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UK MARKET RESEARCH FOR TUKIMET OY

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The purpose of this thesis was to look into the walking aids industry in the UK and find out if there is any potential market for a newly innovated walking aid from Tukimet Oy. Tukimet Oy is a company from Rauma, Finland which specializes in the development and manufacture of innovative assistive tools and devices for handicapped persons, the elderly and those with special need.

In order to achieve the above purpose for the thesis different market analysis tools and theories were used to analyse the market. These include; SWOT analysis, PEST analysis and competitor analysis. These theories and tools were closely looked into and researched from several academic sources in order to increase quality of the span of the theoretical base.

Based on the theoretical information found out, a research on the UK was conducted and findings noted down in the thesis. These results were analysed to determine if the UK market was suitable for the case company or not. Several problems and recommendations were also addressed in the thesis on the basis of the research findings.

The recommendations are some of the things that Tukimet Oy should do but since this thesis is only a suggestion it is very important for the reader to note that the case company may or may not take the recommendations into actions. These recommendations include; sending free sample to some suitable resellers identified. These samples will be sold or given at a low price to end user organizations like hospitals and nursing homes where there are many potential customers to see the Wheelator in use and also be able to use it.

Attend disability and independent living exhibitions in the UK, for example the Naidex exhibition in Birmingham. This will enable the company to meet potential resellers where they can interact with these resellers taking part in the exhibition and may be potentially be able to do business with them.

Hire an experienced UK marketing expert who can be able to market the product and be able to get potential customers in the UK. Additionally the company can hire these services from a marketing company in the UK market to help them market the Wheelator and find potential customers.

Find a way that to reduce the cost of the Wheelator. This will enable them also to reduce the end price of the Wheelator to the customer which is a major barrier to the sales.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Most companies always look forward to expand their business beyond the borders of the country they are operating in. This expansion might be due to different reasons in different companies, for example, boost sales, improve profits, government incentives, competitive strike, economies of scale, etc. Tukimet Oy happens to be one of these companies in Finland planning to expand their market outside the borders of Finland to the United Kingdom.

Tukimet Oy is a company located in Rauma, Finland, the company specializes in the development and manufacture of innovative assistive tools and devices for handicapped persons, the elderly and those with special needs, for example racks (walkers), the rise in subsidies and bed rails, hand rails and handles, shower chairs, as well as ice skating aids. The company is known for its high quality products and also use of mainly domestic materials. The company's customer base not only includes private consumers but also sports and health activities of municipalities, hospital districts, utility services and the dealers. Currently the company has 10 employees and had a turnover of approximately EUR 1.5 million in the financial year of 2015-2016.

Currently the company is looking to expand its market to the United Kingdom (UK), specifically selling their newly innovated fusion of a rollator and a wheelchair commonly known as the Wheelator. This equipment allows the user to use it like a normal rollator, giving them the support needed to go on walks and move about. When they get tired on the way, they can easily turn the device around and transform it into a wheelchair. In the wheelchair mode, the user can move independently by manual propulsion like with a normal wheelchair, as well as be push onward by an assistant to where ever they need to go. The company has already acquired resellers in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium and Switzerland and the next big step is to venture into the UK market.

The company has given me the task of doing a market analysis to find out the potential of the UK market and later on if the market seems to be satisfying I should contact the

potential customers and try to sell the product to them, however this last part will not be included in the thesis. The thesis has four major parts which include;

- Theory- includes the SWOT analysis, customer analysis and the purchase process.
- Methodology-shows which type of research design, research method and data collection and analysis methods was used to collect the data for the thesis. Additionally in the methodology, there was the validity and reliability subtopic to show how the validity and reliability of the thesis was ensured in the whole process of the thesis.
- Empirical data- where the issues discussed in the theory were measured and discussed in the context of the client company. This enables to relate the theory with a real life case or situation.
- Ethical issues- to show and ensure that everything in the thesis was intellectual and well done.
- Conclusions- it includes the potential problems, barriers identified in the internationalization process of Tukimet and the final words.

2 PURPOSE OF THE THESIS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Purpose of the thesis

The main purpose of this thesis is to find out the potential of the UK market for the case company (Tukimet Oy). This is only for their newly innovated product called the Wheellator which has never been sold before in the UK by Tukimet or even other companies.

The product is a new innovation and the company does not know if there is potential for it as most people in the UK are used to the use of a traditional wheelchair or rollator instead of a combined wheelchair and rollator. Thus it is difficult to predict whether the product will sell or not.

2.2 Objective setting

Based on the research problem of finding out the potential market of the Wheellator in the UK market for Tukimet Oy, the following research objectives have been set for this thesis:

1. To find out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the company, and how can they be fixed, utilized or mitigated?
2. What is the customer journey in the purchase of a mobility product like the Wheellator?
3. How well does the product fit into the current market?
4. How well does the Wheellator meet the needs and expectations of the potential customers in UK?

2.3 Conceptual framework

The figure below represents the conceptual framework of the topics to be handled in the thesis. This is to give a visual sample of what is to be included in the thesis in a brief context.

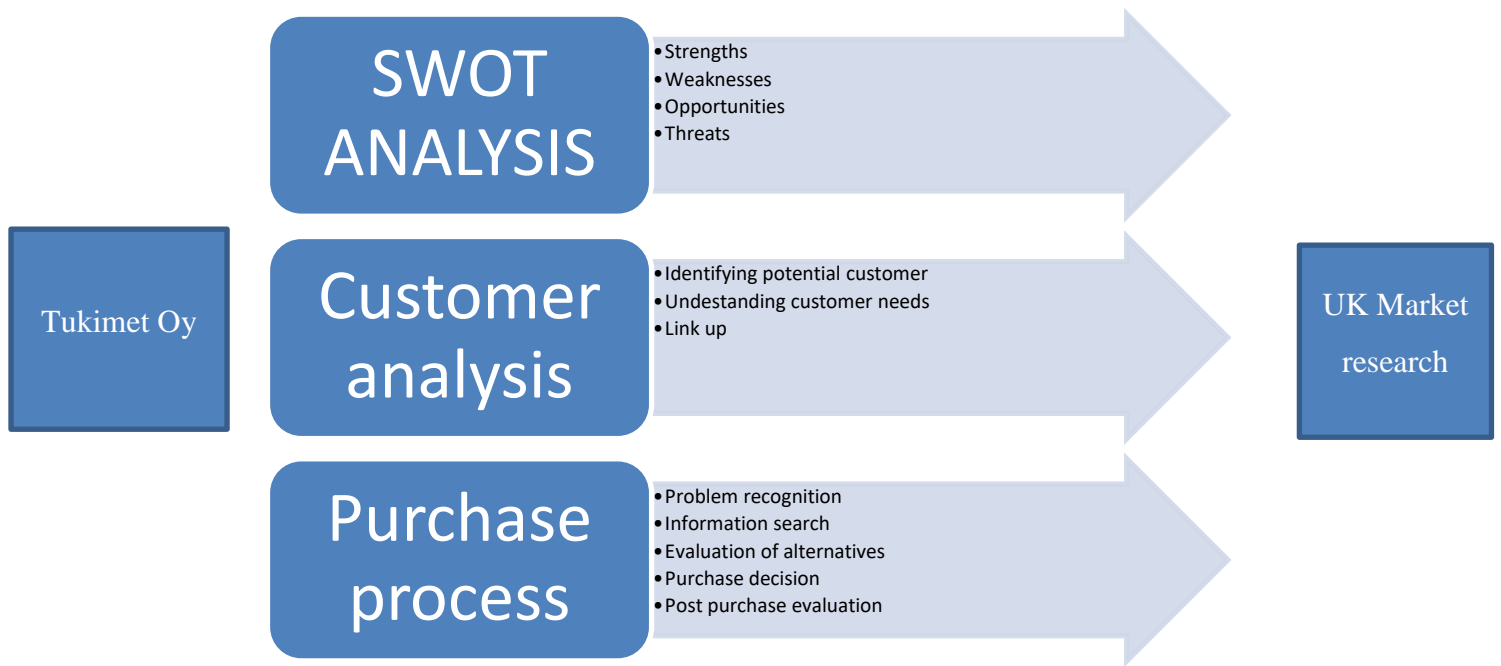


Figure 1. Conceptual framework: UK market analysis (Brian Simiyu)

2.4 Boundaries of the thesis

In the thesis there are some things and issues that will not be handled and will be left out. This does not mean they are not important issues but I would like to focus on certain aspects of the business plan more. These issues include:

- Potential market growth rate
- Market value approximations
- Laws regarding the market entry
- Future activities and expansion opportunities in UK

3 SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis is a structured approach to evaluating the strategic position of a business by identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a marketing

environment. It is also known as a way of monitoring a company's external and internal marketing environment. (Jobber 2010, 46-47). The internal environment includes the strengths and weaknesses of the organization while the external environments are the threats and opportunities than the markets offers or presents to the company. (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman & Hansen 2009, 101-103.)

This analysis thus provides information that is helpful in matching the firm's resources and capabilities to the competitive environment in which it operates. SWOT analysis can also be used as a tool to match strengths with opportunities of a company. For example a retailer company which has a strength of having its own call centers for more than a decade and saw an opportunity in the growing demand for telemarketing services, they can use that strength to create a profitable business of running call centres for other companies. (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman & Hansen 2009, 101-103.)

Additionally this tool provides managers with a critical view and comparison of the organization's internal and external environment and helps them evaluate the firm's fulfilment of its basic mission. Thus it helps to guide companies through the process of reconciling external opportunities and threats with the internal strengths and weaknesses. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 80.)

It is however key to note that when evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, only those resources or capabilities that would be valued by the customer should be included. While in the opportunities and threats only events or trends outside the business that have implications for performance should be listed as anticipated. (Kotler 2012, 51-52.)

	Factors helping the company to reach objectives	Factors preventing the company from reaching objectives
Internal factors	Strengths	Weaknesses
External factors	Opportunities	Threats

Figure 2. SWOT-analysis (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman & Hansen 2009, 101-103.)

3.1 Strengths

As shown in Figure 2 above the strengths are internal factors which help the company to achieve or reach their desired objectives. These strengths also reflect on the company's core competencies and what it does well that the customer values and the competitors find it difficult to duplicate.

The strengths may include tangible assets such as available capital, credit, patents, information and processing system, established and loyal customers existing distribution channels, equipment sans other valuable resources that have positive implications to the company. (Kotler & Keller 2009, 89, 99; Woods 2011, 28-29.)

Additionally companies can also get to easily know their strengths by answering the following questions;

- What do we do well?

- What qualities or aspects persuaded our customers to choose our product or service?
- What resources do we have at our disposal?
- What others see as our strengths?
- What areas are we seen as being expert at?
- What advantages do we have over our competitors?

Nevertheless companies should judge the response of these questions as they should be in the perspective of their operating environment and not from an internal aspect. For instance if guaranteed next day delivery is expected in the industry the company is operating on then this cannot be viewed as a strength to the company. But if it is not usual to get next day delivery in the industry you are operating in then that can be viewed as a strength. (Jobber 2010, 49-52.)

3.2 Weaknesses

The weaknesses are internal factors that prevent the company from reaching their objectives and can create vulnerability for the company. They can be also the characteristics of the company's product that are detrimental to the success or growth in sales. These weaknesses can reduce from the value the company has at a disadvantage when compared to its competitors. For example for a company located in the North of the country but 85% of their customers are located in the South. This means that not only are their distribution costs higher than some of their competitors but are also unable to offer guaranteed next day delivery in line with their competition. (David 2010, 46-47.)

Some of the weaknesses may include unsuitable location of the organization, narrow product line, inadequate financing capabilities, weak market image, and lack of management depth. However, factors identified as weaknesses can often be fixed with suitable investments or restructuring by the company. Due to the fact that weaknesses are by definition internal there can be a lot of resistance by an organization in admitting them. (Jobber 2010, 46-47.)

3.3 Opportunities

Opportunities are external factors that help the company in reaching their objectives which can be exploited to consolidate and strengthen a strategic position of the company. These opportunities can occur any time and for a number of reasons for example it may be as a result of changes from customer lifestyle, advances in technology, new or changed laws and regulations. It is however important to note that as an opportunity in one market, product or service may be considered a threat to another. (Kotler 2012, 51-52.)

Companies should utilize their strengths that they have in their company to exploit these opportunities presented by the external environment or factors. Some opportunities can be forecasted, for example the ability to expand a franchise into a new city, while some may fall into the companies' lap, such as another country opening up its market to foreign business. (Kotler 2012, 53.)

If companies can think far ahead enough, they may even be capable of creating some opportunities, like a chess master being able to analyse the checkmate of his rival in five moves just by watching at the board. For instance, a company may be able to foresee the prospective of innovative products that can be developed from evolving technology. Major instances of this type of anticipation are the social media giants Facebook and Twitter. (Kotler 2012, 53.)

3.4 Threats

The threats are external factors that prevent the company from reaching their objectives. These factors are always beyond the control of the company but the company can take necessary measures to develop contingency plans to ensure they are not taken by surprise. These threats may include for example, competitor reducing prices, supply cost increase, recessions or economic slumps, change in consumer behaviours and new technology. Minor threats can be ignored, although the serious threats must be carefully monitored, while the major threats with which have high probability of occurring

and can seriously hurt the company require the development of contingency plan. (Kotler 2012, 51-52.)

Once the SWOT analysis has been completed, thought can be given on how to turn weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities. For example a perceived weakness in customer care might suggest the needs for staff training for new strength. A threat posed by a new entrant might call for strategic alliance to combine the strengths of both parties to exploit a new opportunity The results of SWOT analysis provide a useful source of information from which an organization can go on to develop policies and practices which allow it to build upon its strengths, diminish its weaknesses, seize its opportunities, and make contingency plans or measures to eradicate or curtail threats. (Jobber 2010, 46-47.)

4 CUSTOMER ANALYSIS

Customer analysis is a process in which companies or organizations acquire data from customer behaviours which will be used to help make key business decisions via market segmentation and predictive analytics. Customer analysis is a very important part of any effective business strategy. This is because it helps to make organizations make key business decisions through the use of market segmentation and predictive analytics through the use of customer information acquired. (Larry 2000, 48). This information acquired by the companies is used by these organizations for direct marketing, site selection, and customer relationship management. Which as a result gives them a 360-degree view of customers on who they are, what they do, what they want, and when and how to best reach them in order to create personalized customer experiences that drive customer loyalty.(Derek & Danica 2004, 112.)

Different organizations use customer analysis differently depending on the type of operations they run and the kind of products or services they provide to the customers. For example; in retail business customer analysis can be used to help make a decision on the type of product, promotion, price and distribution management in a certain area.

Additionally, developing personalized communications and offers or different marketing programs by segment. In financial institutions for example banks, insurance companies and pension funds use customer analysis in understanding customer lifetime value, increasing cross-sales, managing customer attrition as well as migrating customers to lower cost channels in a targeted manner. (Kai Yang 2007, 57-59)

In the customer analysis there are three main things which the analysis must be able to do or show to the company or organization. These things include;

- Identifying the target customer or the best customer for the company.
- Understanding and showing the needs of the customer
- Show how the company's product or service meets or satisfies the customers' needs or wants

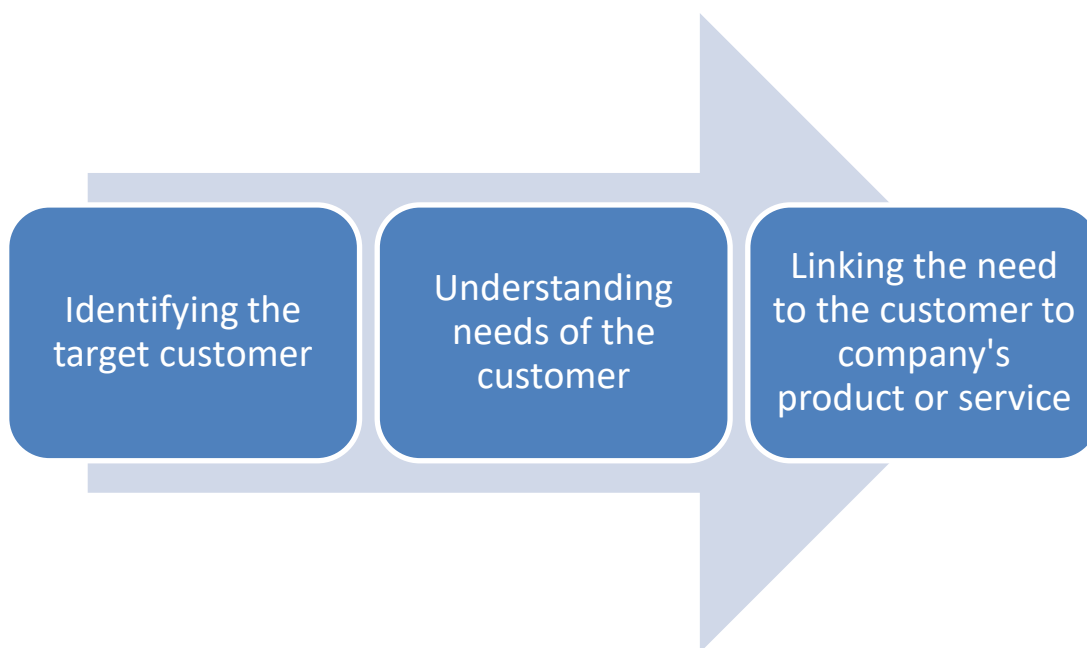


Figure 3. Customer Analysis (Roma 2010, 59)

4.1 Identifying the target customer

The first step requires that the organization or the business to identify who their target customer is. Even though this might look very obvious this has to be very specific and accurate. Because the idea is to know the exact type of customer that the business is

targeting or even serving. The more specific this targeting is prepared, the more targeted the marketing plan can be for the company. (Roma 2010, 59)

However the person doing the planning has to be very careful while narrowing down the section as it is so easy to make an error or to generalize. For instance, if an organization is targeting small businesses, for example, just saying small business as their target customer is not completely enough. Rather, they need to be more specific by may be select the region, number of employees, type of businesses or the success of the business specifically of the target customer. Once this is complete, a first look at the potential customers' needs to happen. (Roma 2010, 59)

4.2 Understanding customer needs

After identifying the target customer the next step for the organization is to get a good idea of what the customer's needs are of what the customer is looking for. There are several ways in which organizations can execute this. For example by considering the past actions of the group, such as the percentage that have purchased a product at some time in the past. Secondly using demographics or other data to determine the future projections of sales with the customer. (Roma 2010, 60).

Additionally the companies can conduct interviews that show how many customers would potentially purchase the product or service. Lastly they can determine the problem's prevalence that the customers have, to learn how many target customers need the product or service to see improvements that have been made. (Roma 2010, 60).

4.3 Link up

Lastly the customer analysis should show how the company's product or service meets or satisfies the customers' needs or wants. In this the person(s) in charge need to really take the time to state how the product or service offered by the company satisfies the needs of the customer. This is in order to bring the marketing plan full circle. One of the ways that this occurs is by showing how the customer's decision-making process

occurs. Why will they purchase this service? What information or data do you have that helps support this information? (Roma 2010, 60).

In an organization, the customer analysis is one of the most important elements in marketing plans because it helps the business to understand who its customers are. When the customer analysis is accomplished through the steps taken above, the organization gets to know who the customer is, what the customer wants and how the products and services offered by the company meet those needs. (Roma 2010, 61).

Doing a customer analysis does not guarantee a direct success to the companies, as the companies need to go into details of individual interactions to understand the relationship between each customer touch point and the value it delivers to customers. In most cases companies waste a lot of money in chasing new customers while taking for granted the opportunity to engage the ones they already have by not getting a better understanding of the needs and wants of their current customers. Additionally a company should be able to evaluate itself from within first to ensure that everyone is on the same page of providing a unified customer experience strategy. (Roma 2010, 61).

5 PURCHASE PROCESS

Purchasing is the formal process of buying goods and services to accomplish the goals of the enterprise, organization or an individual. The purchasing process can greatly vary from one organization or individual to another, but there are some common key elements in which most organizations share in their purchasing processes.

Before a customer decides to buy a product, they go through a journey of different stages before they finally buy the product they needed or wanted. It is very important for organizations to understand this process as it will enable the organization to align their sales strategy accordingly. There 6 main stages in which customers go through before making a final purchase, these stages include;

1. Problem recognition

2. Information search
3. Evaluation of alternatives
4. Purchase decisions
5. Post purchase evaluation

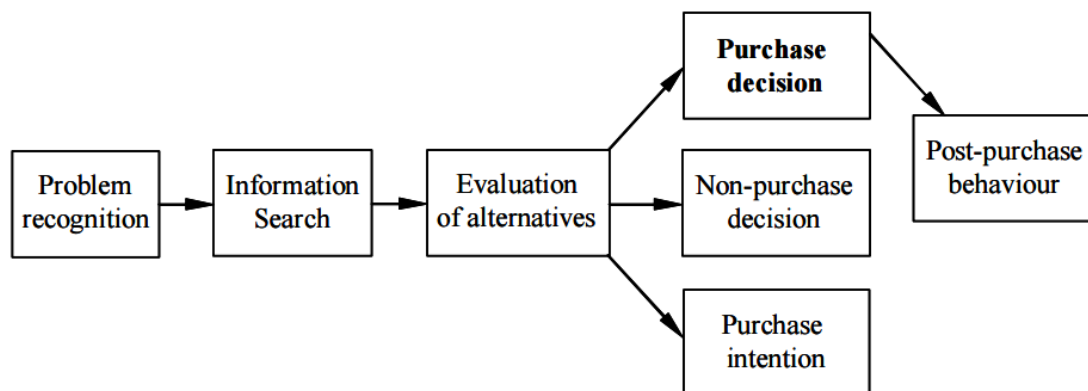


Figure 4. The purchase decision process (Davis & Gschwandtner 2011, 45)

It is however key to note that, the customer does go through all the 6 purchase steps while making a purchase for example during repurchase the customer may not evaluate different alternatives due to the satisfaction of the previous product brand he bought and would like to maintain due to its high quality and suitability. Secondly it is important to note that both organizations and individuals go through these steps in their purchasing process it is just that in organizations the decisions made in different stages might involve more than one different people in the organization and the procedure is more formal than when making an individual purchase. (Davis & Gschwandtner 2011, 45).

5.1 Problem recognition

This is regarded mostly as the first major step in the customer's decision process. A company or an individual cannot buy or purchase anything without recognizing or feeling they have a need. This need feeling makes a customer have a reason to believe

that what they want, where they want to be or how they perceive themselves or a situation is different from where they actually are. This feeling of a need may be caused by internal stimuli/ triggers (hunger or thirst) or external stimuli/triggers (advertising or word of mouth). (Davis & Gschwandtner 2011, 47).

However, for companies or organizations doing the selling of the product or service can create this need feeling to the customers by taking the time to “create a problem” for the customer, whether they recognize that it exists already or not, in order to start the buying process. In order to achieve this, the selling organizations or companies can do content marketing and share facts and testimonials of what their product or service can provide. Additionally, asking questions to pull the potential customer into the buying process. If the selling companies do this, it helps them to easily convince the potential customer realize that they have a need that should be solved even if it is not the case. (Davis & Gschwandtner 2011, 47).

5.2 Information search

After the customer has recognized the problem or a need, the step that follows is information search stage. This is in order for the customer to find out what they feel or think is the best solution for their need or problem. This information search can be done by use of internal environment (mental process of researching the information stocked in the memory, actively or passively) or external environments or a combination of both) or external environments (information obtained via different sources e.g. personal family, friends, commercial advertising, web sites, sales and public mass media). This is in order for the customer to find and evaluate the information sources related to the central buying decision. The customer can rely on print, visual, online media or word of mouth for obtaining information they want regarding their need(s) or problem(s). (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 147)

The amount of influence of these information sources to the customer’s buying decision varies with the product category and the customer’s characteristics. For example the consumer receives most of the information about a product or a service from com-

mercial sources. Nevertheless, the most trustworthy information often comes from personal sources or public sources. For the buyer, personal sources of information are much more valuable than commercial sources that only inform the buyer about a particular product or service. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 147)

5.3 Evaluation of alternatives

After the customer has done information research and identified the possible alternatives, the customer will go to the following stage of the mental assessment of the current options. At this stage it is when the customer will process information to land at brand varieties. The customer does not use a simple and single assessment process in all purchasing circumstances. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 149). The level of complexity of the assessment process is prejudiced by numerous factors, amongst which the utmost important are:

- The customer's experience and knowledge;
- The significance of the service/product reflected;
- The cost of making a bad decision;
- The complexity of the assessed options;
- The urgency with which the verdict must be taken (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 151)

Just because a product or a service is more prominent among the rivalry doesn't mean a customer will unquestionably acquire the product or service. Currently customers want to be sure they have done comprehensive research before making a purchase. Due to this, nevertheless the customer may be sure of what they want, they'll still want to compare other choices to guarantee their choice is the right one. (Kotler & Armstrong 2008, 152).

5.4 Purchase decisions

This is the stage where the purchase takes place and here the customer's choice will be to buy the most preferred brand, but at least two issues can come amongst the purchase intention and the purchase decision, This includes;

- The attitudes of others – if somebody significant to the customer tells them that they should buy the lowest priced product, then their propensity of buying a more expensive product are significantly reduced.
- The unexpected situational factors – the customer up to this moment has made an acquisition intention based on influences for instance estimated price, expected product advantages. Nonetheless, unforeseen happenings may change the purchase purpose. For example, the economy might take a turn for the worse, a close competitor might drop its price, or a friend might report being disappointed of the chosen product.

Additionally in this stage of the purchase process, the customer chooses upon his decisional actions, in the sense that he has the following likelihoods:

- The choice of purchasing the product or the service;
- The choice of not purchasing the product or the service;
- The choice to postpone the purchase;
- The choice of swapping the product or service that he wants with another product or service. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 196).

5.5 Post purchase evaluation

The purchase process decision process does not close with the purchase decision, but with the post-purchase evaluation. In this stage the customer analyses the level to which his purchase decision was good or not. The result stays in the relationship between the consumer's expectations and the product's supposed performance. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 198).

If the product or service falls short of expectations, the customer is disappointed; if it meets the expectations, then the customer is satisfied; if it exceeds expectations, then the customer is delighted. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 198). In the last two cases, the customer will store information in his memory helped him make the satisfactory or wonderful purchasing decision.

Nearly all key purchases result in a state of cognitive dissonance, or discomfort triggered by post-purchase conflict. Once the purchase, customers are pleased with the advantages and benefits of the selected brand and they are happy to circumvent the downsides of the products not bought. Nonetheless, every purchase includes compromise. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, 149). Customers may become disgruntled with the shortcomings and shortcoming of the purchased product or service and they may feel uncomfortable about the benefits of the brand not selected and purchased. Thus, customers experience post purchase dissonance at least to some extent at every purchase they make. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 198)

The level to which the customer is pleased with their purchase choice will evidently affect their behaviour from that moment on. If the customer is contented, they will display a higher likelihood of buying the product or service once more. Oppositely, a dissatisfied customer who condemns a brand is likely to cost that corporation up to 20 clients in minus. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 199).

Companies should also study how the buyers' usage and disposal of the purchased item. The sooner purchasers consume a product, the sooner they may be back in the market to repurchase it. If the consumer pitches the product away, it is significant to know how they get rid of it, especially if it can damage the surroundings. Therefore, the public awareness of recycling and ecological concerns should be increased. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, 150)

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research design

Research designs are categorized into three main groups: exploratory, descriptive and casual. The selection of the most suitable is determined by mostly on the objectives of the research. Furthermore the selection of research design is influenced by the level of knowledge of the researcher about the problem and research objective. (Alvin, Ann & Ronald 2017, 94-99)

If the researcher knows less, the more likely they should use exploratory research. Casual research on the other hand, should only be used when the researcher has a good amount knowledge about the problem and they are in search of casual relationships among variables connected with the problem or research objectives. Descriptive research is done to respond to questions of who, what, where, when and how. For instance, when the researcher wants to know who are the customers, what brands they buy and in what quantities, where they buy the brands, when they shop and how they found out about the products. (Mark & Philip 2012. 111). Additionally it is desirable when the researcher want so project findings for a larger population. (Alvin, Ann & Ronald 2017, 94-99)

In this thesis, descriptive research design was used since this is a market research thesis and the thesis should answer the questions of who are the potential customers and competitors, what brands do the customers use, where the customers shop for their walking aids, and where and how do they find information about the desirable walking aid to buy. Furthermore, the UK is a very large area with a very large population hence in order to project the findings of this large area with such a big population descriptive research design was chosen. (Alvin, Ann & Ronald 2017, 94-99)

6.2 Research method

The types of research methods can be categorised into two main categories: quantitative and qualitative method. The quantitative research method is a research which generally comprises administration of a set of premeditated questions with pre-set response options to a huge amount of respondents. The purpose of quantitative research is constantly definite and is used frequently while the manager and the researcher have established on the particular information that is necessary. Data format and sources are constantly indistinct and well definite and the assembling and formation of the data assembled follow a methodical procedure that is principally numerical. (Alvin, Ann & Ronald 2017, 143).

Qualitative opposite to the quantitative research, it includes collecting, analysing and interpreting unstructured data by observing what people do and say. Qualitative data can be categorized but usually cannot be quantified. (Alvin, Ann & Ronald 2017, 145). Additionally it is aimed to provide in-depth and interpreted understandings of the social world and the research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their lived experiences, perspectives and histories. (Snape & Spencer 2003, 3).

In this research qualitative research method was into practice since data about customers, competitors and the UK was collected, analysed and interpreted in order to come to the conclusion whether or not the UK is a good market for Tukimet to venture into. Additionally in depth and interpreted understanding of the social world and the customers by learning about their social environment, lived experiencers and perspectives is needed. This is in order to determine if all those issues will favour the selling of the Wheellator in the UK.

6.3 Data collection and analysis

Data collection is the procedure of collecting and evaluating information on beset variables in a conventional methodical fashion. This then allows one to answer relevant

questions and assess outcomes. The aim of data collection is to capture quality evidence that allows analysis to lead to the construction of convincing and trustworthy answers to the questions that have been posed. Data analysis is the procedure of cleansing, converting and molding data with the aim of realizing useful facts and statistics suggesting to conclusions and supporting decision-making.

In this thesis most of the data was collected via research through the internet since the UK is very far away from Finland hence the easiest and efficient way to collect information was through the internet. Additionally, since I work in Tukimet Oy I had the opportunity to talk to approximately 14 potential customers via the phone in the period between February to April 2017. During the talks, I was able to get useful information which will be used in the thesis. However, the information regarding the specific customers will not be written in the thesis due to some reasons put forward by the client company and the potential customers.

6.4 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to the credibility or believability of the research. It shows if the results of the findings are genuine and if they have a valid ensure of intelligence. There are two aspects of validity, these include; internal validity and external validity. In terms of reliability, it refers to the repeatability of the findings. Meaning if the study was to be done the second time would it yield out the same result? If yes then the research is reliable. (Snape & Spencer 2003, 78)

In order to assure the reality of the research in this thesis, all data used for research process had a reliable source. For instance, all online data were from official websites or authoritative website. Additionally, all the books used in the paper were from SAMK library.

In terms of the interview questions, because the dedications and the objectives of the thesis were defined and set at present at the very commencement, so in order to

assure the consistence for the thesis, all the interview interrogations were made and listed in accordance to those objectives and determinations.

Additionally, this thesis is about a market research for Tukimet in the UK market for their Wheellator product, thus all the discussions in the study were around the marketing knowledge. In order to ensure that the analysis and discussion in the study were supported, the empirical fragment of the thesis was developed based on the responses established from the interviewees who are the potential customers and also based on the internet research. In addition, all the practical recommendations for Tukimet were conducted based on the analysis about UK market potential made in this thesis. Thus, the reality and validity of the paper could be guaranteed.

6.5 Ethical issues

While conducting the research and when writing the thesis, there were some ethical issues which will be put into practice. This is to ensure that everything intellectually and well done. There are several ethical issues to be observed, these include:

6.5.1 Objectivity

During the research, it is necessary to avoid bias or exaggeration in data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. While every type of communication in relation to the research should be done with honesty and transparency

6.5.2 Respect for Intellectual Property

In the writing of the plan and any other writing one should be able to honour patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property and not in any case use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Lastly, one should give proper acknowledgement or credit for all contributions to research and avoid plagiarism.

6.5.3 Legality

During the writing of the thesis and research conduction one should be aware and respect all the laws and institutional and governmental policies put in place to guide the author in the process of my thesis writing and research conduction.

6.5.4 Confidentiality

Additionally, one should protect confidential communications that one has come across or use during the process of doing the thesis. This includes, not disclosing personal or financial interests that may affect research, respecting the dignity of research participants, obtaining full consent from the research participants before using their information, ensure anonymity of organizations and individuals participating in the research.

All the above issues will be handled during the thesis writing process to ensure that the thesis is written along the ethical guidelines put. This will be done by ensuring that all the individuals and organizations have to participate in the research voluntarily. And give paramount importance to keep the anonymity of these individuals and organization while writing the report. Secondly one should acknowledge works of other authors used in any part of the thesis with the use of SAMK thesis referencing system according to the thesis handbook rules. Lastly, high level of objectivity should be maintained though out the research.

7 SWOT ANALYSIS

In order to evaluate the strategic position of Tukimet Oy SWOT analysis will be used to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a marketing environment. (Jobber 2010, 46-47). This will work on identifying the internal environment which includes the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the external environment which include the threats and opportunities that the markets offers to Tukimet Oy. (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman & Hansen 2009, 101-103.)

In this analysis information will be provided that will help in matching the firm's resources and capabilities to the competitive environment in which it operates. (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman & Hansen 2009, 101-103.) This is in order to provide Tukimet Oy management with a critical view and comparison of the organization's internal and external environment and help them evaluate the firm's fulfillment of its basic mission of expanding the Wheelator market to the UK. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 80.)

	Factors helping the company to reach objectives	Factors preventing the company from reaching objectives
Internal factors	<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Manufactured Scandinavia and raw materials sourced in Europe.</p> <p>New innovation.</p> <p>Enough resources and employees.</p> <p>Patent.</p>	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>New innovation.</p> <p>Price.</p> <p>Lack of enough knowledge about the UK.</p>

External factors	Opportunities: Aging population. Tax relief to customers. Easy trade with the UK. Government support.	Threats: Brexit. Cheaper products/ competitors. UK government in terms of the handling walking aids for the old. Change in trends into lighter walking aids.
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Figure 5. SWOT Analysis of Tumimet Oy (Brian Simiyu)

7.1 Strengths

As discussed in the theory in the first part of the thesis, strengths are internal factors which help the company to achieve or reach their desired objectives. These strengths also reflects on the company's core competencies and what it does well that the customer values and the competitors find it difficult to duplicate.(Kotler & Keller 2009, 89, 99; Woods 2011, 28-29.)

In Tukimet situation they have several strengths that may help them achieve their desired objective of expanding to the UK. The first strength is the new innovation they have. As stated in the introduction, the Wheellator is a combination of both the rollator and a wheelchair which can be self-propelled. This kind of innovation has never been done anywhere in the world hence Tukimet has an advantage of the first market entree. This may give them a chance to get a string position in the market somewhat easier since their product is unique.

Additionally, apart from Tukimet being the first to have the Wheellator innovation, they also have a patent for the innovation which prevents any other company from Europe to produce or manufacture the same kind of product. This enables them to be

the only company able to manufacture this type of product in Europe thus giving them an absolute dominance in the European market.

The Wheellator is manufactured and assembled in Finland hence making it a Scandinavian product. This is a strength to Tukimet since there is a very high respect and trust on Scandinavian products in terms of their quality by customers. Furthermore 80% of the raw materials used to manufacture the Wheellator are sourced from Europe which is known for high quality raw materials as compared to Asian raw materials.

Lastly Tukimet as a company has enough resources and motivated employees to enable them to produce, market and sell the Wheellator in the UK. These resources in terms of machinery and economic resources to enable buy high quality raw materials and produce good high quality end products which will enable them to use it as a marketing characteristic of the product. Tukimet employees are also motivated and are really experienced in terms of production and also motivated into venturing into the UK market.

7.2 Weaknesses

In this part the weaknesses of Tukimet Oy will be discussed. These weaknesses are internal factors that prevent the company from reaching their objective of expanding to the UK and can create vulnerability for the company. Furthermore, detrimental characteristics to the company's success or growth in sales will also be handled. These weaknesses are the ones which reduce from the value Tukimet and has a disadvantage when compared to its competitors (Jobber 2010, 46-47.)

Although the new innovation of the Wheellator can be a strength to Tukimet Oy, it can also be a weakness to the company. This is because may be the market is not ready to accept this innovation and are not ready to substitute the traditional wheelchair and rollator with the Wheellator. Also, another threat may be other potential customers

might prefer to buy powered wheelchairs which is very common among the old, sick and the disabled people in the UK.

Another major concern even for the customers that Tukimet has already contacted is the price. The Wheelator currently costs 657 Euros to the retailer and 900 Euros to the end user. This is very expensive as compared to the price of other wheelchairs or rollators sold by other competitors. For example most rollators cost about 100- 150 Euros to the end user and 250- 300 Euros for a wheelchair. This is however most of these are produced and manufactured in Asia where the production costs are lower and additionally these products are made of lightweight aluminium whereas the Wheelator is made of stainless steel and is manufactured in Finland where the production costs are higher.

Lastly even though they have very motivated and experienced working staff in both marketing and production, they lack a person with vast knowledge about the UK market. This is because the UK is a very different market as compared to any other markets that Tukimet has operated on before. This lack of personnel makes the company only work on assumptions and experiences they have had with other markets which is not always the efficient way to work in a market.

7.3 Opportunities

As discussed in the previous chapter of the theory, opportunities are external factors that help the company in reaching their objectives which can be exploited to consolidate and strengthen a strategic position of the company. (Kotler 2012, 51-52). In this sub chapter the opportunities that the external environment presents to Tukimet will be discussed in detail.

As days go by, people are getting older and older in the world and the UK is not an exception with that. This is evident as the number of nursing homes for the old people is increasing day and night. This aging population presents Tukimet with a market for its new product. Additionally this aging population is more different than that of other eras, as the current aging population are more concerned with the quality of products

they use and additionally avoid using powered chairs instead use manual walking aids to keep healthy.

The UK government has put a tax relief to mobility aid products to most of the customers. These mobility aid products includes the Wheellator, this means that the customers will not pay VAT for the product when they purchase the product hence lowering the cost of the product by 20% which is the VAT charger to these kind of products.

Thirdly the UK government has made it easy for foreign companies especially from the EU to operate in the region. Also the business environment and procedures are not complicated when beginning to do business. This makes it easy for Tukimet to venture into the UK markets due to the ease environment of doing business which has been provided by the UK government.

Last but not least, the Finnish government supports companies who are venturing into other countries both in terms of policies made and also financial aid. For example Tukimet will get some financial aid from the government if they hire some marketing service or research service from other company to do the marketing or research for the UK market. This enables the company to be able to do their export and preparation activities with little or no worry about the finance and their costs. Additionally, the policies put in place by the government on expert encourage companies to do export with ease and no struggle.

7.4 Threats

Tukimet is also faced with external factors that prevent it from reaching their objective of venturing into the UK. These factors are beyond the control of the company but the company can take necessary measures to develop contingency plans to ensure they are not taken by surprise by these external factors. (Kotler 2012, 51-52).

Additionally, minor threats can be ignored, although the serious threats must be carefully monitored, while the major threats with which have high probability of occurring and can seriously hurt the company require the development of contingency plan. (Kotler 2012, 51-52). However in this thesis the threats will not be graded whether it is a minor or major threat and also the contingency plans which Tukimet can take will not be handled.

One of the big threats that Tukimet is facing are cheaper products which are manufactured in Asia by the competitors. Even though the durability of these products is really low as compared to the Wheellator, the customer will most likely buy the competitor products due to the low price of product. Also since the Wheellator is a new product it is really difficult to convince a customer why they should buy a new product which is six times more expensive than other products in the market.

Secondly, even though the UK government has provided tax reliefs to mobility aids and additionally made it easy for European companies to do business in the UK, the system that they use to provide old people with walking aids does not favour Tukimet. The UK has a system where they provide vouchers to the old people that they can use to get a walking aid.

This is a good system however these vouchers however do not exceed 200 Euros hence these old people cannot buy expensive walking aids and also make the people get used and contented with the cheap low quality walking aids sold by the competitors. Thus, it makes it difficult to sell expensive walking aids in the UK like the Wheellator. If an old person wants to buy a more expensive walking aid, they have to add their own money, which most of them find it difficult since they are used to the normal system of free, cheap and low quality walking aids

Another threat that Tukimet is facing, is the change in trend into lighter walking aids in the market. More and more companies are try to reduce the weight of their walking aids every time and it is becoming a trend in the market. This is a problem because the Wheellator is made of stainless steel and weighs almost more than twice than the normal rollators in the market. This is in order to make the product more stable and durable for the customers. However, other competitors are making their products since they

are using aluminium to make the product light for the customer to lift it easily and carry it around more easily.

Another big threat is the political situation in the UK due to the politics of the Brexit. This is a big threat since there is no correct forecast on how it will affect the way of doing business not only in Britain only but also the UK at large. This is because some business policies and relations might change between Britain, the rest of the UK and also Europe either making it harder or easier to do business in the region.

8 CUSTOMER ANALYSIS

As said in the theory chapter, customer analysis is a process in which companies or organizations acquire data from customer behavior which will be used to help make key business decisions via market segmentation and predictive analytics. In this case, this thesis will look into Tukimet potential customer target in both on business-to-business and also in business-to-consumer. Since the UK is a very large area and the Wheellator can be used in different location (whether rural or urban) I will not mention or talk about the suitable location of the potential customer.

This customer analysis will help Tukimet in their business strategy of venturing into the UK. As the customer analysis will help the company to make key business decisions via market segmentation and predictive analytics through the use of customer information acquired. (Larry 2000, 48). This information acquired by the will used by these Tukimet for direct marketing, site selection, and customer relationship management and also to create personalized customer experiences that drive customer loyalty. (Derek & Danica 2004, 112.)

8.1 Identifying the target customer

The first stage of customer analysis is identifying the ideal target customer that Tukimet is targeting. There are two groups of customers who Tukimet is targeting as end

users, namely; the old people and the sick. The old people are elderly who need support or and aiding equipment to manoeuvre through their daily tasks like walking or moving from one place to another with the help of someone else like a nurse.

The second target group of end user customer for Tukimet is the people who are recovering from surgery or are sick. These are customers are the ones who are not old but have a condition for example thigh surgery or cancer and are very weak to walk by themselves but can use walking aid to support themselves to walk and also get pushed from one place to another by an assistant when tired.

However both of these customers have to be motivated to leading a healthy lifestyle and also have a goal of getting fit via the use of the manual walking aid. This is because the Wheellator is quite expensive but is a manual walking aid and with the same amount a person can get a powered walking aid which does not make them healthy or fit or help in their recovery if sick.

Lastly due to the price and quality of the product, the type of customer that Tukimet is targeting is a customer who is financially stable and is more focused on quality and the benefits of the product and not the price. This is because the Wheellator is a very expensive product with very high benefits than other products in the same product group. Thus a customer that is only concerned with price and not the benefits and quality of the product will find it difficult to buy the Wheellator. Additionally, people who are not financially stable cannot be able to afford the Wheellator due to the high price of the product.

In terms of business to business target customer for Tukimet, this is a customer who is out to expand his product portfolio. This is because the Wheellator is a new product which is new to the UK market and has never been sold by any other company. Also, the customer should be the one who is ready to try out and experiment new products which are highly priced and new to the usual products in the market.

Thirdly, the customer should have a good location of their premise or have a big website just in case they sell online. This is because the potential end customer is very small for Tukimet and location is very critical as the customer should be able to reach

a big number of people in order to make sales. The customer should also have very well trained sales staff to sell the Wheellator as the Wheellator is a different product which needs to be sold differently from the normal walking aid products

8.2 Understanding customer needs

Since the target customer has been identified in the subchapter above, the next step will be trying to get a good idea of the needs of the identified customer above and what they might be looking for. Different customers might have different needs and may be looking for something different in a product.

In terms of the business to business customers for Tukimet, most of the customers have a need to expand their product portfolio in order to offer different range of products to their own customers. Additionally they many also be interested in new innovations and have the need to sell new innovations in order to differentiate themselves from the competitors. This will also give them an advantage of being one of the companies to be the pioneers of selling the product hence being recognized more by the customers.

Another type of customer need is the need for diversification, for example a company might be selling furniture aids but would like to diversify itself to sell walking aids hence leading them to purchasing the Wheellator. In this case Tukimet has already had one potential customer who has contacted them and their need was that they would like to diversify.

The second need of the customer is the need of a walking aid that would help them to keep fit and stay in a healthy condition. This is because there are many other powered walking aids in the market at the same price as the Wheellator but these walking aids do not help the users to keep fit or stay healthy as they are automatic. Also for the sick they might have the need for recovery from the medical condition which made them have some problems in walking.

Thirdly, the need for high quality products with high durability. This is a very essential need which will enable the customer to purchase the Wheellator as it is of high quality

and high durability. This need will make the customer look past the price of the product and purchase the product due to not only its specifications but most importantly its quality and durability. This is because the customer is ensured that the product will serve them for a long time and will not need constant repairs like some cheap and low quality aluminum walking aids. The needs discussed above are the major needs that the Wheellator customers will have in both business to business customers and end user customers.

8.3 Link up

The last part of the customer analysis is to show how the Wheellator meets or satisfies the customers' needs or wants. In this case the Wheellator satisfies the needs of the different customers differently according to their specific needs and the type of customer.

For the business to business customers looking to expand their product portfolio in order to offer different range of products to their customers, the Wheellator is a suitable product for them since it is not available in any other stores in the UK. This is an additional advantage as they will be adding a unique product in their shelves hence positioning themselves above the competitors who offer regular products available in the market. This is the same when it comes to customers who are looking to sell new innovations in their stores as the Wheellator is a new product which has not yet been manufactured or sold by any other companies or shops.

However, in the case of the end user of the Wheellator the one common need that the end user customers have is the need for a walking assistance either for medical reasons or due to old age. The Wheellator satisfies this need as the product itself is meant to be a walking aid for both the sick and the old with walking difficulties. Additionally it has additional advantages as a walking aid mentioned in the sub chapter above which other common walking aids do not have.

In terms for the customer having the need of having a walking aid that would help them to keep fit and stay in a healthy condition, the Wheellator also solves this. This

is because the Wheellator is a product meant for both keeping physically fit and also independent living. This is because the Wheellator can be used as both a rollator and wheelchair which can be self-propelled or pushed by an assistant. When used as a rollator it enables the user to be able to go for walk and also push themselves in the wheelchair mode hence exercising both the hands and the legs with the same equipment.

Thirdly, for the customers with the need for high quality products with high durability the Wheellator is also able to solve this need. This is because the Wheellator is made of stainless steel with 80% of its raw materials sourced from Europe hence guaranteeing high quality and durability. This is opposite to the other products available in the market which are made of aluminum and are manufactured in Asia and have a very low quality and a very short life span as compared to the Wheellator.

9 PURCHASE PROCESS

This chapter will look into what stages the customer goes through before they finally decide to buy a Wheellator. This is very important for Tukimet to understand this process as it will enable the company to align their sales strategy accordingly. There six main stages in which customers go through before making a final purchase. However, although these main stages refer business-to-consumer customer, also business-to-business customer will be discussed in a similar way, since they go through a somewhat similar process in their purchase decision.

9.1 Problem recognition

As stated in the theory, problem recognition is regarded mostly as the first major step in the customer`s decision process. A company or an individual cannot buy or purchase the Wheellator without recognizing or feeling they have a need for it. This feeling of need makes a customer have a reason to believe that what they want, where they want

to be or how they perceive themselves or a situation is different from where they actually are. This feeling of a need may be caused by internal stimuli/ triggers for example in the end user the physical inability to walk or in the business to business customer the need to expand their product portfolio or external stimuli/triggers which may be as a result of Tukimet advertising or word of mouth from one customer.

Tukimet can create this feeling of need to both the end users and business to business customers by making them realize that they have a problem, by doing content marketing and share facts and testimonials of what the Wheellator can provide. Additionally they can ask questions to pull the potential customer into the buying process. This is to help them to easily convince their potential customer to realize that they have a need that should be solved.

9.2 Information search

After the customer has recognized they have a problem or a need, the step the follows is searching for information on the walking aid that can satisfy their need. The customer searches for information about different walking aids in order for them find out what they feel or think is the best walking aid solution for their need or problem. Mostly the potential end user customers are most likely inclined to so the information search of the walking aid via internal environment while the business to business customers are inclined towards using external environments.

9.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

After the customer has done information research and identified the possible alternatives of the walking aids they would like to purchase, the customer will go to the following stage of the mental assessment of the current walking aids options. At this level the customer will process information on the different types of walking aids to land at brand varieties of the walking aids that they think will be suitable for them. This starts with the suitable product to satisfy their need then it comes down to the price. After the customer has considered the price he or she will then look at the quality and durability of the product.

Just in case the Wheelator might be more prominent among the rivalry doesn't mean a customer will unquestionably acquire the product or service. This is because, currently customers want to be sure they have done comprehensive research before making a purchase, especially when it comes to walking aid as it might result to bad medical conditions if the customer buys the wrong walking aid.

9.4 Purchase decisions

This is the stage where the customer buys the Wheelator if it turns out to be most preferred brand by the customer. But at least two issues can come between the purchase intention and the purchase decision of the Wheelator, this includes;

- The attitudes of others – if somebody significant to the customer tells them that they should buy the lowest priced walking aid, then their propensity of buying a more expensive Wheelator are significantly reduced.
- The unexpected situational factors – the customer up to this moment has made an acquisition intention of the Wheelator based on influences for instance estimated price, expected product advantages. Nonetheless, unforeseen happenings may change the purchase purpose. For example, the economy might take a turn for the worse, a close competitor might drop its price, or a friend might report being disappointed with the Wheelator. This might make the customer buy another brand other than the Wheelator.

In this stage of the purchase process, the customer chooses upon his or her decisional actions, in the sense that he has the following likelihoods:

- The choice of purchasing the Wheelator
- The choice of not purchasing Wheelator
- The choice to postpone the purchase of the Wheelator
- The choice of swapping the Wheelator with another type pf walking aid

9.5 Post purchase evaluation

When the customer buys the Wheellator, this does not close the purchase decision, but the customer moves to the post-purchase evaluation stage. In this stage the customer analyses the level to which the Wheellator was good or not. The result stays in the relationship between the consumer's expectations and the Wheellator's supposed performance. If the Wheellator does not perform to what the customer had expected then the customer will be disappointed. However if the Wheellator it meets the expectations, then the customer is satisfied; if it exceeds expectations, then the customer is delighted. When the customer is delighted or satisfied they will store information in their memory and next time it will help them make the satisfactory or wonderful purchasing decision by buying the Wheellator or even recommending the Wheellator to a friend.

The level to which the customer is pleased with Wheellator will evidently effect their behavior from that moment on. If the customer is pleased, they will display a higher likelihood of buying the Wheellator once more. Oppositely, a dissatisfied customer who condemns the Wheellator is likely to cost Tukimet up to 20 clients in minus since they will spread the news of dissatisfaction to other customers. This means that Tuki- met should be ready to deliver the expectations to its customers and should have good after sale services to ensure the unsatisfied customer is additionally taken care of. This is to in order to maintain the reputation of the Wheellator in the market.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Summary

The thesis began with the introduction of the case company where details of the company were discussed. After that the purpose of the thesis was also handled to explain

why this thesis was done by looking into the objectives and conceptual framework of the thesis. Additionally the boundaries to which the thesis will stick on were discussed. Later, the theory to which the thesis was based on was looked into. This included the SWOT analysis, customer analysis and the purchase process.

The SWOT looked into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a company while the customer analysis looked into how to identify a customer, understand their need and link their needs on how the product can solve their needs. Lastly, the purchase process looked into the customer journey on which stages the customer goes through before, during and after they make a purchase.

After the theory, there was the methodology which showed which type of research design, research method and data collection and analysis methods was used to collect the data for the thesis. Additionally in the methodology, there was the validity and reliability subtopic to show how the validity and reliability of the thesis was ensure in the whole process of the thesis.

The empirical data followed after the theory where the issues discussed in the theory were measured and discussed in the context of the client company. This enabled to relate the theory with a real life case or situation. From this empirical data collected, issues facing Tukimet in their internationalization process to the UK were discussed. The results and findings of the thesis are very relevant and interesting. The information and findings found can be used by Tukimet to develop their internationalization process to the UK by developing a strategy based on the findings. I learned lots of new information about marketing and internationalization in general.

Lastly problems identified which would make the internationalizations process difficult for Tukimet were handled. Recommendations were also given on how Tukimet can make the internationalization process easier and smoother. In a broad-spectrum, the writing of this thesis went smoothly and lots of fascinating and appropriate content was created. This was partly because I was working in the client company and getting information was very easy. Additionally I was heavily involved in the research process of the UK in the company. The theme on the thesis stayed interesting and fascinating since it is very up-to-date and will grow in the future

10.2 Problems identified

From the potential customers in the UK who have been contacted by Tukimet all like the Wheellator innovation. But all of them are concerned with one problem which is the price of the Wheellator. The price will create a major problem or barrier that Tukimet will face in the process of venturing into the UK market is the price. This is due to the fact that there are a lot of cheaper brands of walking aids which have been in the UK for a long time. This has made the people in the UK be used to the low priced walking aids hence, it will be very difficult for them buy the Wheellator which costs more than the regular prices.

Secondly it will be also a tough job to get resellers who will sell the Wheellator to the end users. This will be due to the fact that the resellers will be afraid of having a product that they think they will not be able to sell due to the price. Finding the right reseller is also a big issue as the Wheellator has to be sold by certain resellers who have the experience of selling expensive products in the market as they would know what to do in this kind of situation. Also these resellers would be having the contact to customers who have been buying the expensive product from them.

These problems however can be tackled by Tukimet if they find the right resellers who have the right customer base. This is because the UK has many wealthy people who can afford the Wheellator in many areas of the region. The biggest challenge will be finding these people and be able to convince them to buy the newly innovated Wheel-lator. Additionally, to convince them as to why they should not buy other cheaper brands available in the market.

10.3 Final words

During the writing of the thesis I learnt so many things both in terms of school things, work and also general life. The first thing that I learnt is how to balance my time, this is because I had so many important things going on in my life (internship, work, thesis

writing, school courses and basketball coaching) and they all needed maximum attention. With all these things in my life I had to learn to prioritize.

I also got to learn more on topics that I had handled in my class course work. These included customer analysis and SWOT analysis. This is due to the intense research I did during the thesis and also getting to talk to both the client company and the potential customers.

Further studies can be done on this topic in regard to the step by step guide on the internationalization process just in case Tukimet Oy decides to venture into the UK market. This will act as a guide to Tukimet on their venture into the UK market.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite of the idea of venturing to the UK for Tukimet seems very hard and challenging, there are somethings that Tukimet can do to make it much easier to venture into that market. One of the things that Tukimet can do is to send free sample to some suitable resellers identified. These samples will be sold or given at a low price to end user organizations like hospitals and nursing homes where there are many potential customers to see the Wheellator in use and also be able to use it. This enable potential customers to use and experience the Wheellator and may be purchase the Wheellator after having a good experience using it.

Additionally Tukimet should attend disability and independent living exhibitions in the UK, for example the Naidex exhibition in Birmingham. This will enable the company to meet potential resellers where they can interact with these resellers taking part in the exhibition and may be potentially be able to do business with them. Also attending these exhibitions they can interact with other industry players where they can get to learn about the UK market. With this they can be able to know how the market works and be able to twist their way of doing business to be aligned with the way of doing business in the UK.

Thirdly, Tukimet should hire an experienced UK marketing expert who can be able to market the product and be able to get potential customers in the UK. Additionally the company can hire these services from a marketing company in the UK market to help them market the Wheellator and find potential customers. This is because the UK is a very different market from the Scandinavian market hence there has to be an experienced marketing personnel to help with the marketing of the Wheellator.

Lastly, even though this might be tough to do, Tukimet should find a way that they could reduce the cost of the Wheellator. They can do this by changing their activities in the company since they cannot start sourcing from Asia as this acts as their competitive advantage. This will enable them also to reduce the end price of the Wheellator to the customer which is a major barrier to the sales.

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