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B2B-TELEMARKETING MODEL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL IT-
COMPANY

Bachelor Thesis

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<p>Title</p> <p>B2B-TELEMARKETING MODEL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL IT-COMPANY</p>	
<p>Abstract</p> <p>This project aims at developing a functional and practical business-to-business (B2B) telemarketing model for the case company and exploring the state of B2B telemarketing as a direct marketing channel. The current state of B2B telemarketing was found to be extremely healthy, widely used and as a viable option among other direct marketing channels.</p> <p>The implementation of the project consisted of interviews with the company's sales managers in order to realize the current situation of telemarketing in the company. It was found that the sales managers are extremely occupied, and a reorganization of telemarketing and other tasks is needed. Included is also a discussion of the cross-cultural aspects of the project, the most important factor of these being the language used.</p> <p>The decided outcome of the project was forming two different telemarketing models based on the case company's needs and supported by the fundamentals of telemarketing. The telemarketer model is solely dedicated to the cold calling purpose. The sales assistant is a more complex model which would combine cold calling with sales assistant work such as handling web-leads, small account management and order processing.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

We probably all have had dozens of calls from people trying to sell us phone subscriptions or magazines. The overall feeling from these is usually negative, especially out of office hours. However, since we still get those calls, it seems that it is worth doing. How about in the business world of today, with almost a hundred emails during an office day, but only five ten phone calls. Which one seems more irritating now?

Telemarketing is great channel for two-way direct marketing. On the phone it is much easier to get a message across when engaging in a dialogue and questions can be immediately answered. As said, telemarketing might sound negative from consumer experiences, but almost every business has a phone and they are probably not going to stop using them in the near future.

Still, the evolution of direct marketing goes on and the social media has made the field even more scattered. But is it still a viable option to use telemarketing among these modern mediums? This study will open the subject for a closer look and also make it practical with the case company.

The case company in this project is a medium-sized Information Technology company. The company provides software solutions and services to both the corporate and public sectors. Their main focus is on business-to-business (B2B) markets. The company has an extensive global presence and a strong foothold on their market. At the moment they do not have any type of specific telemarketing procedures in place.

1.2 Aim of the Thesis

The aim of this study was designing a functional and practical B2B telemarketing model for the case company and exploring the state of B2B telemarketing nowadays. The knowledge base has been acquired from internship, literature, articles, interviews, and discussions from both the case company's side and from telemarketing service providers.

1.3 Outline

Telemarketing in the B2B-framework is studied first and a comparison between other direct marketing mediums is introduced. Databases of contacts are discussed as they are one of the cornerstones of the activity. Cultural aspects as well as legislative issues are discussed as the case company operates internationally.

The current situation within the case company is based on interviews with the company's sales managers. This part will give insight into telemarketing in the company and also the basis for further model development. There have also been discussions with external telemarketing service providers, but they are left as an information source rather than discussed as an option.

The telemarketing models are designed upon the state of telemarketing, both in general and within the case company. Furthermore, frameworks for scheduling the activities and campaigns are introduced. Projecting financial activities is an important part of the evaluation as well as the key performance indicators.

2 TELEMARKETING

2.1 Concept

Telemarketing is usually considered as the use of telephones to sell directly to consumers and business customers. (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders 2008, 831) As we here are focusing solely on B2B purposes, a more diverse approach has to be taken.

Telemarketing in B2B markets is not necessarily selling the product or service in one phone call. It is not anymore just cold calling to reach out for the possible demand. Cold calling is usually considered as the first call towards a potential customer who does not have any prior information about the product or service offered. (Miller & Zemke 2005, 1.) Telemarketing has to be seen as a versatile marketing tool; it can be used to target existing and new customers, for lead generation, lead qualification, audience acquisition, database enhancement, profiling, surveying, customer satisfaction, confirmation and arranging sales meetings, inviting to people tradeshows, and increasing brand awareness. (Direct Marketing Partners Ltd. 2012.) The goal of each call made has to be clear beforehand.

Sales people are telemarketing basically every time they pick up the phone and call someone. They have the same ultimate goal like any telemarketer: sales. They can have tens of cases open, account management and also the cold calling and lead qualification on their table.

Here is an example of the workload (Kotler et al. 2008, 784):

Suppose we have 1,000 A-Level accounts and 2,000 B-level accounts. A-Level accounts require 36 calls / year, B-Level accounts require 12 calls a year. Sales force workload= $(1,000 \times 36) + (2,000 \times 12) = 60,000$ calls. If average salesperson can make 1,000 calls a year, we need 60 salespeople.

Therefore, the time used to make those cold calls is off from closing actual sales cases.

Business-to-consumer (B2C) telemarketing is usually considered to be the most irritating way of marketing. In the B2B-world it is widely used and even an appropriate way to approach possible customers. SCi Sales Group, the leading B2B sales accelerator (telemarketing and lead management service provider) company in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, asked 200 managers which is the most annoying form of advertising. B2C telesales to homes was the most annoying for 34% of respondents, while the number for B2B telesales was only 4%. Even email (6%) was more annoying than work related telesales. (SCi Sales Group, 2011.) If one gets 100 emails a day, how many are actually read? How many calls out of 10 in a day are answered?

This brings the significance of human interaction into account. To demonstrate with an example, SCi Sales asked over 600 managers the following question “It’s your birthday? Friends congratulate you in different ways. Which friend makes you feel more valued? Sally sends you a text message, Raj sends you an email, Peter sends you a birthday card, Heather gives you a telephone call, and Simon visits you at home.” As channels of interaction, Sally represents Mobile Marketing, Email Marketing is Raj, Direct Mail is Peter, Telemarketing is Heather and Field Sales is Simon. (SCi Sales, 2011.)

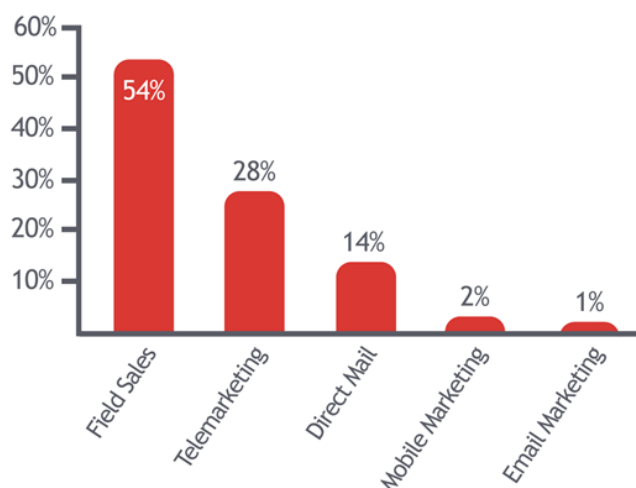


Figure 1. Which channels make Managers feel valued?

As Figure 1 shows, telemarketing is still a valued means of interaction, mainly because of the human interaction and dialogue involved. To compare the costs involved, an

average field sales meeting can cost 300€ or even more, but a telemarketing call costs between 7€ and 30€, depending on the complexity of the call. (Kotler et al. 2008, 784.)

Cron and Decarlo (2010, 165) state that telemarketing is 5 to 15 times more efficient and 70 to 95% less expensive than field sales. Ignatov (2010, 26) writes, “this is based on the fact that necessarily no other tangible assets than telephone is needed for achieving benefits.”

The same elements of a sales meeting are there: human interaction & dialogue. Only the visual elements are missing and they can be provided either by email or in the actual meeting. To understand the beneficial influence of combining email marketing with telemarketing, we can refer to two statements from Ignatov. One is from a company’s (sender) perspective and the other one is from a customer’s (receiver) perspective. (Ignatov 2010.)

When I get e-mails from addresses and persons I don’t know, I delete them right away. If a company wants to get a hold of me, they should call first and tell me they will send me an e-mail. Then I know to wait for it and the percentage of me opening it will only grow.” (Receiver side interviewee Y 2010.)

You should first send an e-mail and then call by phone to ask about it. It is better that you have something specific to rely on during the phone call: “I called to make verify whether or not you had time to read my e-mail”. (Sender side Interviewee D 2010.)

Sending an email can give reasoning for the call. The differences are in preferences; the company side thinks that it is better to send the email beforehand, as the customer side claims the opposite. In general, sending the email before or after as a follow-up brings the visual element and brand recognition to the sales process, in other words, a face.

2.2 Trends

The next section aims to present the current state of B2B-telemarketing among the other marketing channels.

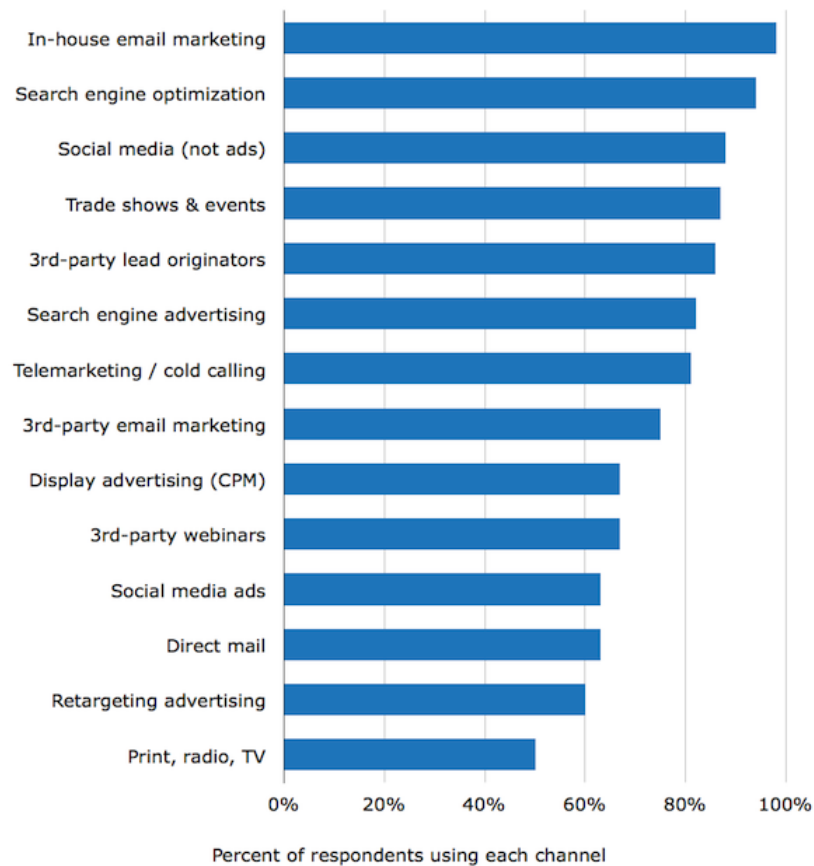


Figure 2. The popularity of B2B Marketing Channels

Over 80% of marketers use telemarketing and cold calling as a channel in their marketing, according to B2B Demand Generation Benchmark Survey in 2013 (Eloqua, CMO.com, Software Advice 2013). It is rather safe to say that it is still a quite common procedure and is not as old-fashioned as often mentioned.

Websites and especially social media are popular, due to low costs and the wide audiences. That is also the downside, because with these methods it is difficult to target the marketing to specific groups or people and therefore the quality of leads is not that high.

Ken Krogue (2012) gives an idea about the average contact ratios (the contacts divided by the dials to reach somebody): “average contact ratios across all industries are between 10% and 11%. So if you want to reach someone, make 9-10 dials, not 1 or 2.” Especially in the hectic business world of today, 2-3 phone calls cannot get one through, sometimes not even to a secretary.

Marketing managers (n=228) were asked to rank marketing channels according to their popularity (dark blue) and ability to deliver quality leads (grey). Figure 3 reflects the comparison between channels and popularity versus effectiveness.

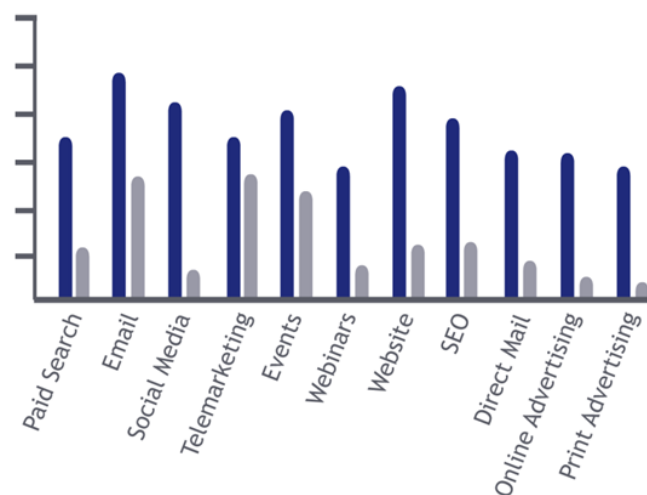


Figure 3. Telemarketing Popularity vs. Effectiveness 2011

One of the managers interviewed stated, “Email, events and telemarketing produce the best quality leads. But websites and social media are more popular than telemarketing, which shows a degree of bias in favor of digital channels,” (SCi Sales Group 2011).

2.3 Databases

Database in this framework means a contact list of prospect companies and their decision maker's contact information. In order to successfully perform a cold calling campaign, there must be a list, a database, from which the contact information can be found and the persons contacted.

For some markets it can be crucial to know the person to try to contact. This sort of information can be from a purchased database from a service provider, searching through social media such as LinkedIn or from trade shows or events.

The key point from this project's perspective is to find the headquarters location, due to the decision making process. Due to the nature of the company's solution, which concerns the entire organization, the decisions for procurement cannot be done in branch offices.

Preferably, the following information would be minimally needed for the company in order to successfully contact the company and incorporate the information to Salesforce or other customer relations management (CRM) software used:

- Company name & address (Street, Zip code, Country)
- Contact's first & last name, email address and title
- Telephone number (preferably in international format)
- Industry

In addition, especially in the corporate and public sector, the following can enhance the preparation:

- Number of employees in the company (national/international level)

A minimum of one contact per site is compulsory, but two to three contacts are better to get so at least someone is contacted.

2.4 Goal Identification

The goal of the telemarketing call can be broken into two different categories. The two different approaches could be for existing customers and for new customers.

For existing customers the goals could be the renewal of contracts, upselling more products and simple customer relations enhancement. For new customers the goals could be creating awareness and interest or email follow-ups, and, if possible, sales meetings.

It is notably easier to sell to an existing customer than to a new one. It can cost five to ten times as much to attract a new customer as it can keep the existing ones happy. (Kotler et al. 2008, 392.) There can be various reasons to contact them, aiming for those long term contracts, renewals, upselling more products or inviting them to a trade show. As an additional benefit, there is no need for expensive database acquisition for existing customer targeting.

For new customers it is harder to sell but it can also be rewarding. Some prospects are not mature enough to buy or have a meeting with immediately. Some of the prospects are interested, but only an informative email package is asked for. Some of the prospects may even call back after a period of time has elapsed. Therefore, the goal can and should be everything from creating awareness and opening doors, qualifying prospects all the way to sales meetings setup. Telemarketing can also be used to follow web leads and invite people to tradeshows.

One key factor is also to make clear division on targets between sales managers and telemarketers. As for the most critical and high value prospects, it is sensible to leave them solely for the sales managers. The top 100 or 150 companies and organizations

would only be for sales managers and then the other could be contacted via telemarketing.

In addition to the general goal definitions, an understanding of lead qualification is necessary. One of the models used is called BANT, Budget-Authority-Need-Timeframe. (Koehler 2012.) It clarifies some of the characteristics needed in order to qualify a lead.



Figure 6. BANT - lead qualification measures

The first thing is to find out whether or not the prospect has the financial power to actually make a purchase and if can they afford it. It is equally important to immediately map out whether or not the person on the phone has the authority to decide on procurement or even about a possible meeting. It is necessary to identify the need for the solution in question. The difficulty of selling something that does not address a need can be akin to hitting one's head against the wall. Timing gives the understanding on the maturity of the prospect; are they ready to buy and do they truly understand the solution?

2.5 Funnel Model of Telemarketing Campaign

Figure 5 describes the campaign of one IT-company's telemarketing tryout campaign from a database of 100 contacts. It illustrates the possible outcomes of telemarketing. The results are extremely good. Therefore, this could be stated as the optimum result for a telemarketing campaign.

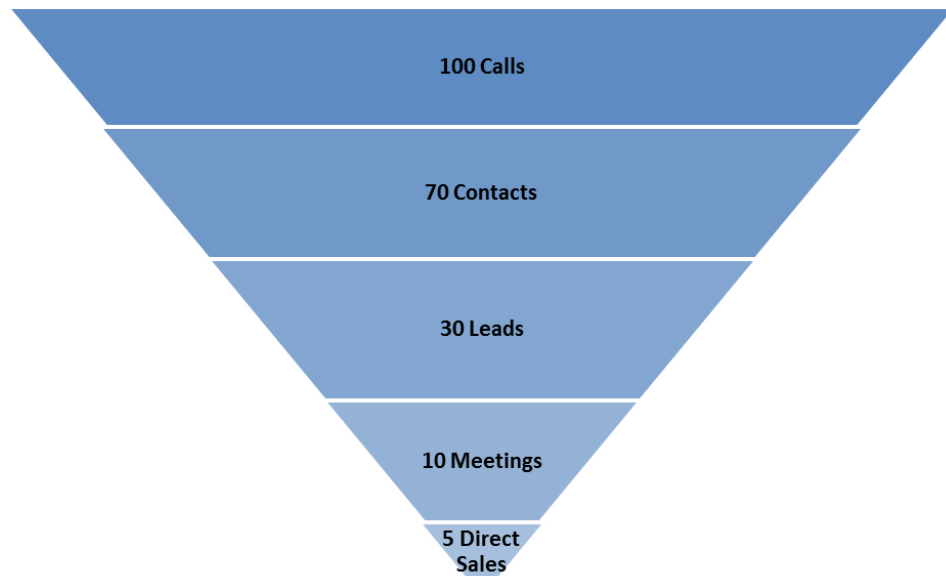


Figure 5. Funnel model for a telemarketing try-out campaign

From 100 cold calls from a database the callers managed to get 70 contacts reached; from those contacted 30 indicated interest and became leads. From those 10 leads became sales meetings, and finally 5 of the initial 100 became direct sales cases. Afterwards some of the leads and meetings became also direct sales. (Sahlsten 2009.)

3 CULTURAL FACTORS IN TELEMARKETING

Due to the international markets, for example Europe, where the case company operates, an insight to various cultural factors is necessary. The culture differences have been narrowed to concern the telecommunication.

3.1 Telecommunication

In telecommunication, the tone of voice, language, words and for example pacing are important. The other half is about the phone usage. For example, Spaniards and Italians answer calls in restaurants, conferences and business meetings. On the other hand, Japanese put collective needs in front of individual ones and avoid public phone speaking, often also muting the phone. (Canton 2012.)

There are also differences how much people spend talking on phone. In Finland people spend approximately 240 minutes per month talking on the phone, while in Malta they spend only 46 minutes (Canton 2012). From this type of information the nature of phone conversations in different cultures can be studied.

In the process, the differences arise for example in availability. There may be several calls before a telemarketer gets hold of the right person with decision making power, and sometimes the phone is just not answered.

3.2 Hofstede's Dimensions

To evaluate the cultural dimensions affecting this activity, Hofstede's framework provides an excellent platform. The dimensions are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term versus short-term orientation. Power distance and long-term versus short-term orientation are most applicable for telemarketing and therefore discussed here.

Power distance defines the level of hierarchy in an organization or a country (Hofstede 2010). For example, it can show in different cultures as in the number of "gate

keepers”, secretaries or assistants that must be passed before the decision maker can be contacted in person. In some cultures management level personnel has their straight contact information as a standard and there are no mediums.

Long-term versus short-term orientation describes the timeframe and straightforwardness of decision making process an organization or a country (Hofstede 2010). In this context, it can vary between cultures for example, that lead nurturing can get prolonged or the first cold call does not reach even the minimum goals set because of the slow-paced relationship building.

3.3 Language

The language is by far the most important cultural aspect of this activity. When the company language is English and the field is global, the easiest way would be to stick with English when using telemarketing. Unfortunately there is the possibility that it will not work with some of the cultures. In the same way the case company has adapted across continents and countries, taking a similar approach might provide the best result.

Consider the following scenario: A Finnish business representative receives a phone call in English selling something. The representative does not even guess from where the person is calling; it could be anywhere. Then he receives a phone call in Finnish selling him something. The first thought is that it of course the caller is from Finland. Which will he more probably buy something or even want to communicate? Even though Finnish people tend to have relatively good skills in English, trusting another over the phone becomes based on the language and tone. Therefore, I would claim that when a person receives a phone call in his or her native language, the odds are better than using English. (Excluding English as the official language speaking countries). Here an example by IZEN Marketing Limited:

If you request a ‘native French language speaker’ for a campaign in France, it may not be appropriate to use a consultant with a West or North African accent, but instead a speaker educated in France. In the country of

“Les Grande Écoles” culture, senior level management has to approve a dialogue before middle management can step in. (IZEN Marketing Limited 2012, 32)

Discussions with Telemarketing Company A (2013) provided a new view of the language issues. Their experiences have shown that English can be well used for example in Poland and in the Czech Republic. We are seeing the English language making its way widely to corporate world. It is also due to globalization and the overall mentality of the IT-world. Talking with one of the case company’s sales managers, who is doing business with several countries not having English as an official language, is supporting this view using English as a telemarketing language. Also companies which are considered multi-national have most certainly adopted English as a service and working language.

As a concluding comment to the language issue, it probably is best to go with the native speakers in each country. If it happens to be impossible, the activity can be tried out in English. As Albaum and Duerr (2008, 606) state if both parties are not fluent with the language chosen, misunderstandings could occur. Therefore the agreements must be confirmed in written documents, e.g. in email.

3.4 Legislative Matters

As the main focus of the company is international markets, there are direct marketing regulations that affect telemarketing and other means of direct marketing. Here the focus is on the European level. Each country in the European Union has different regulations on direct marketing, but the framework is the same. The three main types of marketing affected by these regulations are telemarketing, email marketing and fax marketing. (European Market Intelligence Group 2011.)

The main issue of database acquisition is to check with each target country chosen if the contacts opted in or opted out. If the contacts have opted in, a prior consent has to be received from the recipient prior to the chosen marketing medium can be used towards

this person. (European Market Intelligence Group 2011.) If the contact has opted out, no prior consent is needed, but the recipient has the option to request removal from future marketing activities (European Market Intelligence Group 2011). These regulations vary from country to country and the marketing medium used.

Usually the database providers are aware of the current legislation in their country, and they provide lists which have been cleansed from opt-ins and outs. Still, if the recipient wants to remove him/herself from the list company is using, no direct marketing mediums shall be used towards to this person anymore.

4 ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATION OF TELEMARKETING IN THE CASE COMPANY

This part of the study defines the current situation of telemarketing in the case company. The chosen method was interviews with five selected Sales Managers (to be referred to as Sales managers A, B, C, D, E) of the company. Most of them have three to five different countries in their sales portfolio, but some of them have tens of countries.

4.1 Current Situation

Figure 4 describes the main responsibilities of a sales manager currently.



Figure 4. Sales Manager's main responsibilities

There are no specific telemarketing procedures in the case company. The sales managers are handling sales from initial touch points to account management.

4.2 Sales Managers Interview

The interviews were conducted in June 2013 face-to-face, and the questions used were more of a guideline to discussion. The main idea was to find out what kind of support they would need when it comes to telemarketing, what difficulties have they encountered and how much time is spent cold calling (Reaching contacts for the first time).

4.3 Support Type for New Customers

For new customer acquisition the most important procedure was cold calling. All of the five sales managers stated that if someone called those "cold" contacts and made the first contact, it would more efficient for their time usage. Then the sales manager would get only qualified and already interested leads on their table. One of the sales managers added to this that for example after trade shows there is the possibility to call the

acquired business cards through and pass the qualified leads onwards to sales managers. (Sales Manager B 2013.) The goal of the cold call was in their opinion clear: a sales meeting booked. From the sales meeting they can carry on towards sales. It also was noted that, due to the nature of the company's solution, just building awareness is very beneficial. (Sales Manager E 2013.) The goal might also be inviting people to trade shows, which is beneficial from the company standpoint because many prospects (potential new customers) can be met in one location (Sales Manager E 2013). Inviting to trade show is also a good and more interesting reason to call.

Finding the key decision makers by calling can also be one of the key goals (Sales Manager A 2013). As further will be discussed, in some cases it might not be possible to obtain contact information for a specific person from an external data base or it is not cost-wise sensible. This activity can also be described as "opening doors".

One other area of interest was pre-qualifying web leads (Sales Manager C 2013). Web leads are leads from various internet sources such as web page demo downloads, resource downloads or contact forms. Considering the vast number of countries these managers are working with, there is an almost endless stream of web leads. The potential telemarketer could integrate sales assistance with cold calling in order to profile the leads into segments and pre-qualify them by calling. One other method of contacting these would be via email, although product specific web lead inquiries would be directed straight to Sales Managers.

There was also concern with quality. As in the B2B-world the individual monetary value of a sale is usually higher than those in consumer markets, the risk of losing a potential customer must be avoided. Therefore, the person making the cold calls should concentrate on lower value and priority prospects. One proposition was that only smaller (estimated sales deal value less than 10,000€) could be contacted via telemarketing. (Sales Manager D 2013.)

4.4 Support Type for Existing Customers

Among the existing customers the sales managers were unanimous: they nurture the relationship and manage the accounts. In some cases, small accounts with outdated orders or else unnoticed ones could be provided with follow-up calls by a telemarketer. (Sales Manager A 2013.)

4.5 Challenges in the process

Next the challenges and difficulties of the telemarketing work were discussed. Both the process and communication were of concern.

If the decision maker is known, they can be extremely hard to get in touch with (Sales Manager A 2013). Usually these kinds of people are in a managerial position. When they eventually are caught via telephone, challenging their existing solution can become a problem. “We already have a solution in place for this activity” is something heard very often (Sales Manager B 2013). Here the person making the call should be able to sell and challenge why their solution would be better. This reflects the fact that the telemarketer should also possess good sales skills.

Some problems occur also if the contact has leaved the target company (Sales Manager C 2013). They might not give the new person’s contact due to compliance issues. This brings up the importance of keeping the database of contacts as up to date as possible. Each of those false contacts cost time and effort to correct.

From a cultural standpoint, the penetration possibilities towards the decision maker vary a lot. In some countries if the caller does not know the person’s name who he is trying to contact, the secretary will not let him through or tell the right persons contact information, even if the caller has a title to refer to (Sales Manager A 2013). If the

language becomes an issue, a change to email communication can be made, but it will slow down the process quite a bit (Sales Manager C 2013).

Web lead management was mentioned here also. Due to the vast number of web leads coming in, with all the existing accounts and sales cases open, there is not enough time to qualify all of them. (Sales Manager A 2013.)

4.6 Time Usage

The numbers concern only cold calling time usage, and variation between sales managers is great.

The average duration of the first cold call is usually one to five minutes. In some occasions it can be even ten minutes, if a great amount of interest is shown.

The average quantity of cold calls per week is around 20, but there was variation from just 5 calls a week to 25 calls a week per sales manager. Therefore, the average time spent weekly varies from 20 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes per week, and monthly time usage is 1 hour 20 minutes to 8 hours per month.

The variation is due to each sales manager's individual time usage, and from there we cannot make any conclusion. It is still noteworthy that even the highest averages of cold calling among the sales managers are not very high. This supports the overall view that sales managers do not have time to make cold calling because the work on existing cases and other tasks take time.

4.7 Open Remarks

The open comments from the sales managers were mostly pieces of advice and ways how they conduct the aforementioned activities. One of the most interesting one was

segment focus. It basically means that when a cold calling round starts, it has a structure. The first week can be dedicated to a different industry than the next one. This gives the ability to design consistent telephone scripts (sales pitches) to suit the industry's nature. (Sales Manager E 2013.)

The quality issue was also discussed, as the telemarketer can “make it or break it”. As earlier stated, the concern with the challenging skills of a person conducting telemarketing is real, especially with more critical target customers.

An addition to the previous cultural discussions, the avoidance of certain words is also relevant in some markets. For example sometimes the word “selling” can provoke the recipient, and then the telemarketer can use the word “providing”. (Sales Manager E 2013.)

5 TELEMARKETING MODELS FOR THE CASE COMPANY

5.1 Models

The current situation at the case company was viewed from the sales managers' viewpoint. It was notable that there would be a need for wider support than just from telemarketing. As the models aim mainly at the new division of tasks, new personnel recruitment would be necessary. Therefore, there are two alternatives to arranging telemarketing at the case company. One model provides broader support and the other is a more concentrated model. The two models are introduced in order to show comparison and serve the company's management with multiple ideas. Both models are designed as “pilot” models, and further development is upon the case company.

The first model is called the **Sales Assistant**. This model is designed as an overall support to drive sales and make the whole process more efficient. Due to various needs the sales assistant model is combining cold calling and assistance in lead and small account management. The person's time would be quite evenly divided to these tasks.



Figure 7. Sales Assistant's main responsibilities

As the nature of these models is more as a pilot model, the person or persons recruited can be interns or graduates. The sales assistant should possess the desired language and culture knowledge, due to the international markets. Also skills in sales and the ability to work full time at the company are needed. The duration of the employment can vary between 6 and 12 months, as the target campaign will dictate this.

Cold calling would exclude the top 100 high-value prospects and would be concentrated on creating high quality leads and sales meetings. In some occasions finding the key contacts can be necessary.

When it comes to small account management, the sales assistant could reduce the workload from the smaller accounts by handling the orders and renewals. When a campaign dictates so, the sales assistant can be assigned to invite prospects and customers to trade shows.

The sales assistant would be in the charge of web lead management, which will be discussed briefly in the next chapter. In addition all other relevant lead qualification and profiling would be assigned to this person.

The second model is called **Telemarketers**. This model is solely dedicated to telemarketing. There will be two part-time telemarketers working at the company, in approximately four hour shifts. These persons can also be either interns or graduates. They could have the language and culture competence to support the chosen campaign and could work six to twelve months depending on the campaign.

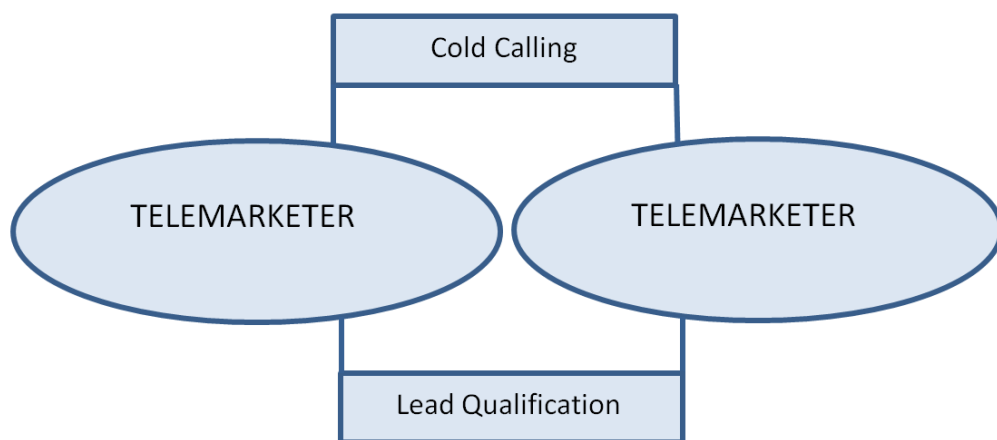


Figure 8. Telemarketers' main responsibilities

Telemarketers will be assigned in same manner as the sales assistant. Their focus will be on cold calling in all of its forms: creating leads, meetings, trade shows invitations and such. Other lead qualification tasks are also possible, based on needs. The difference from the first model is that the telemarketer model aims to produce as much qualified leads and meetings as possible.

5.2 Web Lead Management

As there was a discussion earlier on the vast number of web leads rushing in, there should be enhancement made here also. The sales assistant could see these through and

then forward them to sales managers or manage them, as the following examples describe:

Example number 1: A general inquiry about the products comes via a contact form on the website. The sales assistant handles and sends general emails to prospects or calls directly, depending on the content.

Example number 2: A product specific inquiry from a major prospect comes via contact form on the website. The sales assistant forwards directly to area responsible sales manager.

Dr James Oldroyd conducted a research (2007) with the Kellogg School of Management about cold calling success and also qualifying web-leads:

That's not a very big window of opportunity, but you are 4 times more likely to successfully qualify your lead than if you called back between 5 and 10 minutes. If you call within those first 5 minutes rather than waiting 30 minutes to get in contact, you are 21 times more likely to qualify your lead than if you waited (Coles 2013).

The quicker the response can be made, the better. Fast response “surprises” the lead and gives the feeling of quality and the lead has not forgotten his/her visit yet.

5.3 Timing and efficiency

Depending on the chosen internal model, the calling times vary. If we look at the first model, sales assistant, it is quite safe to say that the person could use half of the working hours for cold calling. However, this is not 100% accurate, because the number of small orders, web leads and other relevant tasks can vary. Therefore the telemarketer model represents double the amount of cold calling than the Sales Assistant model.

One factor which improves the efficiency of contacting is to target similar industries over one week (e.g. health care) and the other for the second week (e.g. banking). This is based on the thought that different industries will be approached with different proposals due to variation in needs.

What is more important than how many calls a person can make is the number of actual contacts reached. When considering a pure cold calling model (Telemarketers), Kotler and Armstrong (2008, 784) state that depending on the product and client type, it is possible to reach 20 – 33 managers per day. High quality contacts, with a decision (yes or no - type) can be reached 10 – 20 during an 8 hour work day. (Vuorio 2008, 108.) Hence the maximum number of contacts varies between the two models. The minimum could be 5-10 high quality contacts a day with the sales assistant model, and 10-15 with the telemarketer model. In the case company's telemarketing model, quality should always come before quantity.

Nobody can stay on the phone 4 hours straight with the same enthusiasm. "An hour to 75 minutes is really the maximum time to be calling back-to-back. Then 10 – 15 min break, and back to calling" (Zeller 2008, 12). This supports the first model, as the sales assistant can do other tasks as well.

The timing of contacting during the day is also important. Dr James Oldroyd conducted a study in 2007 with the Kellogg School of Management to study cold calling success. They worked over 4 months with companies of various sizes from more than 40 industries and finally got with 495 responses. (Coles 2013.)

Most people would probably suggest that the best times to cold call would be from late morning, over lunch and then the early afternoon, when people are about, right? Wrong. The absolute best times to cold call are between the hours of 8-9am and 4-5pm, with the lunchtime period of 1-2pm being the absolute worst. (Coles 2013.)

The lunch time has to be left in peace, even though in some cultures even lunch time is appropriate for business calls. The beginning and the end of the work day are perfect for cold calling, due to the usually low amount of other activities during the first and last hours of work.

5.4 Training and Script

The importance of constant training and using script is undeniable. There should be initial training, as well as constant, weekly or bi-weekly based training. The script is a written guideline for a cold call, i.e. a sales pitch. There has been discussion whether using a script reduces the flexibility of sales representative over the call. On other hand it provides a guideline to achieve goals in more efficient manner.

Hoerl, & Snee conducted a small study around this theme (2012, 289). The study was conducted on 20 sales representatives with 4 different 5 person sample groups. Each group was given either training or script, or both or nothing at all. The average sales reached was in reference to 100 calls each sales representative made. As we can see from Table 1, the results are quite drastic.

Table 1. Telemarketing Experiment Summary

Group	Script	Training	Average sales
A	No	No	10.8 %
B	Yes	No	15.2 %
C	No	Yes	20.6 %
D	Yes	Yes	41.8 %

Both the training and the script are crucial to have. The most noteworthy finding from the table is that the script combined with training doubled the sales rate when compared to just using training.

The script will work as a guideline. IZEN Marketing introduces five qualities of a telemarketer, which can be applied in script design (2012, 12). The five qualities are opening, investigating, qualifying, demonstrating capability and obtaining commitment.

Opening skills include the preliminaries, introductions and beginning of the conversation. The caller has to spark interest and give a reason why the call has been made. Investigating skills help uncovering, clarifying and developing the buyer's information. This part usually includes the research of their existing solutions. Qualifying skills are discovering the BANT figures. Demonstrating capability establishes how the company's solution meets buyer needs and challenges their existing solutions. The final step is obtaining commitment. This means securing agreement to an action that moves the buyer to an agreed next step, which can be email follow-up, meeting, calling again at x date or even immediate purchase. (IZEN Marketing 2012)

The script should be developed in cooperation with the sales managers, because they have the knowledge how to present the solutions over the phone.

The training should include the basic new employee training, which also encompasses sales and CRM training and the evaluation tests afterwards. Both products and strategy training is necessary, especially in the sales assistant model.

Training can also include mock-phone call sessions to ensure the capabilities of the new employee. A mock-up call session includes several different phone call situations between the new employee and his/her manager, for example. The manager can then evaluate the readiness of the employee to begin the actual contacting. There could also be one pre-step before cold calling: calling existing customers, due to the easier approach. Also time to time (weekly or bi-weekly) sales training would be necessary.

The weekly training session is mostly dialogue between the project manager or team leader and the telemarketer/sales assistant. The weekly training includes:

- Last week's benchmarking and results (if there is more than one telemarketer/assistant, comparison between them)
- Problems encountered and solutions (script changes, phone behavior)
- Product-related issues, if new products or new features or questions on products
- The next week's targets: industry and goals

If the telemarketer/assistant does not meet the targets in three consecutive weeks, there should be further investigation to develop the activity and solve the problem.

5.5 Comparison of the models

Comparison of the pros and cons of the proposed models relies mainly on the needs and wants of the case company's management.

The sales assistant model introduces plenty of benefits. As the interviews showed, there are far too many leads to follow and the response times suffer. On top of the cold calling, the sales assistant would be a major help in lead management altogether and if possible, order processing and small account management to some extent. In total, the model provides broad, low-end help for growing sales.

The telemarketer model provides different benefits. Through the volume of calling, it can create more meetings and leads and qualify existing ones, if that is the barrier for growth. Both models have the same major issue: finding the right people to perform the activities.

The problem is real, due to the nature of the telemarketing job. It is much undervalued and the wage level is usually quite poor. The work itself is very demanding and monotonous. Therefore, the sales assistant role is easier to fill, as it is more interesting and motivating due to its versatile nature.

6 PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

6.1 Preliminaries

Both of the aforementioned models are examined here in preliminary financial terms. The main tool of evaluation is the return on investment (ROI) calculator. The internal start-up costs are not discussed here in detail and the calculations are based on these assumptions and facts.

The preliminary calculations are projecting one month running phase of an actual telemarketing campaign in ROI calculator. There is no additional equipment costs involved. Running costs include estimated employee cost and constant training and management estimation. Table 2 represents the costs of one month with both of the models.

Table 2. Estimated monthly running cost for employee

	Telemarketers	Sales Assistant
Wage	2,000.00 €	1,000.00 €
Training/Management (4 hrs /week)	560.00 €	280.00 €
Total	2,560.00 €	1,280.00 €

The employee costs are here considered only as salaries and the employer's payments. It has been calculated that in Finland the cost of an employee for the employer is 37.4% more than the actual hourly wage paid to employee (Silverbank 2010). The costs have been estimated with 150 hours of monthly work (in the telemarketer model: 75 hours per employee) and according to the Finnish Telephone Services Labor Agreement 2010 – 2012. (Erityispalvelujen Työnantajaliitto 2010). The hourly wage has been selected as a trainee salary and the final costs were rounded. There was an addition of 4 weekly

hours of management and training cost, which has been calculated as management hourly wages towards the activity. The sales assistant model is designed as an internship placement and therefore the wage and costs are lower. If the person would be a graduate, the cost can easily double.

In addition it would be motivating to have commission. One proposal could be fixed 10€ extra per each booked meeting. In further calculations the bonuses are tied to the number booked meetings.

6.2 ROI-Calculator

The calculators are based on estimations of one month of the campaign. First, the number of contacts reached per day is from the statement about reaching 20-33 decision makers in an 8-hour work day (Kotler et al. 2008). Secondly, the telemarketing success rate which indicates the success rate of booking meetings with the contacted people has been set quite low. Only very successful professionals can attain a success rate of 10%, and it fluctuates with selected targets and industries. (Telemarketing Company A 2013.) A meeting has been chosen as a goal because its outcomes are easy to project financially. Third, the average sales deal is set to 1,000€ and the meeting success rate to 40% (Case Company 2013). The average sales deal is adjusted to new customers. An existing customer's buying again is usually of higher value. The meeting success rate reflects the success of sales manager in the sales meeting, as in how many direct sales are attained per 10 meetings.

Also it has to be noted that these calculators are based solely on the outcomes of the sales meetings. It does not include other beneficial influence, e.g. email-follow up, call back or brand awareness. The start-up costs of the activity have also been excluded.

The following calculator represents the sales assistant model with 10 contacts reached per day. There are two different telemarketing success rates for comparison. The per

meeting bonus of 10€ is within costs. The average deal is set to a new customer level, 1,000 €.

Table 3. ROI calculator for Sales Assistant Model, 1 month

Success rate (Tele) %	5 %	2 %
Cost / Month	1,385.00 €	1,322.00 €
Contacts / day	10	10
Contacts / month	210	210
Meetings / month	11	4
Cost / Contact	6.60 €	6.30 €
Cost / Meeting	131.90 €	314.76 €
Success rate (Meeting) %	40 %	40 %
Average deal	1,000.00 €	1,000.00 €
Successful Meetings *	4	2
Revenue / Month *	4,200.00 €	1,680.00 €
Cost / Successful meeting	329.76 €	786.90 €
Net income	2,815.00 €	358.00 €
ROI	203,25 %	27,08 %

* The numbers have been rounded, as successful meeting has to show a whole number.

The variation of ROI is staggering with little variation of the telemarketing success rate. The break-even percentage on telemarketing success rate is about 1.6 % with the model above. It is extremely noteworthy that these calculations represent only the cold calling part of the Sales Assistants work; therefore only half of the whole productivity. It is quite hard to credibly estimate the productivity and net income through web-lead handling, order process handling and other meaningful and related activity.

One key point to consider is to whom target. If we would start up a campaign targeted to existing customers to sell them more, the telemarketing success rate can easily rise by 2 to 5% and the average deal can be 2,000 to 3,000€.

The following calculator represents the telemarketer model with 20 contacts reached per day. There are 2 different telemarketing success rates for comparison. The per meeting bonus of 10€ is within costs. The average deal is set to the new customer level, 1,000€.

Table 4. ROI calculator for Telemarketers Model, 1 month

Success rate (Tele) %	5 %	2 %
Cost / Month	2,770.00 €	2,644.00 €
Contacts / day	20	20
Contacts / month	420	420
Meetings / month	21	8
Cost / Contact	6.60 €	6.30 €
Cost / Meeting	131.90 €	314.76 €
Success rate (Meeting) %	40 %	40 %
Average deal	1,000.00 €	1,000.00 €
Successful Meetings*	8	3
Revenue / Month*	8,400.00 €	3,360.00 €
Cost / Successful meeting	329.76 €	786.90 €
Net income	5,630.00 €	716.00 €
ROI	203.25 %	27.08 %

* The numbers have been rounded, as successful meeting has to show a whole number.

Basically this model just doubles up everything, but leaves out the extra productivity that the Sales Assistant could achieve. The ROI's are same. But again the targeting can change the numbers a lot. Both of these internal models are built on quite modest estimations, and variation throughout the project is more than possible.

One option also test the internal model is to assign current 5 sales managers to dedicate 5 hours per week for pure cold calling and measure the results. They would have 4 contacts per hour and they are contacting existing customers, totaling 25 hours of cold calling a week. The average sales manager's hourly cost is estimated to 22€ per hour. (Cost of 3,500 € per month / 150 hours). To show the difference between existing and new customer targeting, the next table will increase the average deal to 2,000 € and set the telemarketing success rate to 7% and 5%. The success rate of the meeting would also probably be higher, being 50%.

Table 5. ROI calculator for test model, 5 sales managers, 1 month

Success rate (Tele) %	7 %	5 %
Cost / Month	2,200.00 €	2,200.00 €
Contacts / day	20	20
Contacts / month	420	420
Meetings / month	29	21
Success rate (Meeting) %	50 %	50 %
Average deal	2,000.00 €	2,000.00 €
Successful Meetings*	15	11
Revenue / Month*	29,400.00 €	21,000.00 €
Cost / Successful meeting	149.66 €	209.52 €
Net income	27,200.00 €	18,800.00 €
ROI	1236.36 %	854.55 %

* The numbers have been rounded, as successful meeting has to show a whole number.

The findings are truly remarkable. ROI can break four digits with minimum effort and investment. This can be a very good way to see how telemarketing works on a small scale and with minimum investment, because there is no need for an external database and no start-up costs. Meeting success rate is also bit higher when the sales manager knows exactly what has been told over the phone and the details are clear. Of course here it has to be noted, that this takes 20 hours a month off from sales manager's other productive work.

6.3 Six Month Projections

The calculations include also six month projections of these models. Here it is estimated that the telemarketers/sales assistant develops in their work and the telemarketing success rate rises from 1 to 5% during 6 months. It is also noteworthy that the success rate depends a lot on the actual target audience, whether it exists or new customers and whether it is in the health care sector or in banking. In real life it would probably fluctuate during the project, but in the calculations it does not really matter whether it is 5% for the first month and 1% for the second, as long as all the possibilities are shown. It is worth mentioning that in the introduced models a 1% change in telemarketing success rate changes ROI by +/- 55%.

Table 6 represents a six-month projection of the sales assistant model. The telemarketer model is not presented here, as the ROI percentages are fairly similar.

Table 6. Six Month projection of the sales assistant model

Month	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Tele-Success rate	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	4 %	5 %
Net income	-471.00 €	348.00 €	1,167.00 €	1,986.00 €	1,986.00 €	2,805.00 €
ROI	-35.93 %	26.13 %	86.25 %	144.54 %	144.54 %	201.08 %

Total Net Income	7,821.00 €
Average ROI / Month	94.44 %
Average Tele-Success rate	3.17 %

With the average telemarketing success rate of 3.17% the ROI is almost 95%. For the 6-month campaign this is an extremely good result. As the success rate fluctuates due to industry and targets, it is still worth mentioning that the telemarketer or sales assistant will probably develop his or her skills over the time period. Hence the success rate can have a “natural” increase.

7 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MODELS

7.1 Schedule

The time schedule for the average telemarketing pilot campaign can be 3 to 6 months. The Telemarketing Service Provider 1 stated that three months is a very short time for an efficient campaign with all the necessary call backs (2013). The schedule for implementation excludes the recruitment process, which can take 1-2 months. The schedule has been made as straight-forwardly as possible and works more as a guideline. For both models, after a pilot phase of 3 months it can be decided whether to continue or abort, mostly if the process has not enhanced.

The time schedule applies to both internal models introduced. Here one cycle targets one country. The six month cycle begins with start-up phase, which lasts approximately two weeks depending on the case. At the beginning recruitment and data base acquisition are ready. It is followed by the training period and the actual start happens preferably two weeks from recruitment.

The running phase is the actual campaign running time and here it is 5 months. This phase includes definitions on monthly targets in both corporate and public sectors and weekly targets of different industries in detail. The time frame used per industry depends always on quantity of prospects in the chosen industry. This phase includes also constant weekly reporting and management of performance and the whole process. Approximately half-way through, the more comprehensive evaluation is held with the upper management and further actions decided.

The last phase is cool-down, lasting about two weeks. There the necessary loose ends are tied up and a closure report is being created and delivered to upper management. Evaluation happens in the upper management and after that, the new target country set-up can commence. The six month cycle may not be viable in all the cases. If the sixth month still brings good and improving results from one target country or industry, the campaign can be continued.

From the appendices, a more detailed and graphic display of the pilot timeline can be found.

7.2 Key Performance Indicators

In this instance, the company can measure how many calls the telemarketer makes per hour and what is the average length of a phone call, how many meetings telemarketing can arrange per day and what is the ROI of the activity. In some cases, e.g. running a 20-person call center, more meters are needed to manage and develop the activity. The key performance indicators (KPI) discussed in this section are for small scale implementation (One or two persons), and therefore only a few key indicators are discussed.

To decide what sort of meters to use, understanding the differences in campaign types and targets must be clear; are we targeting existing or new customers, are we inviting them to a trade show or trying to arrange a sales meeting? These factors affect the evaluation of the results.

The meetings success rate and related measures are left out because they are in the hands of the sales managers and representatives.

I have initially selected the following set of the most important meters: Calls per Contact, Contacts per day or hour, Telemarketing goal achieved per contact, Telemarketing ROI and comparison between telemarketers (Silverman 2012).

The **calls per contact ratio** tells us how many calls have to be made to achieve to one decision maker conversation. It tells how successful the telemarketing penetration is and also the ability of the caller getting through gatekeepers, such as secretaries. (Silverman 2012) It can also be used to monitor wrong numbers, “dead” contacts and so on.

The financial evaluation can be monitored with cost per contact. The monthly running costs are divided by each contact reached. By this we can monitor what it really costs to get a decision maker on the phone.

The **contacts per day or hour**, which one is more suitable, tells how good are the telemarketers at their work, and what kind of problems they face might face (Silverman 2012).

The values which have been discussed in this report are Vuorio's (2008, 108) 10-20 high quality contacts per 8 hour business day and Kotler's and Armstrong's (2008, 784) 20-33 contacts per day. This can be also measured hourly, e.g. in the inside sales assistant model.

One of the most important measurements is the **telemarketing goal achieved per contact** which is the previously discussed telemarketing success rate. It means the contacts reached converted into goals like meetings and leads or whatever the campaign dictates. The campaign dictates the goal: usually it is the meeting and/or lead. Different industries and even cultures have the tendency to create fluctuation to these success rates.

It can also be email-follow-up, another contact time, new information acquired, registered visitor for trade show or brand awareness. Silverman (2012) states that, “if you can establish that those prospects that received an email are more likely to convert then it's worth tracking emails to appointment rates”

Brand awareness is one of the trickiest to measure. Every time the first call is made to represent company it will be the first touch point towards the brand. This brings us to the importance of finding and hiring the right people to perform the activity.

Depending on whether we see the meeting as the ultimate goal of the campaign, it is probably the most difficult goal to achieve over the phone. Therefore, initially, success rates of 2-3% (2-3 meetings per 100 new contacts) may be quite realistic, but they depend greatly on the personnel's abilities and the difficulty of reaching some of the industries decision makers. The rate can vary also a lot when targeting existing customer, meaning that it can be between 5-10% instantly.

The financial measurement can be done by cost per meeting or lead. By dividing the running costs with the goals achieved it can monitored how much for example a meeting setup costs. This can also be referred to as external telemarketing companies costs, if applicable.

The **telemarketing ROI** is obviously crucial. The activity has to create value. In my calculations, I have been leaning on the meeting booking perspective and the initial investment (not discussed in this report) is separated from the running costs.

The running ROI describes the monthly ROI during the campaign. The ROI is affected by the three previous KPI's and it is worth mentioning that a 1% change in telemarketing success rate changes ROI by +/- 55%. It is also affected by the sales manager's ability to follow the lead or “win” the meeting. The costs are considered to stay quite stable. The running ROI has its limitations: it does not take into account the different models' various extra-benefits: In the inside sales model only half of the

productivity is allocated towards cold calling; the other half is allocated to web-lead handling and small account management. It has to be measured otherwise how this extra productivity will show in ROI.

One limitation is related to leads and closing opportunities (converting leads to direct sales); a successful meeting arranged in May can show its value in August, which may alter monthly measurements.

For example, if the average sales value is £20,000 and you have 20 prospects from telemarketing, if your conversion rate (another thing to measure) is 1:10, you probably have £40,000 worth of business from telemarketing to take into account. (Silverman 2012)

If there are two telemarketers, comparison between them is necessary to maintain quality. The KPI's used are the above mentioned and they are simply benchmarked between the telemarketers.

7.3 Management

If the chosen model is telemarketers, an appointed team leader should exist. The task can be secondary to some existing person in the case company. The task would include weekly training as well as overseeing the performance and managing the team. This would be approximately four hours per week.

If the chosen model is sales assistant, it would be sufficient to have a “mentor” or head of sales as in more of a guiding role as well as overseeing the performance. The same weekly hours apply here. Both of the internal team leaders have been taken into account in the calculations.

8 SUMMARY

The aim of this study was on designing a functional and practical B2B telemarketing model for the case company and exploring the state of B2B telemarketing nowadays. B2B-telemarketing is a viable marketing channel. It is still used and valued method of direct marketing. One could even say that with all the email and online overload of direct marketing, it might even stand out.

In order to perform successful cold calling, the goal of a call should be carefully defined, but remembered that different industries and cultures may affect greatly the results. The far most important cultural aspect in this case was the language and no single answer was found, but many to support different approaches. Using English as the corporate language is getting more and more usual and that lowers the bar for international telemarketing. Furthermore, B2B-telemarketing is not getting easier as the privacy laws and upcoming European wide directives will make the contact information acquisition harder, as the databases are a necessity when reaching for greater customer base.

The current organization of telemarketing at the case company made it clear that there is room for broader reorganization tasks than just telemarketing. The main findings were time shortage and overflow of leads reducing the amount of cold calling made. There was also discussion on the challenges of telephone work and the quality issues were brought up, as the challenges and risks lie in finding the right people to perform the activities.

Two models were introduced to suit the case company's needs and wants. The telemarketer model is solely dedicated to the cold calling purpose and generates meetings, leads and for example trade show invitations, what the campaign decision dictates. The sales assistant is a more complex model which would combine cold calling with sales assistant work; handling web-leads, small account management and order processing. The challenges and risks are less than in the telemarketer model. That is

because their productivity does not only rely solely on their cold calling skills, which have to also be good, but in the low-end sales management and process enhancements. It is more a versatile model, where the assistant can be assigned to help there where the help is needed. The person can be in the pilot phase an intern or a graduate or someone looking for a fresh start. It could be even a career building path to become a sales manager eventually.

The financial section presented the possible outcomes of the activity. Based on case company side preliminaries and the fundamentals of telemarketing, the designed models showed very promising figures. The main finding with these models was that the slightest, one percent change in telemarketing success rate can affect the ROI percentages by increase or decrease of 55 %.

The models and structured telemarketing can be tested before pilot launch. Sales managers can increase their weekly cold calling hours and management can measure the effect. This minimizes the risks and costs to almost nothing. Whether management sees improvement in sales with the test or not, that dictates the actual need for telemarketing enhancement at the case company.

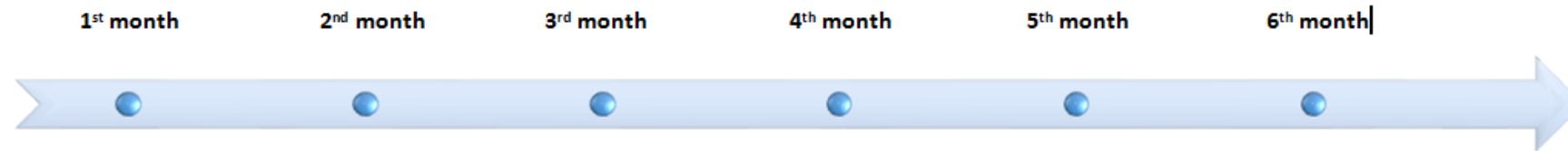
Also I could be beneficial to refer to some external telemarketing service provider companies, especially with financial and success rate perspective. Further research can also be made on outsourcing the activity.

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Timeline for Telemarketing Campaign, 6 Months



Implementation

-2 weeks of Training -2 weeks to get up to speed – e. g. calling existing clients	-2 weeks calling health care sector -2 weeks calling municipalities - Monthly report	-3 weeks calling banks -1 week calling ministries - Monthly report	-1 week calling telecoms -3 week calling other government organizations - Monthly report	-2 weeks calling insurance companies -2 weeks pharmaceuticals - Monthly report	-Re-calling certain (agreed) or missed contacts, 2 weeks - 2 week wrap-up: updating & clearing database, building final report.
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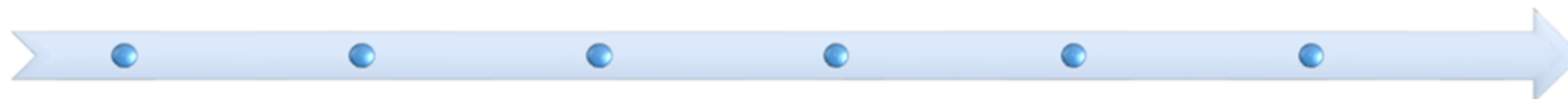
(The time periods and industries are examples)

Management

-Recruitment done -Databases ready -Detailed Plan for the first 3 months ready and plan for the whole 6 months set -Goals set	-Initial performance measuring & guidance - Overseeing implementation -Once a week training/briefing	- Performance measuring & guidance & overseeing implementation -Once a week training/briefing	- Half-way performance meeting to plan continuation of the activity -Performance measuring & guidance & overseeing implementation -Once a week training/briefing	- Performance measuring & guidance & overseeing implementation -Once a week training/briefing	- Building final conclusion / report - Evaluation - Planning the next cycle targets or continuing with current targets
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Training:

-Two week training period incl. Strategy, Sales & Product training, Practical rehearsing -Goal briefing	- Once per week, one hour dedicated to last week's performance & problem solving & the next targets	-Once per week, one hour dedicated to last week's performance & problem solving & the next targets	-Once per week, one hour dedicated to last week's performance & problem solving & the next targets	-Once per week, one hour dedicated to last week's performance & problem solving & the next targets	- Final feedback
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