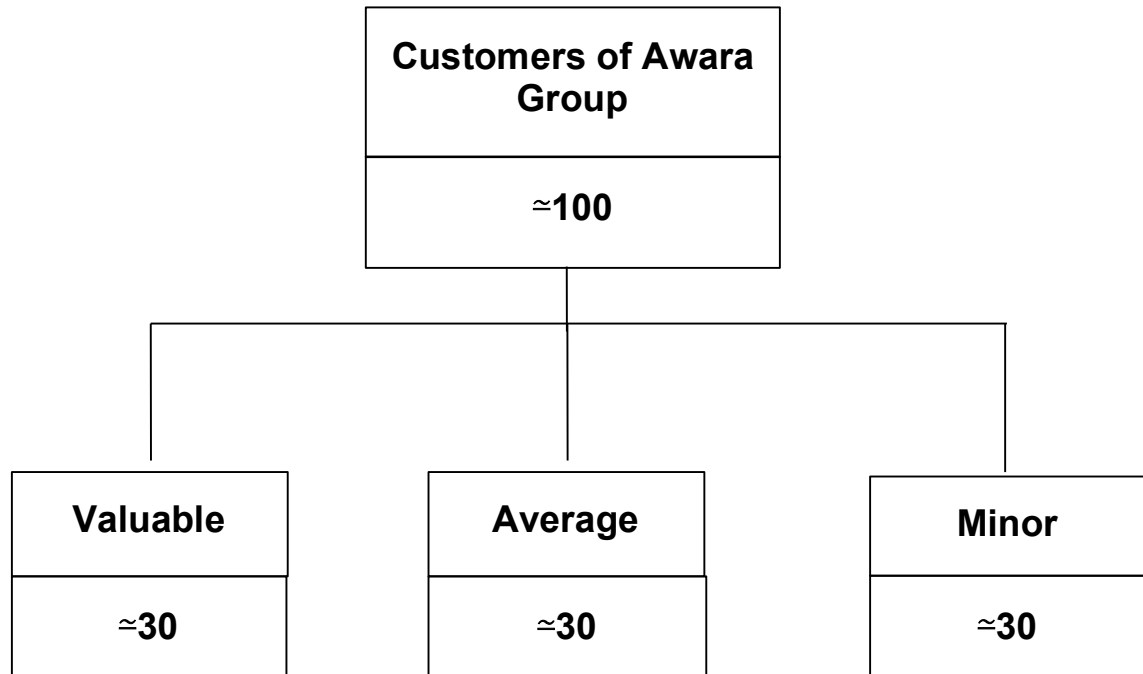


Figure 2. Customer segmentation of Awara Group. **2.3**

2.4 Customer Journey and Moment of Truth

Before analyzing the service quality, there is a need to understand how the whole process works. The scheme presented in Appendix 4 describes a Customer Journey, which gives an overview of service delivery process.

Everything starts with a legal problem, something which might occur in any company. There is a necessity for a company to get legal consultancy and support. A customer, business representative, searches for information on legal service providers. He can use completely different sources starting from the internet and continuing with word of mouth. For example, Awara Group has very informative web pages in Facebook and LinkedIn. Moreover, the corporate web page is full of useful information, where customers are able to find various services, the company's background, structure, activities and so on. Recommendations and discussions of other people (for instance the clients of Awara) play a highly important role in the decision making process. Actually, people tend to use a word of mouth approach to share information. In this step, it is important for Awara Group to have a worthy reputation and brand awareness on the market.

Further, all search attempts should allow the customer to “be aware” of the company or, at least, to take into account that such a firm exists. As a positive outcome, if Awara Group attracted the client, he is looking for additional information, through the internet, i.e. the company’s web resources, publications, etc. In this case, the web page of the company has to be appealing and professional in order to catch the attention of the customer.

Finally, when the customer is attracted he calls to the company or sends a notification. The ability to get a fast reply is one of the major points at this stage. The customer connects with the company’s representative, who transmits a request to senior managers.

After, when an appropriate KAM is appointed, a chain of personal meetings takes place, where the customer shares problems and gets feedback. Key account managers coordinate the requests, i.e. share the problems of customers with the lawyers of Awara Group, who are solving the challenge. KAMs, lawyers and the client are in touch. The customer usually knows exactly at which stage his problem solution is. During the process, the company is dealing with necessary organizations and handling essential documents.

Further, when the challenge is solved, the customer gets positive or negative experiences and draws up personal conclusions. At this point, the level of satisfaction is fully determined.

Basically, shortcomings can occur in any phase of the customer journey process. Since a customer satisfaction survey, especially the questionnaire, covers basically all areas, it also identifies possible failures or gaps.

As for the moment of truth (MOT), it has several stages. The zero moment of truth is a period when the pre-order phase happens. At this point, everything starts with the pre-order and the first acquaintance of the customer and product or service. The first stage starts when the customer confronts the actual product or service. It is also called the first moment of truth. The second stage is the actual purchase. The last one is another half of the second stage and happens after the purchase. It covers the final customer experiences and feedbacks. If promises and expectations are met,

satisfaction level goes up. (Cohen 2013.) Figure 3 demonstrates all moments of truth, starting from the beginning and ending with the final customer expectation.

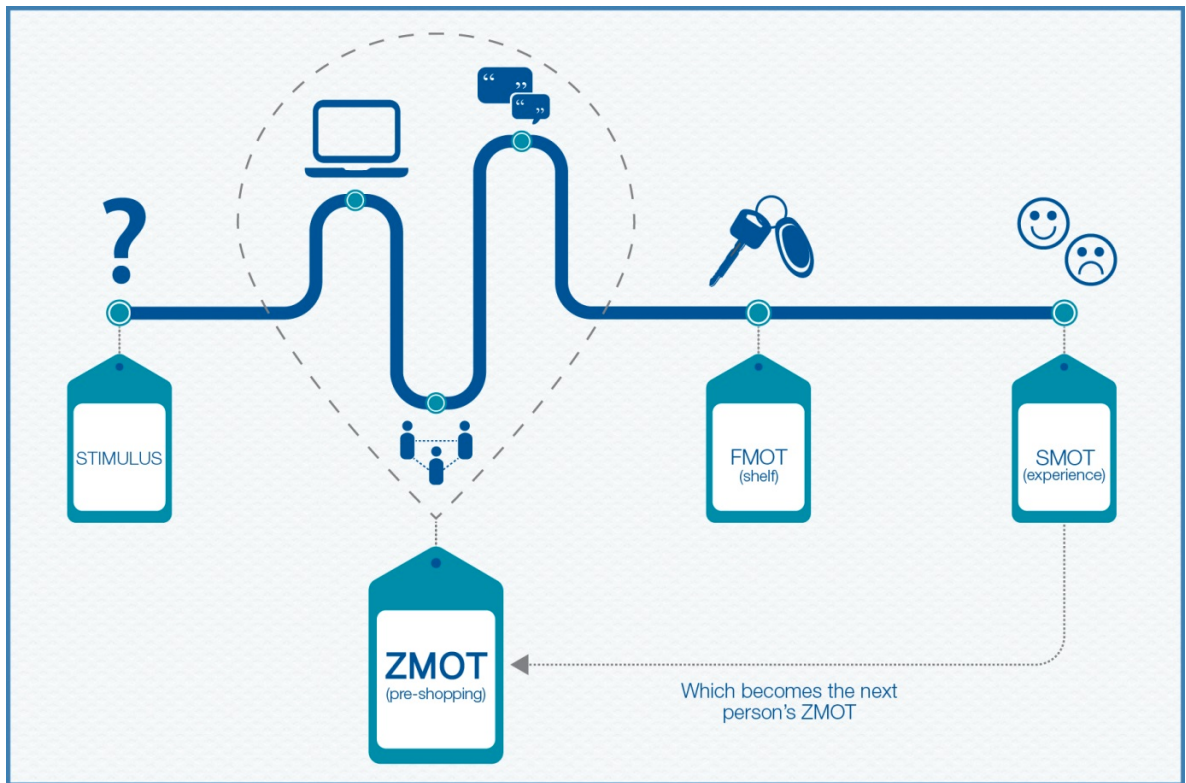


Figure 3. Model of MOTs.

(Source: B2B International, 2015.)

3 PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN B2B CONTEXT

3.1 History of customer satisfaction

The popularity of the term “satisfaction” comes from the 1970s when Cardozo, the scientist, measured on regular basis customer satisfaction, expectations and effort (Cardozo 1965). There was a lot of studies concerning the topic. As a consequence, many scientists had an individual explanation for the term. For example, during the 1990s the term was measured and explained by Gunderson, Heide and Olsson. The group of scientists claimed that ‘customer satisfaction is a post consumption evaluative judgment concerning a specific product or service’ (Gunderson, Heidi & Olson 1996).

One relevant approach is presented by Gerson (1993, 5) who claimed that ‘customer satisfaction is the degree in which person’s expectations are met’. The definition unites both satisfaction and expectation. Moreover, the author is sure that the measurements of customer satisfaction are a vitally important component in defining the level of service/product performance and customer needs.

Macro models of Customer Satisfaction (Figure 4) summarize all definitions and describe the process of customer satisfaction. It starts with perceived performance, where personal perception takes place. The comparison standards are numerous and also different for each customer. Perceived disconfirmation has a positive or negative effect and is directly dependent on a customer’s opinions. Next comes perceived performance or satisfaction feelings - the level at which customer has positive or negative mental results. The last one is the outcome, which refers to final step in determining customer satisfaction level. (School of Economics in Tianjin, 2015)

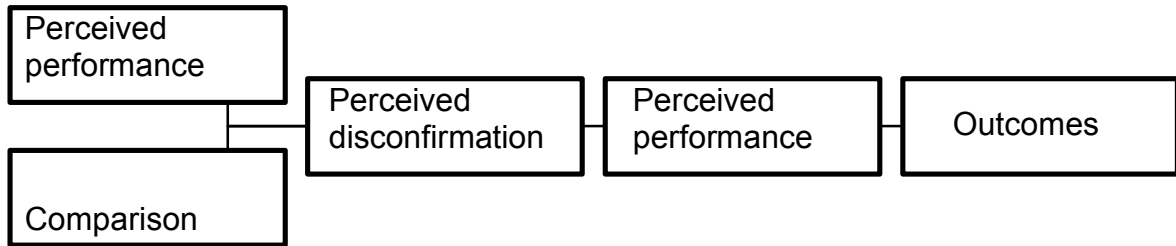


Figure 4. Macro- Model of Customer Satisfaction

(Source: School of Economics).

In general, all definitions of customer satisfaction have a lot of similarities. One of them is the fact that satisfaction is directly connected to personal perceptions and expectations. Actually, a significant point is that the wrong policy of a certain company can easily improve or deteriorate the level of customer satisfaction, even in B2B.

The topic regarding customer satisfaction is highly important in the marketing area since it has a direct link to the company's profitability and success. Companies benefit by knowing the level of customer satisfaction; based on the outcomes it easily determines the gaps to be improved. However, one of the major issues remains the ability of a company to develop quality improvement tools for fixing those areas.

In this thesis the whole idea and structure of customer satisfaction is based on the study of several sources. Each source provides reasonable factors which determine customer satisfaction. In this thesis Gerson's model was used. According to Gerson's study, there are three basic measures which can provide a full overview of customer satisfaction, even in B2B (Table 1).

Table 1. Measures of customer satisfaction

Measure	Description
Product/services of the company	the quality of the offered product or service
Fair treatment of customers	the relationship between a customer and staff
Position among competitors	the level at which the company is positioned in the market

Next, there is detailed information concerning each area, which further serves as a basis for the empirical study.

3.2 Quality of product and services

Basically, by measuring quality, a company is getting an idea for further improvements. Afterwards, the company makes changes, and, as a consequence, gets higher customer loyalty and increased revenue. However, according to Gerson (1993), the quality measurement is a complicated issue, because there are no general frames – ‘quality is only what customers define it to be’. Thus a customer could be dissatisfied even though internal quality measurements of a company are tooled. That is why internal measurements do not represent the full picture. B2B relationships are even more complex, and the quality is a key success factor.

The main purpose of this area is to determine the popular and the less attractive legal services in Awara Group. Consequently, a survey defines the strong and weak sides of the company. As a service provider, Awara Group has to know what are the expectations and experiences of its clients.

Actually, the quality measurements are difficult to quantify, and qualitative research serves as a perfect tool to identify the experiences of customers. Thus, the survey has also close - ended questions, presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3, which are discussed through the interviews. In general, the collection of information in this area is connected to the interviews.

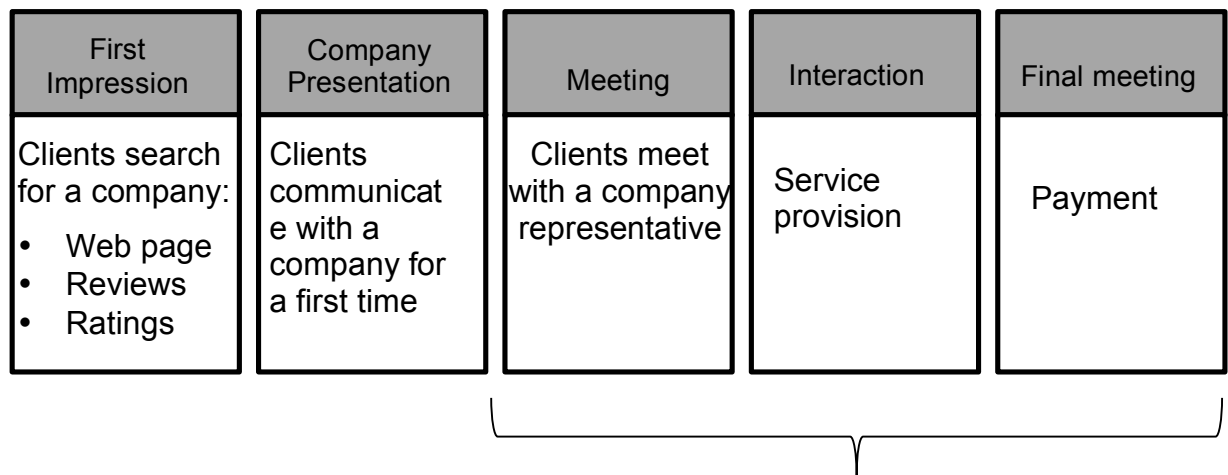
3.3 Quality of fair treatment

Another way to study customer satisfaction is to look at the relationships between a customer and company representatives. The level of general satisfaction is mostly dependent on a company's interactions with a client. In this case, the company is able to have direct influence on the results.

As a service provider, Awara Group is trying to please its customers by fulfilling needs and demonstrating staff proficiency. The customer journey includes the whole process, starting with a service provider and ending with a final result (Figure 5). The cooperation with a customer is an essential component of the customer journey. In general, if there are no gaps - the satisfaction level goes up; otherwise there is a need to determine failures. Figure 3 shows a simplified service delivery process in Awara Group. Detailed information is described in Appendix 4.

A company with legal problems should start looking for a solution i.e. legal service support. A company representative gathers information through word of mouth or the internet. A positive decision takes place if the web page of Awara Group is appealing and interesting. Next, the client connects with Awara Group and its staff. One of the important points is to show staff proficiency and polite treatment. If the client feels satisfied, then the parties discuss problems and possible solutions. The chain of meetings and interaction takes place. The main challenges are whether the customer gets enough feedback, knows the pricing policy, agrees with deadlines, etc. In the end, the client and managers of Awara hold a final meeting, in which they

discuss outcomes and positive results. Payments and necessary documentations are a formal part.



The simplified version of service delivery

Figure 5. The simplified Customer Journey in B2B.

3.4 Position among competitors

Another aspect to be studied is the position in the market, i.e. the positioning of the company among competitors. The vital goal is to determine where customers rank Awara Group – whether the company is considered as a professional or average legal service provider. Furthermore, the good position of the company creates the interest of potential clients.

Awara Group does not have direct competitors in St. Petersburg. There are less professional companies, or some services are absent. Awara Group positions itself on the same level as the Big Four – group of leading consulting and auditing companies (PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte, Ernst&Young, KPMG). (Christodoulou 2011.) However, prices are at the same level with competitors. Thus, Awara Group offers professional services at a reasonable price range. This is considered a competitive advantage.

3.5 Gaps and customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction in B2B is more complicated, but failures in the service delivery process can occur both in B2B and B2C. From one side, business representatives are not usual consumers. From the other side, company representatives are people who have feelings, experiences, attitudes, etc. That is why B2B customers have to be treated similarly as B2C.

Gaps are failures which can occur on a customer's path of the customer journey. Failures are applicable for B2C and B2B clients, who are human beings in both cases.

There is a basic scheme of possible gaps in the service delivery process. (Figure 6.) According to the mode, there are four possible gaps which can occur in the service delivery process. Additionally, there is a customer gap related to the customer itself. As for a company, it could have defects in the structure, delivery and communication. This leads to shortcomings in the service delivery process. At this point, there is a necessity to define corporate problems at first.

Gaps Model of Service Quality

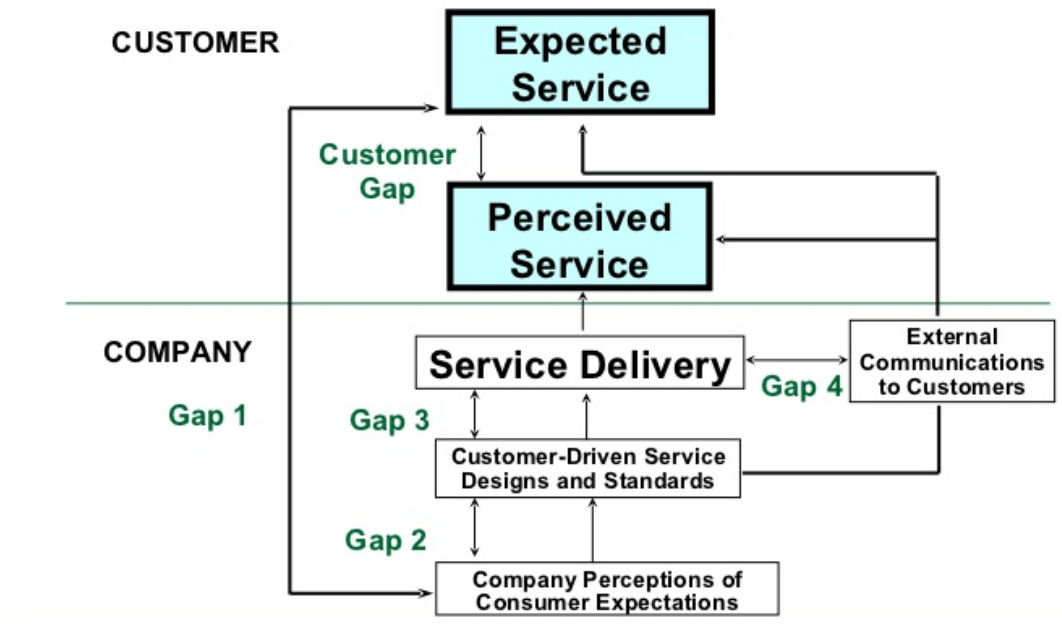


Figure 6. Model of service quality.

(Source: Slideshare 2011.)

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Data collection

Basically, the main idea of this thesis is to determine the level of customer satisfaction. Online survey and interviews are the main tools for conducting the research.

4.1.1 Survey design

The full version of questionnaires, both in English and Russian, can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3, respectively. The design, topic of questions and multiple choice are done in accordance with the company's requirements. Basically, questions are both open- and close-ended. There are multiple choice questions, where a respondent can select several answers. The questions are divided into topics making it easier for respondents to orientate.

Questions are related to the areas of customer satisfaction discussed in the previous chapter. The first and eleventh questions define the customer satisfaction of services. According to the results of the third question, it is possible to define the services, which are more popular among customers. The second, seventh and eighth concern customer satisfaction with the staff of the company. Close ended questions and empty frames for feedback define the position of the company among potential competitors – third studied area. Other questions, e.g. the ninth, are also essential in providing additional information. For example, the improved quality and content of the newsletter contributes to the further interest of clients. Additional languages are key success factors in the communication process.

Both questionnaires contain empty boxes, where respondents are able to write additional comments. This is a great opportunity for customers to discuss any issues which might be actual and current.

4.1.2 Online survey

An online questionnaire allows surveying of a larger number of customers, since it is a time saving approach. In this case, around 80 customers received a link for answering online. Questionnaires were sent with instructions and deadlines.

KAMs were responsible for conducting the survey within personal groups of clients. According to the list, where all customers divided by groups, each KAM has customers from different segments for online and personal interviews.

The company decided to use the Survey Monkey platform to create an appealing questionnaire. All KAMs got the link to the questionnaire to be sent to customers.

Survey Monkey surveys allow for set deadlines and follows the process. In the end, it provides different graphs and a summary

3.3.1 Interviews

Personal interviews were conducted with the first group of clients (higher revenues), and these questions were asked in English and Russian (depending on the preferred language of the respondent). The interview list contains the same questions which are used in online survey (Appendix 2 Interviews). The process of the interview requires more time, but allows gathering more information. Respondents are not limited by option selection. That is why the interviews were conducted only with "important" customers - businesses who remain loyal for years (i.e. the first group of segmentation). This information enables the realization of which factors loyal customers consider to be the key components of Awara Group and where they would like to see changes. The target group for the personal interview included people, business representatives, who were dealing with Awara Group during three or more years. All offices of Awara Group are involved in this process (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tver, Stockholm, Helsinki). The messages with instructions were sent to KAMs, who were supposed to conduct interviews with their own group of customers.

In the St. Petersburg office, there are three KAMs who were responsible for interviews. As a part of my thesis process, I attended interviews (if conducted internally) and was responsible for collecting and analyzing the data.

On average, all KAMs were responsible for personal interviewing around 20% of the customers. According to the Pareto principle - only 20% of customers bring 80% of the profit (Joseph 2008). Awara Group is following the same idea, since loyal customers, representing 20%, bring 80% of total revenue. The company has to improve relationships with loyal customers and keep them up to date.

4.2 Sample size

The sample size for this thesis is calculated with the help of the Survey Monkey calculator. Survey Monkey is a well-known online survey software. (Survey Monkey 2016.) In order to make calculations, the following numbers are taken into consideration: population size equals 100 customers, confidence level is 95% and the margin of error is 5%. Such numbers were chosen in accordance with the company's preferences. The final number is 80. Thus, the survey handles 80 responses in order to get reasonable results. However, this survey implies that there are customers who might not want to participate, or then certain businesses have several contact persons who answer the questionnaire. In fact, about 80 copies of the questionnaire were used online and 20 for interviews.

Awara Group serves plenty of businesses both in the domestic and in international markets. Speaking about legal services, Awara Group fulfills the needs of roundly one hundred companies. According to the customer group segmentation (in the second chapter) most important clients (higher revenue) are interviewed and other received questionnaires. It means that each group consists of approximate 30 respondents. This makes it easier to calculate the results and define findings.

5 RESULTS

The results are drawn from both the online survey and interviews. It is important to highlight that the online survey, especially the questionnaire, has always been risky and usually works well or disturbs the whole process. In this case, the online survey accomplished only 25% of planned results. Clients are busy and did not find time to fill out the questionnaire, causing a low rate of online responses. In fact, there are around 20 responses gathered online. The interviews were successfully implemented. As was planned, 20 customers were personally interviewed.

Nevertheless, the available responses provide sufficient information concerning general customer satisfaction. Thus, the common results are based on the answers of 40 respondents from different segments.

5.1 Quality of the service

In this case, results define the general level of customer satisfaction. It proves the degree in which customers are happy with the company and its services.

According to the results of the online survey (two groups resulting in average and minor revenue), about 70% of customers define Awara Group as a good legal service provider (Figure 1). It can be seen from the first question where customers rate Awara Group. Mostly, customers chose “good” and “average” grades to rate Awara Group. Surprisingly, none gave it an “excellent” grade.

According to the interviews of customers with the highest turnover, the majority gave a better grade to Awara Group. Usually, answers for the first question were “good”. At this point, the first group tends to be more satisfied with the company and offered services in general



Figure 1. Overall satisfaction with Awara Group.

The third question is not directly connected to customer satisfaction, but it allocates legal services according to its popularity. The services which were chosen by the majority are more popular. These can be seen as key services of the company. However, for the least important services there is a necessity to increase customer awareness or reorganize service content, i.e. make it more attractive for customers by showing the company's professionalism. According to the results, "leaders" are different for Russian speaking customers and English ones. Registration, Tax Advice and Litigation are more popular among Russian speaking customers (red bars). Foreign customers set other aspects higher, such as Tax Advice, Transfer pricing, Corporate Law advice, and Immigration support, equaling 50% (blue bars). The other 5% relates to other services – minor ones. (Figure 2.)

Speaking about interviews, the third question contains similar to online results. Basically, all customers of Awara Group position registration, tax advice, labor and corporate law as the more popular and usable services.

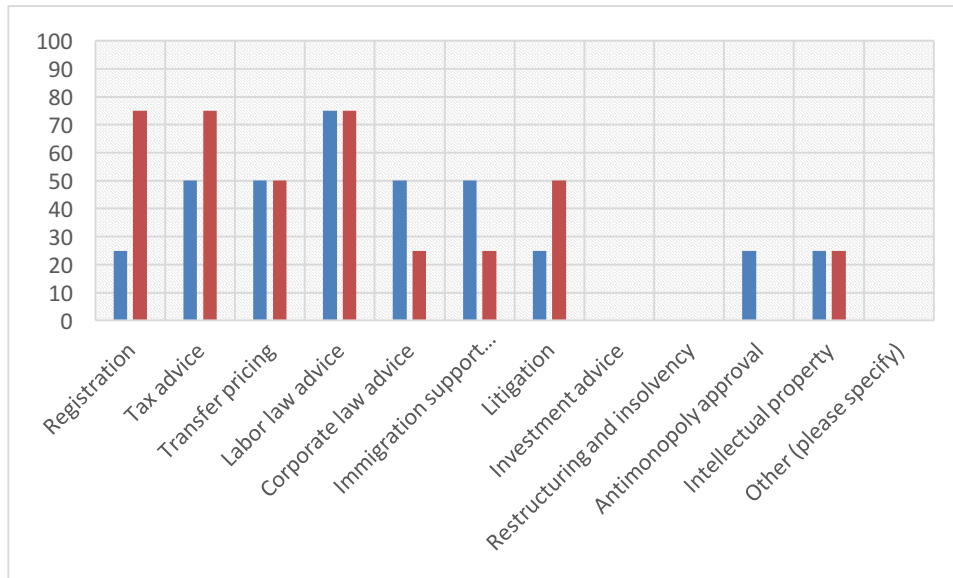


Figure 2. Rating of legal services.

The eleventh question asks whether customers are able to recommend Awara Group to partners and friends. 100% of clients who are definitely recommend Awara Group. (Figure 3.)

Interviewers also would definitely recommend Awara Group to friends and partners.

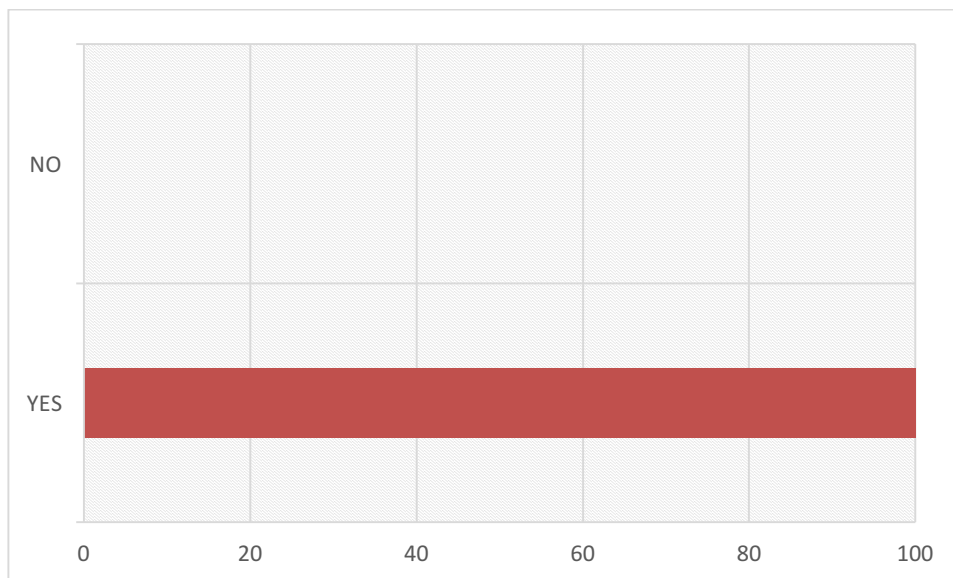


Figure 3. Willingness to recommend to partners and friends.

5.2 Customers and personnel of Awara Group

The other set of questions covers the relationship between customers and staff, i.e. legal service professionals. Speaking about the online survey, the second question defines whether companies have an in-house lawyer. The results of this question are essential in detecting services which are challenging for in-house lawyers or a company itself. In this case, there is a similar number of companies who have and do not have an in-house lawyer. (Figure 4.)

According to the interview results, around 80% of customers have in house lawyers but prefer to use third parties in extraordinary situations.

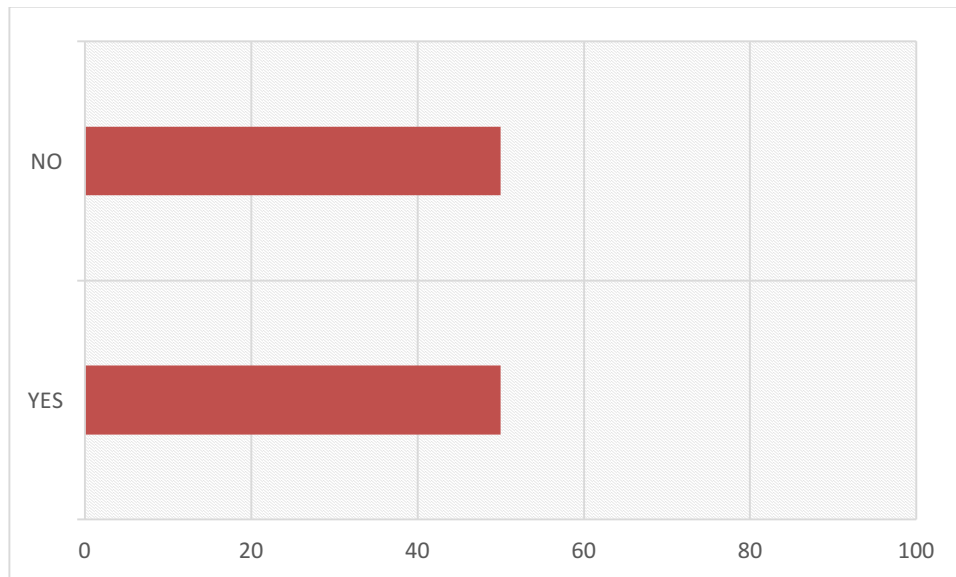


Figure 4. Availability of in-house lawyer.

The determination of potential competitors plays an essential role. The company has to determine its own advantages, what drives customers when using other suppliers. At this point, the seventh question strives to detect whether customers prefer other legal service providers as well. According to the results, Russian speaking customers use other service providers as well as Awara Group (1st two bars). From the other side, foreign companies (English speaking) mainly use other legal service providers besides Awara Group (2nd two bars). (Graph 5.)

In fact, 90% of the interviewed customers consider Awara Group as only one supplier.

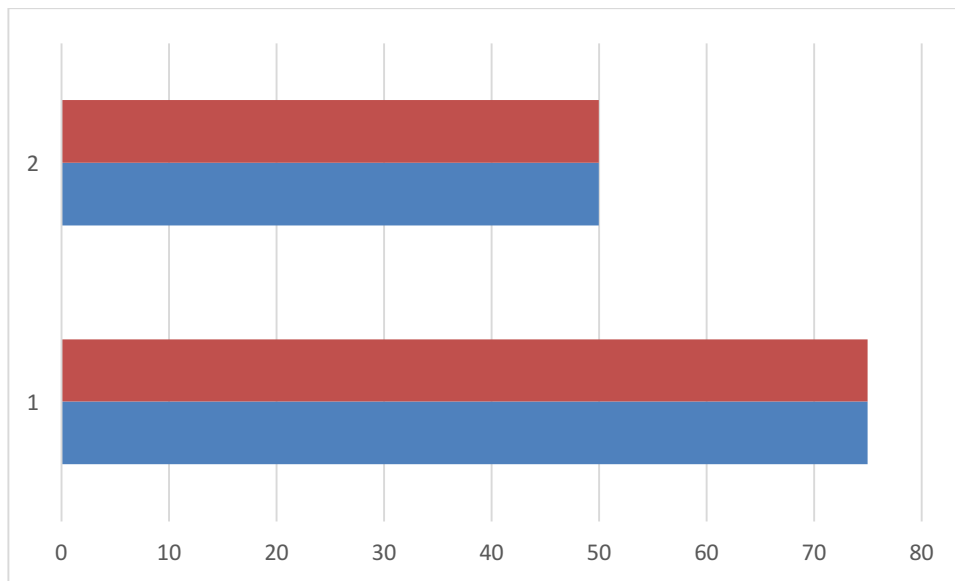


Figure 5. Probability to use another service provider.

The eighth question follows from the seventh and determines what factors are affecting the customer decision making process when choosing a legal service provider (average grade). It is possible to detect what features Awara Group is lacking. The most essential factors for Russian companies are the recommendations of others and reputation. Russians have more trust in the advice and experiences of others. Professionalism, service speed and quality are crucial points for foreign businesses. (Figure 6.)

The quality of services and speed are the most preferable features for the first group of clients. The price of services has received really low points from all groups.

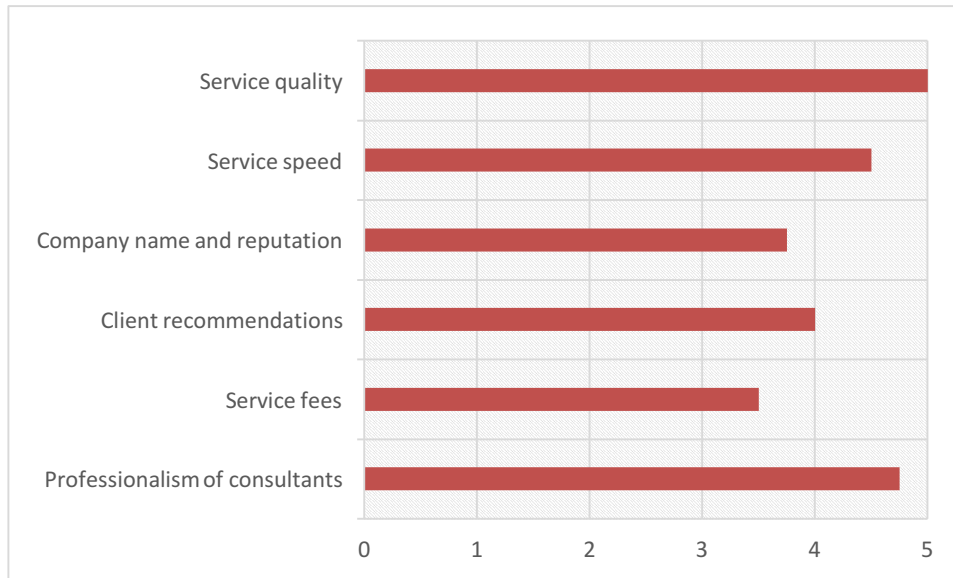


Figure 6. Factors affecting customer decisions.

5.3 Position of Awara Group in the market

The company position in domestic and foreign markets was not successfully defined. The main reason for this is the poor design of the questionnaire, which did not provide any information relating to position of Awara Group.

The interviewees provided really valuable answers. In most cases, Awara Group was positioned as highly professional and holding high brand awareness in the market, especially in Russia. Awara Group is popular by different seminars, conferences and briefings. Customers really appreciate such activities and express gratitude.

Nevertheless, Awara Group remains a relatively small company. The size of the company is the reason why large companies are not usual clients. Big players have a lot of issues, which require a lot of time and work. That is why such companies prefer larger firms. In this case, Awara Group serves as a good supplier for middle size companies.

There were also questions, which are not related directly to any covered areas. However, these questions provided additional information. For example, the results of the fourth and fifth questions showed relationship of customers with newsletter. The interviewed customers found newsletter uninteresting for reading.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis aims at determining the general satisfaction level and defining gaps in the service delivery process. The findings are essential components for the future development of the company – Awara Group. Moreover, in the current situation, when the company rebranding, the conducted survey serves as grounds for a new brand.

Basically, the survey and interview are the main tools used in this research. The survey was gathered online, and the interviews were collected personally with key customers. In general, all customers were divided into three groups according to the value to the company.

Based on the survey and interviews, there are several recommendations which contribute to the further development of the new brand - legal services provided by Awara Group. The recommendations are conclusions, which are based on personal knowledge and corresponding literature.

According to results of the survey, certain gaps were defined. The first group covers general gaps affecting the whole service delivery process.

- Gap of the first contact with the company – connection lacking among offices
- Gap of external communication between Awara Group and its clients (informative newsletter do not accomplish expected results)
- Gap of timing in the service delivery process, the long expectancy of orders

The second group contains so-called marketing gaps, which are defects in the company's structure.

- Gap in general customer segmentation (absence of precise clusters)

- Gap in blurred company's mission, strategy and vision
- Gap in constant customer satisfaction level tracking

Next, there are recommendations based on the survey's results.

The results of interviews have shown that a significant majority of customers is dissatisfied with contacting. It is difficult to reach the company's offices, especially in different regions of Russia. There is a necessity to develop different connections for all offices. Currently, the company has one common network for all offices. It can be done by creating different phone numbers and email servers.

According to the results, customers really have received the newsletters, but the content is not so good. As a consequence, there is a need to think about appropriate and interesting topics which can make the reading more efficient. Interesting findings and articles can be published in social media, where Awara Group tries to be active. It is essential for customers to know what the company is doing and interested in. Moreover, the company's topic of interest should embrace the customer's preferences at the moment. Repeatedly, surveys are effective tools in determining customer willingness and trends at a certain time.

In general, according to the survey, the company does not have a serious problem with staff proficiency and relations with customers. The staff of Awara Group is polite, professional, responsible and reliable. However, timing and high expectancy remain a vital issue. One of solutions is to think about hiring extra labour.

Awara Group offices, especially in St. Petersburg, do not have separate marketing departments. The company offers marketing support as one of its services, but it does not do marketing for its own purposes. In the current business environment, where changes happen frequently, it is highly important to have a marketing manager who could not only fix but also prevent possible brakes. The marketer is able to segment customers according to the company's goals, understand different markets and trends at the moment, lead the company in the right direction, solving

challenges within the path. Overall, the marketer is an essential component of any business which strives for growth. One of advantages is that the marketer can easily determine the current relationship between a customer and offered product or service. Consequently, the company gets up to date information and possible solutions, when the marketer detects customer needs and figures out the corresponding solutions.

The survey is a powerful tool for defining customer satisfaction, experiences, expectations, etc. Another recommendation is related to the systematic survey approach. The key to development and progress of any successful company is always keep update information regarding customer satisfaction. At this point, according to recommendations of professional marketers, Awara Group should conduct surveys every year (InfoQuest 2016). It can be a short list of questions, but cover the important areas to be checked. The segmentation of clients would vary according to the survey and company goals. While keeping the current segmentation (revenue related), the company could conduct similar surveys for important customers (according the highest revenue). Up to date information is always beneficial, especially in the current economic situation, when the environment is disruptive and changing. However, this survey experience has shown that online questionnaires are least effective in B2B. In general, the current survey serves as a great ground for further improvements, which lead to successful growth and development.

As a consequence, all aims presented in the first chapter have been accomplished successfully. The first aim relating to determining the general level of customer satisfaction is completed. Actually, the results of the first question are basic grounds for conclusions concerning the general level of customer satisfaction. According to the results, in general customers are satisfied with Awara Group on a “good” level, meaning that minor changes can be considered. At this point, the company has room for improvements, presented in recommendations. The second goal was defining and eliminating shortcomings in the service process. Potential failures, i.e. gaps, are

checked, and recommendations are given. The third aim is obviously reached since the survey brought significant contribution to improving the relationships between customers and the company.

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY*Awara Law*

Dear Client,

We strive to continually improve our services and focus primarily on our clients' requirements and needs. We appreciate your opinion and preferences, and we would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire. This should not take longer than 5 minutes of your time. Many thanks.

1. Please, rate your overall satisfaction with the legal services provided by Awara Group:

- Substandard
- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Excellent

2. Does your company have an in-house lawyer?

- YES NO

3. Which of our law services would be of interest to your company?

- Registration
- Tax advice
- Transfer pricing
- Labor law advice
- Corporate law advice
- Immigration support (including work permits)
- Litigation
- Investment advice
- Restructuring and insolvency
- Antimonopoly approval
- Intellectual property

Others, please specify _____

4. Do you receive Awara Group newsletters about legislation changes?

- YES NO

5. Please rate the information provided in Awara Group newsletters (several answers possible):

- Useful
- Sufficient
- Reliable
- Timely
- Irrelevant
- Too complicated

6. Please indicate any topics are of interest to you:

7. Does your company work with other providers of legal services?

- YES NO

What services do they provide to your company? _____

8. Please rate the factors affecting your decision when choosing a law firm from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important)

- Professionalism of consultants
- Service fees
- Client recommendations
- Company name and reputation
- Service speed
- Service quality

Others, please specify _____

- My company has not chosen a legal service provider. It was appointed by headquarters

9. Please rate our legal services on a scale from 1 to 5

(1-Substandard, 2-Poor, 3-Average, 4-Good, 5-Excellent)

- Ability to contact the company and/or consultant (telephone, email, etc.)
- Query response rate
- Understanding of assignment/issue
- Service speed
- Professionalism of employees
- Quality of advice and proposed solutions
- Intelligibility of answers
- Feedback and project update
- Document management

Additional comments _____

10. Which language do you prefer using for communication (several answers possible)?

- Russian
- English
- French
- German
- Other _____

11. Would you be willing to recommend us to partners and friends?

- YES NO

Please feel free to leave any comments, feedback, and questions here.

Thank you for your feedback that will greatly help us improve the quality of our services!

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY



Dear Client,

We strive to continually improve our services and focus primarily on our clients' requirements and needs. We appreciate your opinion and preferences, and we would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer 11 questions. This should not take longer than 5 minutes of your time. Many thanks.

1. Could you, please, rate your overall satisfaction with the legal services provided by Awara Group?
2. Does your company have an in-house lawyer?
3. Which of our law services would be of interest to your company?
4. Do you receive Awara Group newsletters about legislation changes?
5. How do you find the information provided in Awara Group newsletters?
6. Please tell any topics, which could be interesting for you.
7. Does your company work with other providers of legal services?
8. What factors affecting your decision when choosing a law firm?
9. Please rate our legal services on a scale from 1 to 5
(1-Substandard, 2-Poor, 3-Average, 4-Good, 5-Excellent)
 - Ability to contact the company and/or consultant
 - Query response rate
 - Understanding of assignment/issue
 - Service speed
 - Professionalism of employees
 - Quality of advice and proposed solutions
 - Intelligibility of answers
 - Feedback and project update
 - Document management
10. Which language do you prefer using for communication?
11. Would you be willing to recommend us to partners and friends?

ОПРОС УДОВЛЕТВОРЕННОСТИ КЛИЕНТОВ



Уважаемый клиент,

Мы стремимся постоянно совершенствовать наши услуги и ориентируемся в первую очередь на нужды наших клиентов. Нам очень важно Ваше мнение и предпочтения. Мы будем крайне признательны, если Вы уделите не несколько минут и заполните опросник. Это займет у Вас не более пяти минут. Заранее благодарим!

1. Как Вы в целом оцениваете наши услуги?

(1-ужасно, 2-плохо, 3-удовлетворительно, 4-хорошо, 5-отлично)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

2. Имеет ли Ваша компания штатного юриста?

- ДА
- НЕТ

3. Какие услуги Awara Law интересны Вашей компании?

- Регистрационные действия
- Налоговое консультирование
- Трансфертное ценообразование
- Консультирование по вопросам трудового права
- Корпоративное право
- Миграционная поддержка (в т.ч. разрешения на работу)
- Судебные споры и арбитраж
- Консультации по инвестиционной деятельности
- Реструктуризация и insolvency
- Антимонопольные согласования
- Защита интеллектуальной собственности

Пожалуйста, сообщите, если Вам интересно что-то другое _____

4. Получаете ли Вы новостные рассылки об изменениях в законодательстве от Awara Group?

- ДА
- НЕТ

5. Находите ли Вы получаемую информацию (возможно несколько вариантов):

- Полезной
- Достаточной
- Достоверной
- Своевременной
- Бесплезной
- Неактуальной
- Слишком сложной

6. Пожалуйста укажите, какие информационные темы Вам наиболее интересны:

7. Работает ли Ваша компания с другими поставщиками юридических услуг?

ДА НЕТ

Какие услуги они предоставляют вашей компании? _____

8. Пожалуйста, пронумеруйте факторы, влияющие на Ваше решение при выборе юридической компании от 1 (самый важный) до 6 (наименее важный)

- Профессионализм консультантов
- Стоимость услуг
- Рекомендации клиентов
- Имя и репутация компании
- Скорость предоставления услуг
- Качество услуг, уровень сервиса

Другие важные для Вас факторы _____

- Моя компания не выбирает юриста. Он назначается головным офисом

9. Пожалуйста, оцените нижеследующие характеристики, относительно наших юридических услуг по шкале от 1 до 5 (1-ужасно, 2-плохо, 3-удовлетворительно, 4-хорошо, 5-отлично).

- Возможность связаться с компанией и/или консультантом
- Скорость реакции на запрос
- Понимание задачи/вопроса
- Скорость исполнения услуги
- Профессионализм сотрудников
- Качество консультаций и предлагаемых решений
- Доступность изложения ответов
- Обратная связь и информация об этапах проекта/прогрессе.
- Организация документооборота

Ваши дополнительные комментарии _____

10. Какой язык общения Вы предпочитаете (можно выбрать несколько вариантов)?

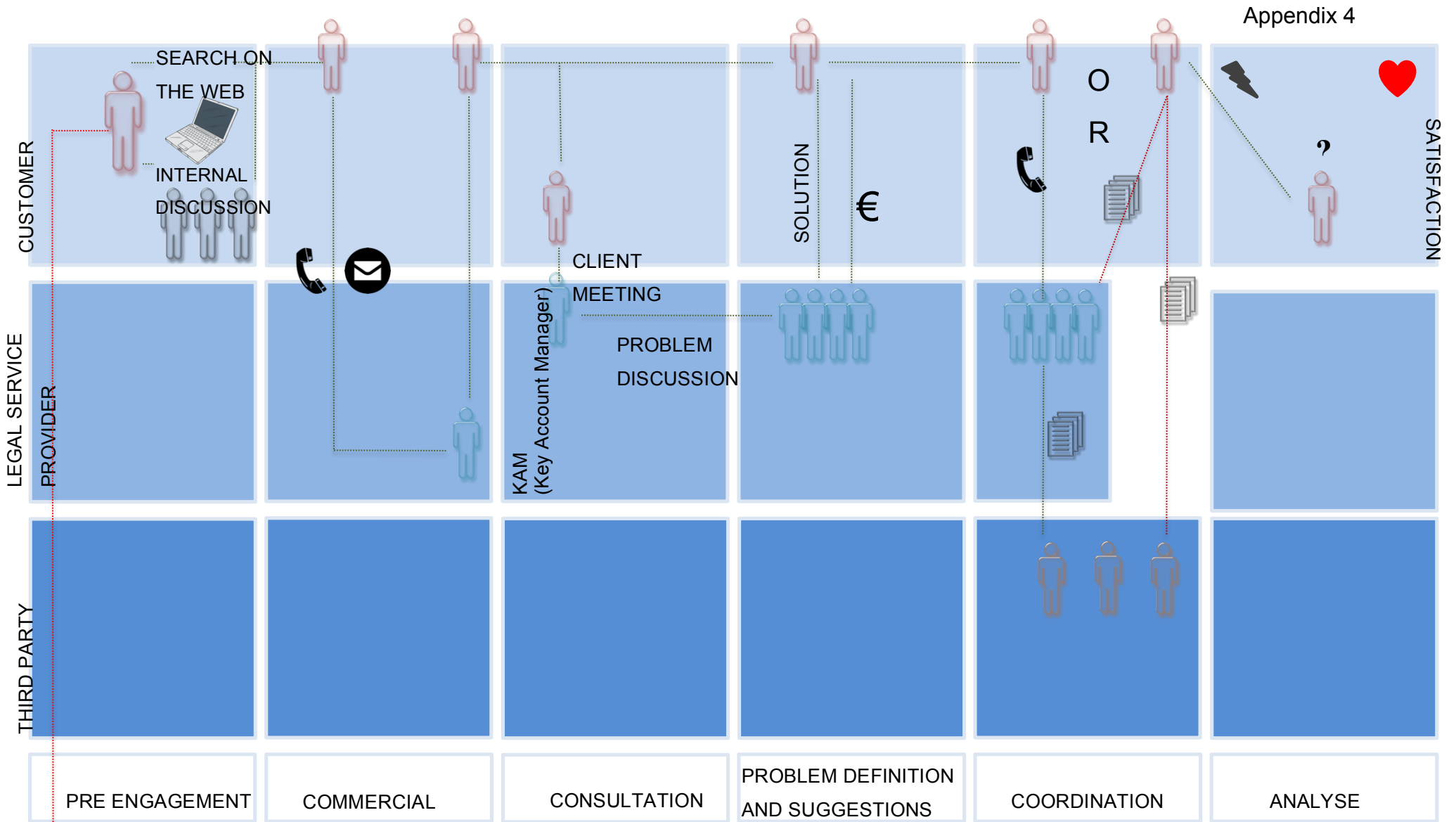
- Русский
- Английский
- Французский
- Немецкий
- Другой _____

11. Готовы ли Вы нас порекомендовать партнерам и знакомым?

ДА НЕТ

Здесь Вы можете оставить любые другие комментарии, отзывы, пожелания и вопросы.

Мы искренне благодарны Вам за сотрудничество и помощь в развитии качества наших услуг!



Appendix 4

START



PROBLEM

- A company has a legal problem
- There is a need for legal service provider
- The company starts a search