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IMPROVING MARKETING
COMMUNICATIONS FOR B2B
COMPANY

Case: Geoclima S.R.L.

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Abstract <p>Geocloma S.R.L. is an engineering company that specializes in the production of HVAC&R systems for large-scale facilities and for individual request. Currently, the company has a problem because of the economic deterioration on the global market and high price of products: a lack of new orders and, consequently, a reduction in total sales.</p> <p>The main objective of this thesis is to give suggestions and recommendations regarding useful marketing communication tools and channels that could solve current problem the company. Also, the thesis research is focused on the improvement of current marketing communications and the development of completely new ones in order to increase brand awareness and total sales of the company. Geocloma S.R.L. is interested in the research outcomes and would like to consider suggested solutions from the standpoint of their application.</p> <p>In order to provide more reliable solutions, the supportive literature was reviewed. A theoretical background of marketing communications, marketing communication process and marketing communication tools was described.</p> <p>It was decided to use qualitative research method. It includes semi-structured interviews with CEO, head-manager of sales and marketing department and three company's customers from different industries; a benchmarking of competitive' websites and a review of the company's website analytics.</p> <p>Results of conducted research helped to formulate some suggestions and recommendations concerning marketing communications improvement. Moreover, it was developed a number of completely new marketing solutions in case of Geocloma S.R.L. All in all, the received results show that the company should re-develop the website and consider an application of online marketing. Also, it was discovered that it's necessary to extend current personal selling activities and include direct marketing and sales promotion in the company strategy. Finally, a problem of weak post-purchase support should be solved.</p> <p>All recommendation and suggestions were described and supplemented with visual objectives. An evaluation of the conducted research was provided.</p>		
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1 INTRODUCTION

The commissioning party of this thesis is Italian company Geoclima S.R.L. which specializes in designing and creating chillers for individual customers' application in air conditioning and refrigeration systems. Geoclima S.R.L. is business-to-business (B2B) company that works with wide range of corporate clients and has an individual approach for every customer project.

In accordance with company's sales statistics for last three years (2014-2016) the sales decreased and it requires immediate improvement. The main reason of the reduction in sales is the economic deterioration on the global market. Products of Geoclima S.R.L. have really high costs that aren't acceptable in the situation of economic deterioration – some potential clients strive to find cheaper substitutes. Furthermore, Geoclima S.R.L. operates in the narrow industry – conditioning and refrigeration chillers for large-scale facilities – and has long-term clients who buy a unit ones and then buy only maintenance services. As the result, there is a problem: a lack of new customers who is ready to order and buy primary products of the case company – chillers.

To solve this problem, the company has to convince potential customers of a real necessity of its products and show their advantages over other industry competitors. For this reason, the objective of this thesis is to give suggestion and recommendations about useful marketing communication tools and channels. To find the best solutions it's necessary to answer on following research questions:

1. How to improve current marketing communications to attract new clients, increase brand awareness and total sales?
2. What kinds of new marketing communications could be developed and used to attract new clients, increase brand awareness an total sales?

In order to answer on the stated questions and achieve the main objective of this thesis is necessary to have strong theoretical understanding of B2B marketing communications. Also, there is a real significance of empirical research that will be based on qualitative research method. The selected set of research methods includes:

1. Semi-structured interviews with head-manager of marketing and sales department regarding current marketing communications

2. Review of the company's website analytics
3. Benchmarking research to identify the most useful website features and improve website content
4. Semi-structured interview with current new clients.

The combination of strong theoretical understanding and results after empirical research will help to give the most useful suggestions and recommendations concerning more suitable marketing communications as well as to solve current problem of Geoclima S.R.L.

2 BASIC MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MODELS

In this chapter marketing communications and their main objectives will be described. Moreover, marketing mix and its components will be explained in order to provide an understanding of a role of marketing communications in it. In the middle of this chapter a description of marketing communication process is provided and explained in two core models: macromodel and micromodel. In the end of the chapter marketing communications mix and marketing communication tools are separately explained.

2.1 Definition of marketing communications and objectives

Marketing communications are one of the most important aspect that determines a success of a failure of a product, a service or a company in general. All types of organizations weather B2B companies, B2C (business-to-customer) companies or even non-profit organizations use different types of marketing communications to promote their products or services and reach a final customer. (Shimp 2007, 4.) Marketing communications is used to create the first positive impression about a brand and then engage customers in long-term relationships with this brand (Arens et al. 2011, 8-9).

Terence Shimp (2007, 55-56) recognizes that the primary role of marketing communications is to engage target audience. However, there are four additional tasks of marketing communications:

1. To inform a target audience and increase general brand awareness
2. A try to persuade a potential customer about necessary of a product or service and motivate him/her to purchase it

3. To remind previous customers about good and profitable experience with a brand. In other word, to persuade a customer about necessary benefits of a brand that could make them lives more comfortable
4. To act as a differentiator that distinguish a brand among other substitutes. (Fill 2006, 5-10.)

Overall, marketing communications are used to initiate and maintain a contact with a target audience (Arens et al. 2011, 8-9). It helps to inform, persuade, differentiate and then remind about positive brand associations trough a set of marketing tools (Fill 2006, 5-10). In other words, marketing communications are responsible for sustainable and profitable communication with clients in order to motivate them to involve in relationships with a company(Arens et al. 2011, 8-9).

In accordance with Kotler and Keller (2012, 476), marketing communications is a voice of a company that is aimed to establish a productive and effective dialogue with a potential customer and build profitable and sustainable relationships with him/her.

2.2 Marketing mix

The term “marketing mix” was developed by Neil H. Borden and first time used in his book “The Concept of the Marketing Mix” in 1948. According to him, marketing mix is a special marketing concept that includes all available for marketer tools that help to develop efficient and profitable relationships with a target market and stimulate a purchase process. The original structure of marketing mix is developed by Neil H. Borden consists of 12 elements that are illustrated in Figure 1. (Kubicki et al. 2015, 2-3.)

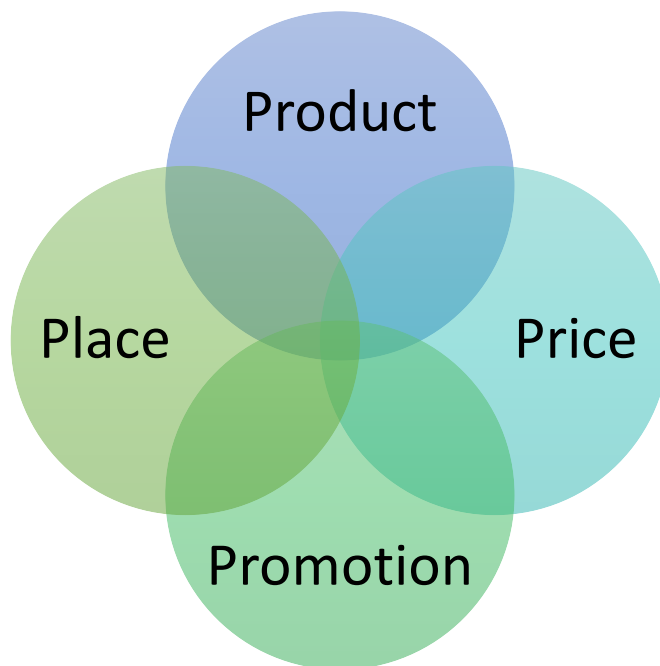
FIGURE 1. Borden's original marketing mix, based on Groucutt et al (2004, 17-18.)



Then in 1960, professor E. Jerome McCarthy redeveloped the core structure of marketing mix and grouped 12 elements of marketing mix created by Neil H. Borden into only four interrelated elements: Product, Price, Place and Promotion (Kubicki et al. 2015, 3). However, the main idea of marketing mix model remained the same – to help a marketer to create profitable and sustainable relationships with potential target audience (Shimp 2007, 4). To this days, companies use this business tool to ensure the success of a brand in its market (Bird et al. 2004). Shimp (2007, 4) names “4 P’s Model” as a quality decision-making tool covering all main areas that a marketer should focus on.

The Figure 2 illustrates controllable interrelated elements of marketing mix that an organization has to consider to achieve profitable relationships with a target audience, in accordance with a McCarthy’s model (Groucutt et al. 2004, 17, 19).

FIGURE 2. McCarthy's model of interrelated elements of marketing mix (4 P's Model) adopted from Kubicki et al. (2015)



Four elements of marketing mix are described in Table 1:

TABLE 1. The characteristics of 4 P's Model elements, adopted from Groucutt et al. (2004, 19.)

Model elements	Description
Product	A set of product characteristics that stimulate and provide customer satisfaction (e.g. tangible/intangible, design, shape, etc.)
Price	Revenue generation element that includes all price values from a production price to a price perceived by the customer.
Promotion	The stage that is responsible for a communication with a target audience. The process of disseminating relevant information about a product/service to client and motivate him/her to participate in purchase process. Overall, promotion helps to differentiate a particular product/services in a market. Here is the full range of communication activities and marketing communication tools.
Place	Logistics, distribution channels, locations, placement, etc.

Extended Marketing Mix (7 P's Model) was developed in 1980's by Booms&Bitner and includes 3 additional elements to 4 P's Model: People, Process and Physical evidence. However, the majority of professors and authors argue that these additional elements are already mentioned in 4 P's model and don't require an independent

separation. (Chaffey et al. 2009, 276.) For this reason, the combination of all marketing mix elements, no matter if it's Border's original mix, 4 P's Model or 7 P's Model, could be summarized as following marketing rule: "the right product, in the right place, at the right price and at the right time" (Kubicki et al. 2015, 3-4).

All interpretations of marketing mix involve promotion component that is also named as marketing communications among different sources. For example, Shimp (2007, 4) argued that marketing communications traditionally has been described as the promotion component of marketing mix. Chris Fill (2006, 1) uses terms promotions and marketing communications as synonymies and argues that they both responsible for presenting a product or a service on the target market.

Moreover, the term promotion could be described like a set of marketing activities and tools used by a company to inform or remind potential customers about a product or service offer and then persuade them to purchase and use this product or service. The definition of promotion is the same with the definition of marketing communications and it could prove an affirmation that promotion and marketing communications are the same terms with the same activities and both are the fourth component of marketing mix. (Bird et al. 2004, 1.)

2.3 Marketing communication process

In accordance with Chitty et al. (2011, 25-27) communication is a process of creating a common understanding between message sender (e.g. advertiser) and a receiver (e.g. consumer). To achieve the most profitable results both message sender and receiver should be interested and participate in the communication process as well as share the same thoughts. As the result, a communication is a dialogue between people but not a monologue where one person tries to provide information to another person.

Marketing communication process occurs between seller and target audience with a purpose to motivate potential customers to make a purchase of a particulate brand (Bird et al. 2004). Kotler and Keller (2012, 480-482) described a marketing communication process in two main models: macromodel of the communication process and micromidel of the customer responses. Both of these communication

process models consist of fundamental elements that a marketer should take into account to achieve the most effective dialogue with a target market.

Arens et al. (2011, 10) in their book “Contemporary Advertising and IMC” argues that the marketing communication process drives from the basic human communication process. The human communication process consists of the series of steps that take place when people shares information with each other: source, encoding, message, channel, decoding, receiver and response (feedback). These steps are fundamental structure of marketing communication process that is describe in Chapter 2.3.1. and Figure 3.

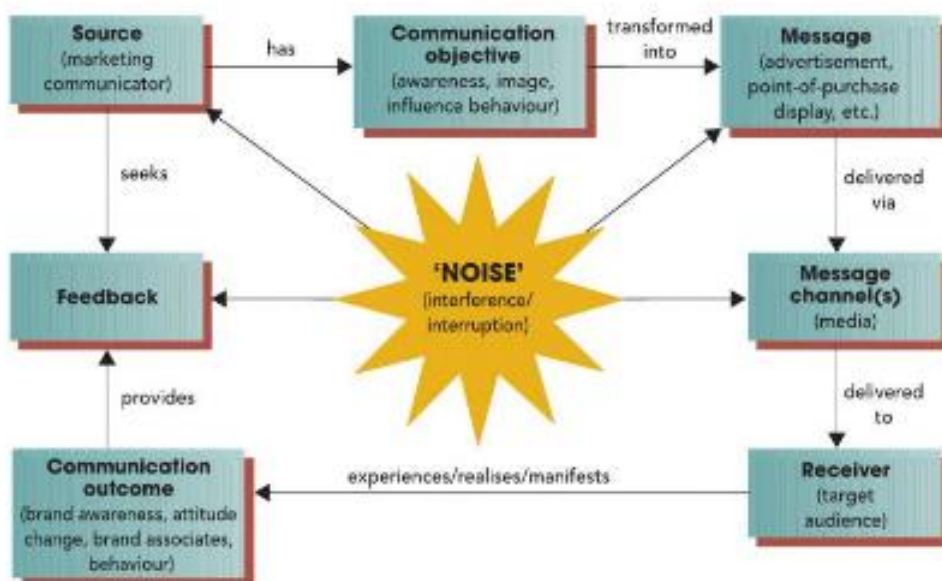
2.3.1 Macromodel of marketing communication

Marketing communication model that is also named as macromodel of the marketing communications (Figure 3) process consists of eight key factors (Kotler&Keller 2012, 480-482). There is a source (1) who sets a communication objective (2) which is encoded into a message (3) that is delivered to the receiver (5) through a message channel (4). A receiver discovers the message and formulates a communication outcome (6). To inform about formulated outcome the receiver has to send a response to the source that is presented as a feedback (7). The whole marketing communication process is exposed to harmful impact of outside environment – noise (8).

Overall the process is really similar with the basic human communication process because it consists of the same steps. However, the marketing communication process is more complicated and specific in some details as well as has marketing or business orientation. (Chitty et al. 2011 25-27.)

Figure 3 illustrates the marketing communication process in details and shows that it’s really complex process. The success of the marketing communication process depends on how well all these key factors is coordinated. (Shah&D’Souza 2009, 185.)

FIGURE 3. The macromodel of marketing communication (Chitty et al. 2011 25-27)



Source (Marketing communicator)

A source or marketing communicator is an author or an originator of the whole marketing communication process (Dahlen et al. 2010, 36-38). In a reality, a source is a company, a sales person, a sales promoter, an advertiser etc. who has some marketing capacity and wants to sell a product or a service to the potential customers and therefore creates an advertising message that describes benefits of a product/service offer. The source has an idea of the message that describes a good from a positive side to attract an attention of a potential customer. He/she encodes the formulated message by translating ideas into symbols using verbal tools such as words and sentences as well as non-verbal – a design or a special view of the message. A form of the message serves as an attractive issue to differentiate the good among other substitutes and competitors in the same market. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28.)

Communication objectives

A communicator has an idea what he/she wants to achieve in the result of the communication with a target audience – such idea is named as a communication objective (Shah and D’Souza 2009, 185). There is a wide range of possible

communication objectives, for example: creation or increasing of brand awareness, customer recall and response, creation of brand loyalty, establishing of positive associations with a brand, encouraging of purchase behavior, etc. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28).

It's necessary to clearly define communication objectives to achieve the most effective interaction with a target audience. For these reason, firstly, a marketer or advertiser has to identify existing problems of a brand through the market research that covers areas of customers' attitude, awareness and relationships in general. Correctly identified problems help to formulate the most suitable communication objectives that also could perform as solutions of these problems. (Havaladar 2010, 210.)

Message

It's a symbolic expression that is created by a marketer and addressed to a potential customer (receiver). Marketing communication message has a various of forms, for instance, advertisement, point-of-purchase, etc. All possible forms of marketing message are presented in the marketing communications tools, that will be discussed in Chapters 2.5 and 3.3. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28.)

Message channel

A message channel is a method of the message transmission to a potential target audience (Bird et al. 2004, 46). In other words, it's a path of a message that leads to the receiver. A message channel or medium could transfer a message directly (e.g. salesperson) as well as indirectly (e.g. word-of-mouth). (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28.)

The term Media is a key element of this communication process stage. It provides a various number of the communication channels that could carry a message from sender to receiver. Moreover, Media has an impact on the message and could make it more attractive or, conversely, repulsive for a potential receiver. For this reason, a marketer has to care not only about message formulation but also focus on the correct media channel choice. (Dahlen et al. 2010, 36-38.)

Receiver

Receiver is a potential target audience of a brand. This party receives a brand message and has to decode it correctly to understand its sense. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28.) In case of wrong message interpretation, the communication process could be ended and the advertiser's attempt to achieve assigned communication objective will fail. To avoid a failure, the sender should encode a message with correct symbols that are clean for the receiver. (Dahlen et al. 2010, 36-38)

Communication outcome

A communication outcome is a response on a communication objective and therefore should correspond to it. If communication objectives are defined by a sender, then communication outcomes – by receiver. Communication outcomes could be presented in increasing of brand awareness, creation of brand loyalty, more positive brand attitude, more frequent purchasing of a good, etc. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28.)

Feedback

Feedback is a response on a received message that completes a cycle of the marketing communication process. In this stage a receiver turns into a sender and vice versa. A feedback could be presented in various forms: verbal form (e.g. questions), non-verbal (e.g. e-mail) or action (purchase). Moreover, a feedback could be a positive as well as negative, for instance a letter of complaint. (Shah&D'Souza 2009, 188.) A feedback helps the sender to evaluate an efficiency of a message, a message channel and the whole communication process in general. Also, a received feedback is an evidence of a fact that a receiver gets a message and decoded it. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28)

Noise

The last element of the marketing communication process is noise that has impact on a source, message, message channel and feedback (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28). A noise is the psychological or physical elements that occur from inside as well as outside and have harmful impact on the communication process. It could interfere a message or even block a whole process of the communication (Dahlen et al. 2010, 36-38).

In case of the source, a noise could occur in a stage of encoding a message, for example a bad formulation, a graphic design, bad printed text, etc. The most affected stage is a message channel because there is a possibility of other messages in the same communication channel to the same receiver. For instance, advertisements or marketing offers of the competitors, spam, etc. Moreover, a noise often occurs during the process of decoding of the received message or feedback. For example, a phone call to the receiver during TV advertisement. (Chitty et al. 2011, 26-28)

2.3.2 Micromodel of marketing communication

As it was described in the macromodel of marketing communication, a marketer is interested in a customer feedback or response on a transmitted message. It helps him/her to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication. In a fact, customers often respond to message in hierarchical order of behavior. (Shah&D'Souza 2009, 189.)

Micromodel of the marketing communications that is also named as micromodel of customer response considers a customer's behavior and his/her response to communications (Kotler&Keller 2012, 481-482). Four response hierarchy models or micromodel of customer response (Table 2) were developed to follow and understand a customer behavior in the communication process from stage of unawareness about a brand until stage of purchase it (Barker and Angelopulo 2007, 242).

The response hierarchy models include three response stages that a marketer should recognize in process of moving a consumer from an unawareness point to point of purchase: cognitive, affective and behavioral (Clemente 2002, 362-363). Every stage of response hierarchy models requires specific actions from a marketer. For example, on the cognitive response stage a marketer has to put something about a brand into a customer's mind, then on the affective response stage – to create or change an attitude to the brand and on the behavioral response stage – to enforce a customer to act, i.e. to make a purchase or to use a service. (Shah&D'Souza 2009, 189.)

TABLE 2. Traditional response hierarchy models, adopted from Barker and Angelopulo (2007, 243)

Stages	AIDA Model	Hierarchy of Effects Model	Innovation-Adoption Model	Information Processing Model
Cognitive stage	Attention	Awareness Knowledge	Awareness	Presentation Attention Comprehension
Affective stage	Interest Desire	Linking Preference Conviction	Interest Evaluation	Yielding Retention
Behavioral stage	↓ Action	↓ Purchase	↓ Trial Adoption	↓ Behavior

AIDA Model

The AIDA Model was developed specially to describe the path of a customer behavior when a salesperson practices personal selling. The path of the customer lies through the four main phases: attention (awareness), interest, desire and action. First of all, a marketer ensures that a customer pays attention on a brand. Then, the marketer checks if the customer shows a real interest to the good and if he/she already has a desire to purchase it. The final phase of the model is a phase of action – a fact that a purchase of the brand was made. (Barker and Angelopulo 2007, 242.)

Actually, all these phases more complicated and requires a detailed review:

1. *Attention (awareness)*: in the beginning, a majority of target audience is unaware about a brand, therefore the main duty of a marketer is to build awareness. It could be just a brand name recognition or understanding of the basic product's characteristics. (Shah&D'Souza 2009,189.) In other words, a marketer should customer's unawareness turn into awareness with a use different marketing communication tools and cannels (Kotler & Keller 2012, 481-482).
2. *Interest* – in this stage a potential customer graduates from an awareness stage and becomes interested in a brand. Special marketing and sales offers, unique

product characteristics, entertainment programs, etc. help to create customer interest in a brand.

3. *Desire* – it's not enough to create just an interest in the product – a marketer should convince a customer that he/she really wants to have it. In other words, a potential customer should believe that an advertised brand is necessary to have. (Shah&D'Souza 2009,189.)
4. *Action* – in the final stage some potential customers already have a conviction that they really wish to have the brand. However, they still are not ready enough to purchase it. In this stage, a marketer should persuade them to make a purchase. It's possible to do using special offers, low prices, etc. (Kotler&Keller 2012, 481-482.)

Hierarchy of effects Model

The next response model is the Hierarchy of Effects Model. It is based on the idea that advertising effects occur over time. The model shows the series of steps that a consumer experiences when he/she is exposed to an advertising message. In contrast to AIDA model, the Hierarchy of Effects Model states that a marketing communication message not always leads to immediate action or response (e.g. purchase). (Kotler&Keller 2012, 481-482.)

Firstly, a customer gathers information about a brand from the received marketing message and other resources. The customer should ensure that he/she really likes the brand and prefers it more among other substitutes and competitors' brands. Only when the customer is totally sure that he/she wants exactly advertised brand, he/she will make an action – invests money in it and purchases this brand. (Barker&Angelopulo 2007, 244.)

A communication process moves the consumer through five psychological stages before it leads him/her to the final stage of purchase: awareness, knowledge, linking, preference, conviction and purchase (Shah and D'Souza 2009,189).

Kotler and Keller (2012, 481-482) describes these five behavioural stages in more details:

1. *Awareness* – the initial stage of the whole process that is totally same with the beginning stage of AIDA model. A potential customer is unaware about a brand and a marketer should change it
2. *Knowledge* – in this stage the potential customer has an awareness about the brand but not more than it. He/she knows nothing about the brand, so the marketer should provide more information. Actually, in this stage the marketer has the first communication objective - to create a brand knowledge
3. *Linking* – in this step the marketer has to ensure that the customer likes the brand and wishes to know more about it. In this case, when the customer doesn't like the brand and strives to avoid it, the marketer should investigate a real problem of it and immediately fix it. The advertiser has to know exactly how to present the brand, show its benefits as well as unique features and make the customer interested in the brand as a result;
4. *Preference* – in this behavioral stage could occur a problem when the customer likes the brand but still doesn't prefer it. In such situation, the advertiser has to differentiate the brand among other market competitors and show a reason why his/her brand is better. In other words, the marketer has to convince the target audience that the advertised brand is more attractive than others. It's possible to do through a comparison of values and unique features of the particular brand with its' competitors as well as a highlighting of product benefits;
5. *Conviction* – this stage describes a creation process of the customer's desire to buy the brand. There is a possibility that the customer could like and prefer the particular brand but still don't be sure if he/she really needs it. The customer has a doubt about real necessity to purchase the brand. For this reason, the marketer has to convince the customer in the existence of a specific need that could be satisfied only through the brand purchase. Nowadays, advertisers use a wide range of marketing tools to convince a target audience in a really necessity of a product. For example, companies provide special samples of a product that are possible to use for free and experience all its benefits;
6. *Purchase* – it's the final stage of the whole model. It's pretty same with the final stage of AIDA Model. The customer already has a strong convince that he/she needs the brand but he/she still thinks about real action – to purchase it. Now, the communicator has to push the consumer to the action, making the

process of purchasing really simple and well understandable. For example, a company can provide a wide range of payment options.

Marketers usually use the Hierarchy of Effects Model to estimate marketing communications tools effectiveness (Shah&D'Souza 2009, 193).

Innovation-Adoption Model

The third model of traditional response hierarchy – is Innovation-Adoption Model that represents a customer's behavior when he/she adopts new product or service. After becoming aware about new brand the customer needs a time to know more about it and gets used to it before he/she decides to make a purchase decision. The Innovation-Adoption Model describes the customer's adopting path that involves 4 stages: awareness, interested, evaluation, trail and adoption. (Barker&Angelopulo 2007, 244.)

This model considers customers like adopters of innovations and separate them into few categories depending on a level of their openness: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. Obviously, the laggards require more time to accept a product and make a purchase decision than innovators. For this reason, advertisers who use Innovation-Adoption model try firstly to convince innovators and early adopters and only then focus on other customer categories. As well as the marketer convinced innovators and early adopters, he/she starts gradually move others customer categories through decision-making process. (Kotler&Keller 2012, 482-483.)

Marketers use a wide range of marketing tools in the adopting process. For example, they organize demonstrations of products or allow to use it during particular period of time for free. This stage of adoption is named as "trail" and helps potential customers to experience and feel all possible benefits of the brand. As a result, it increases customer confidence in a product and convinces in a real necessary of it. (Shah&D'Souza 2009,193.) The final stage of Innovation-Adoption model is a full adoption to the brand and final purchase decision (Barker&Angelopulo 2007, 244).

Information Processing Model

The Information Processing Model developed by William McGuire considers a marketing message receiver as a problem solver and an information processor (Shrama&Singh 2010, 228-229). According to this model, a customer goes through six main steps before makes a final purchase decision: presentation, attention, comprehension, yielding, retention and behavior (Barker&Angelopulo 2007, 245).

Firstly, the customer has to receive a persuasive message, pay attention to it and comprehend new information (Shah&D'Souza 2009,193). As soon as the customer analyzed received information he/she moves to the stage of “yielding”. Actually, in this model yielding means linking – the marketer has to ensure that the customer likes a brand and wishes to collect more information about it. The unique stage of the Information Processing Model is a retention. In this stage the customer adopts and stores all relevant information about the brand in his/her memory. In real, the majority of advertisement doesn't have an immediate effect on the target auditory. Conversely, it focuses more on long time decisions therefore requires constant repetition. For this reason, an amount, credibility and relevance of retained information has a huge impact on a customer's purchase decision. Overall, the Information Processing Model argues that it's necessary to convince a target auditory in every stage through providing of memorable information to achieve a final purchase decision. (Shrama&Singh 2010, 228-229.)

2.4 Marketing communications mix

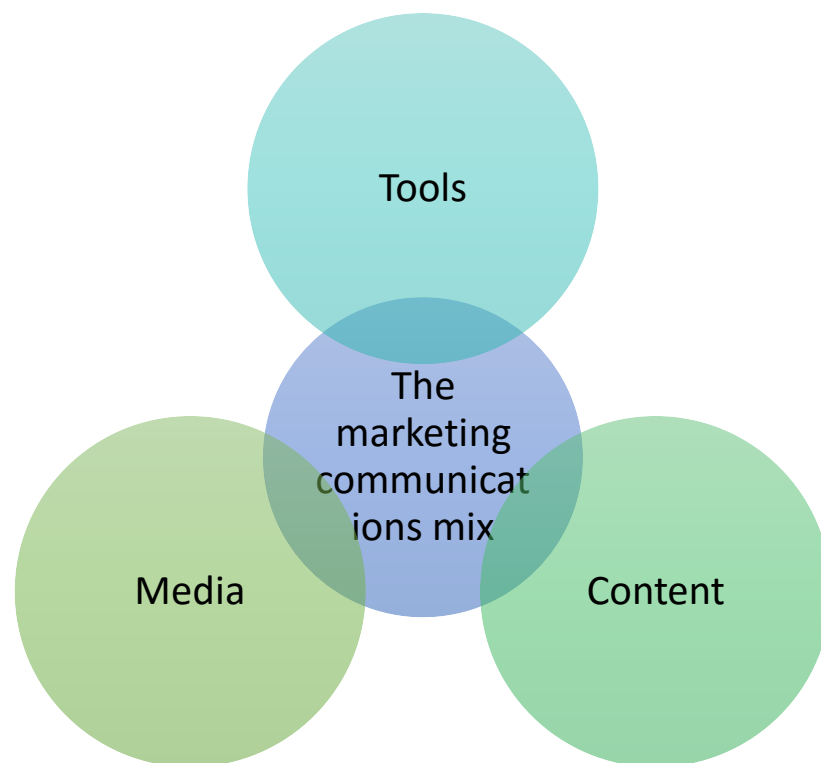
As was already mentioned above, the strong and smoothly marketing communications process is a core element in a dialogue between companies and their target audience (Kotler&Keller 2012). Fill and McKee (2012, 10) argue that a determining factor of the marketing communications process effectiveness is a correct formulation and active implementation of the marketing communication mix (Figure 4).

Among many authors the marketing communication mix is also named as the promotional mix and presented as an interdependent blend of communication tools, media and message. A systemic effect of these three elements is used to reach and attract a target audience as well as interact with it. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 447.)

Marketing communications mix is a promotional tool that deliver communications between a company and a target audience to achieve diverse sets of objectives, e.g. communication (marketing, sales, etc.) objectives. Moreover, the marketing communications mix is a subset of marketing mix that was described in Chapter 2.2. (Dahlen et al. 2010, 277.)

Figure 4 illustrates a structure of the marketing communication mix that consist of 3 core elements: tools, media and content. These core elements are described after the figure.

FIGURE 4. The marketing communications mix, adopted from Fill&McKee (2012, 10)



Tools: there are five traditional communication tools: advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations and personal selling (Fill&McKee 2012, 275-276). All of these tools have expansions that are presented in a large range of sub elements and could be used in variety combinations and different degrees to reach a target audience (Fill 2002, 15). The marketing communication tools are discussed in details in Chapters 2.5 and 3.3.

Media: it's a general communication method that carries a marketing message (Shrim 2007, 366). It could be also named as communication channels through which an advertiser using some marketing communication tools sends and transfers an advertising message to and from a potential target audience (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 453). Nowadays, there is a really wide range of media that is able to convey a message to customer and deliver back a feedback: newspapers and magazines, social media, traditional mass media, billboards, etc. (Fill&McKee 2012, 276).

Content: it's an informational part of the whole marketing communication mix that grabs a customer's attention and tells them how is a company going to solve his/her problems and stratify needs as well as why they should trust and choose this particular brand among others (Frey, 2016). In other words, it's a message with encoded information that is intended for a target audience. The company wants to influence potential customers, therefore it's necessary to understand what exactly the company wants to say to its target audience – a marketer has to formulate a content of the message. There are two key forms of a message exist: one that primary carries information and another that is primary emotional or transformational. Both of these message types mix with each other and create a special balance that is critical for successful marketing communication process. (Fill&McKee 2012, 276)

2.5 Marketing communication tools

Among different reviewed materials authors describe different sets of traditional marketing communication tools (from five to twelve units). However, in accordance with majority of professors, there are five traditional marketing communication tools that are involved in marketing communication mix. All other tools are just expansions of the main marketing communication tools (Table 4). As a result, traditional set of marketing communication tools consists of: advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations and personal selling (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 462-463).

Table 3 represent all popular marketing communication tools that companies use nowadays. Moreover, this table shows that a marketing communication tools could be separate into two main categories in dependence on type of communication process: one-way communication and two-way communication. In other words, marketing communication tools also differ from each other depending on their ability to

stimulate a response on a marketing message rather than just provide it to receiver. (Hollensen 2010, 498.)

In accordance with Biagi (2010), one-way communication refers to marketing communication tools that are able to send a message but cannot receive a feedback. For example, a TV advertisement provides a marketing message to a customer but cannot collect and send back a response on this message. Vice versa, two-way communication works as dialogue, so it is able not only send a company’s message but also provide a message by customer, his/her feedback to the company. Telemarketing is a good example of two-way marketing communication tool.

TABLE 3. Typical communication tools, adopted from Hollensen (2010, 498)


One-way communication				Two-way communication
Advertising	Public Relations	Sales Promotion	Direct Marketing	Personal Selling
Newspapers	Annual reports	Rebates and price discounts	Direct mail/database marketing	Sales presentations
Magazines	Corporate image	Catalogues and brochures	Internet marketing (WWW)	Salesforce management
Journals	House magazines	Samples, coupons and gifts	Telemarketing	Trade fairs and exhibitions
Directories	Press relations	Competitions	Mobile marketing	
Radio	Public relations		SMS	
Television	Events		Viral Marketing	
Cinema	Lobbying		Social networking (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	
Outdoor	Sponsorship			
	Celebrity endorsement			

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As was already mentioned above, there are five principal marketing communication tools. However, because of chameleonic environment and rapidly developing technologies these five core tools became more complicated and have numbers of variations (Fill 2002, 14-15.)

All principal tools will be explained now. Some of their variation that are relevant in the case of this thesis are discussed in Chapter 3.3.

Advertising

Advertising (also commercial) is the oldest and good known type of marketing communication (Gerber&Bothma 2009, 47). Usually, ordinary people hate advertising and try to avoid it. It's obviously, because different types of advertising surround and follow us everywhere: in newspapers, TV, Radio, buildings walls, etc. However, in a reality, an advertising is not only an annoying aspect of people life but also an indicator of a civilisation growth. It's a part of our social, cultural and business environment that reflects rapidly development and change in our society. Moreover, even if people strive to avoid any types of advertisement it still affects our life styles and vice versa. Actually, nowadays, advertising is one the most explored of all business institutions. (Kazmi&Batra 2008, 8-9.)

Advertising is a product of modern society and modern world that came into being because of people race for a better and more comfortable life. The Industrial Revolution and the rise of capitalism turned advertising into an integral part of our life and an engine in business relationships. Actually, a wide use of advertising is usual feature of capitalist society. (O'Guinn et al. 2015, 55.)

Advertising is a non-personal type of mass communication that is more focused on mass audience rather than an individual person (Gerber&Bothma 2009, 47). As was mentioned above, advertising is part of marketing communication and has the same purposes: to inform, persuade and remind customers about a brand (Arens et al. 2011, 220).

However, in fact, the ability of advertising to persuade potential customers to do real actions (e.g. make a purchase) is doubtful. The main reason of it is a low level of message credibility delivered through advertising. Usually, people don't fully believe the message and don't pay real attention or respond. Furthermore, it's really hard to estimate changes in sales of a brand induced by advertising. (Fill 2002, 14-15.)

Nevertheless, advertising is the most expressive form of marketing communication tools that is able to provide a wide range of emotions and feelings (Hollensen 2010, 498). It allows companies to differentiate its products or services through the adroit use of print, sound, color, images and other visuals. However, commercial is really weak in persuasion of a customer to make a real immediate actions. In spite of it, advertisement is a really strong and powerful tool in a creation of brand picture and brand image. (Gerber&Bothma 2009, 47-49.)

It's traditionally assumed that advertising is really costly because of a wide range of visual, audio and graphic attributes as well as expansive media channels (e.g. TV) used in advertising production. However, commercial is able to reach the most extensive scale of geographically dispersed people in the same time than any other marketing communication tool and it has a low production cost per contact. For this reason, it's possible to conclude that in a ratio of cost per contact to a total audience coverage, advertising communication tool is cannot be named as the most expensive one if it is used reasonable – to reach a large scale of people. (Kotler&Armstrong, 2016, 462.)

Overall, advertising is one-way marketing communication tool that is aimed to build brand awareness, position or reposition a product/service on the market and induce a possible dialogue with a target audience on an internal basis by changing their perception or attitude to the brand (Fill 2002, 487). Advertising is the most suitable

marketing communication tool for customer goods, however, in case of B2B markets it's less powerful and useful (Hollensen 2010, 499).

Public relations

In simple words public relations (PR) could be explained as “the development and maintenance of good relationships with different publics”. However, UK’s Institute of Public Relations (IPR) provides more specific definition: “the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics” (Smith 1998, 360). Both of these definitions describes relationships with “public”. In fact, “public” includes all external and internal people with whom a company has communication. (Egan 2015, 214) Company publicity consists of really wide range of people: corporate organisations, employees, suppliers, stockholders, public and government organizations, labour force, trade and charitable unions, etc. (Shimp 2007).

In contrast to advertising, public relations have a high level of credibility and look very believable for a target audience. The main reason of it is a form of public relations. When advertising has a direct attempt to sell a product, then public relations aim to tell a story or share a news about something concerning this product. There are a lot of forms of public relations, for example sponsorship, events, news stories, etc. All of these forms seems more believable for customers. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463.) Sponsorship is concerned to this study work and will be discussed in more details in Chapter 3.3.4.

The core function of public relations is to provide different programs that are able to attract attention of a target auditory, induce understanding and acceptance of a particular brand (Hollensen 2010, 503). Moreover, it serves to create an imposing and credible image of the brand to convince a target audience (Arens et al. 2011, 220-221).

The main advantage of public relations that helps to achieve mentioned above functions and goals is an ability to reach almost all people even those who strive to avoid salespersons and any advertisement. Public relations as well as advertising can dramatize a brand and convey all features of it to trigger necessary emotions and

feelings in customers. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463.) Egan (212-215, 2015) names such public relations that are directly focused on a communication with customers and prospective customer as “marketing public relations”.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a set of various marketing tools that are aimed to provide additional brand value and increase immediate sales. It's non-personal form of communication with middle level of credibility. The main task of sales promotion is to motivate target customers to behave in particular way, usually to make a purchase. In contrast to advertising, sales promotion seeks customers who are ready more for short-term relations rather than long-term. (Fill 2002, 16, 558.)

Sales promotion could be represented in a wide assortment of marketing tools, for example: discounts, trade deals, free samples, etc. All of them are used to attract customer attention to the brand and stimulate a quick response. In case of advertisement, marketers usually mean “look and buy a product”, however, in case of sales promotions they have other sense – “buy this product right now”. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463.) In accordance with Kotler and Keller (2012, 519), sales promotion provides an incentive to make a purchase when an advertisement gives a reason to do it.

As was already mentioned above, sales promotion uses a really wide range of marketing tools. All of them could be separated on the next categories: consumer promotion tools (e.g. samples, point of purchase displays, etc.), trade promotion tools (e.g. free goods, price-off, etc.), business and sales force promotion tools (e.g. trade shows, contents for sales reps, etc.). These tools are various in their objectives and could be used in completely different situations. Usually, sales promotion tools used as a tactical adaptation to some external (or internal) situations: changing of seasons, new deliveries, innovation on a market, competitive pressure, declining sales, etc. (Arens et al. 2011, 223.)

Sales Promotion is really effective marketing communication tool however requires a careful preparation process and really depends on local adaptation. Sometimes, local law of a country could limit a number of possible to use sales promotion tools. For

instants, some countries can control the amount of discount given. As a result, a marketer of an international brand has to develop sales promotion really careful, considering local laws and other possible restrictions. (Hollensen 2010, 506.)

Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing is a special way to bring a store directly into a potential customer's home or working place. He/she doesn't need to go to the store and wait in a queue to make a purchase – it's enough to have Internet or just a phone to buy a product or a service. For this reason, direct marketing sometimes is named as armchair shopping. (Smith 1998, 323-324.) In accordance with Hollensen (2010, 506), direct marketing could be described as a set of activities by which a brand is individually offered to a customer by digital media (e.g. telephone, mail, etc.) or personal visit, catalogues, etc..

The Information Technology and Media rapidly evolve that also influences and contributes a direct marketing development (Arens et al. 2001, 220). As a result, nowadays, there is a wide range of direct marketing forms that companies use – form direct mail, personal visits, catalogues and telemarketing to online, mobile and social media (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463).

Moreover, in contrast to a majority of marketing communication tools, direct marketing is more targeted and is focused on a concrete customer or target group. Also, direct marketing is immediate, personalized and interactive marketing communication tool. A marketing message could be prepared quickly and immediately delivered to a specific customer (Gerber&Bothma 2009, 22). Furthermore, direct marketing composes a dialogue between an advertiser and a customer that allows to change a content of the message even in a real time depending on customer's response. This marketing communication tool provides two-way communication and build one-to-one customer relationships with a high level of customer engagement. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463.)

Overall, direct marketing is focused more on individual customers with an aim to deliver a marketing message personally and build strong relationships with them based on responses and direct communications (Fill 2002, 17).

Personal Selling

Personal selling is really important marketing communication tool in B2B marketing. It creates face-to-face situations that helps an advertiser to know more information about a customer straight from the tin. Received information helps to develop a correct approach to the customer and involve him/her in a purchase process when he/she finds it harder to say “no, thank you”. (Arens et al. 2011, 220.)

Moreover, personal selling allows to know customer needs and wishes so it gives an advantage to a marketer or salesperson. He/she already know a problem and now has to find a solution of it – to understand how is possible to satisfy the customer. As soon as the salesperson understands it and offers a correct product – he/she solves a customer problem and builds strong relationships. (Kotler&Armstrong 2016, 463.)

It's evident that personal selling is really useful and effective tool, however it has cons too. The main disadvantage of this marketing communication tool is its price. Personal selling is really expensive tool and cost on average 600\$ per sales call. (Hollensen 2010, 508.)

In simple words, personal selling occurs when a representative of a seller comes or call to customer personally and present a product and all its benefits to him/her (Gerber&Bothma 2009, 21). It involves interpersonal or two-way communication through which information is provided, collected and analyzed and then a response (a problem solution) is posted back (Baines&Fill 2014, 388).

3 BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

This chapter is devoted to explanation of business-to-business (B2B) marketing communications. Here below, will be described the main differences between business-to-business (B2C) and B2B marketing communications and reviewed the most effective B2B marketing communication tools. Moreover, in the conclusion of this chapter are presented theoretical definition of some marketing communication tools that could be equally effective in B2C as well as in B2B marketing and are actual in the context of this thesis.

3.1 Definition of B2B marketing

Originally, B2B marketing was called as “industrial marketing” and focused on two main activities: a transaction of final goods for consumption by other business (e.g. equipment, tools for productions, etc.) and transaction of items that are used in production process of final goods (e.g. raw materials, parts and ingredients for products, etc.). Nowadays, B2B marketing has a wider meaning and includes relationships not only between businesses but also between other organizations such as governmental, non-profitable, charitable, etc. (Lilien&Grewal 2012, 3.)

There are a lot of definitions of B2B marketing communications among various scientific resources but all of them argue that B2B marketing communication is “a promotion of goods and services to organizations rather to individual customers”. It’s a mistake to suppose that B2B relationships is always rational because it occurs between organizations. Actually, all organizations consist of people so all decisions are made also by people. For this reason, rational and emotional factors both influence final decisions and predetermine a behavior of organizations involved in communication process. However, it’s important to understand that in case of B2B marketing communication process a final decision could be generated by group of people as well as by individual. (Wood 2006, 75.) Overall, B2B marketing communication could be explained as marketing process with a final aim to sell a product or service of one organization to another one (Fill 2002, 361).

3.2 B2B marketing communications vs. B2C marketing communications

First of all, it’s necessary to give a general explanation of B2C marketing communication to identify and understand the main differences between it and B2B marketing communications. Chapter 2 already explained the general process of marketing communication that is suitable both for B2C and B2B markets. However, in case of B2C marketing communications, the communication process is focused directly on the end customers (individuals) when in B2B it occurs between organizations. In simple words, B2C marketing communications are presented as a set of marketing tools and channels in combination that is aimed at a final user or customer directly. (Fill&Hughes 2008, 149.)

Fill (2002, 24) in his book “Marketing communications” set out the most important differences in between B2B and B2C marketing communications that are presented in a Table 4.

TABLE 4. Differences between business-to-business and business-to-customer marketing communications, adopted from Fill (2002, 24)

	Customer-orientated markets	Business-to-business markets
Message reception	Informal	Formal
Number of decision-makers	Single or few	Many
Balance of the promotional mix	Advertising and sales promotions dominate	Personal selling dominates
Specificity and integration	Board use of promotional mix with a move towards integrated mixes	Specific use of below-the-line tools but with a high level of integration
Message content	Greater use of emotions and imagery	Greater use of rational, logic-based and information-based messages although there is evidence of a move towards the use of imagery
Length of decision time	Normally short	Longer and more involved
Negative communications	Limited to people close to the purchaser/user	Potentially an array of people in the organisation and beyond
Target marketing and research	Great use of sophisticated targeting and communication approaches	Limited but increasing use of targeting and segmentation approaches
Budget allocation	Majority of budget allocated to brand management	Majority of budget allocated to sales management
Evaluation and measurement	Great variety of techniques and approaches used	Limited number of techniques and approaches used

Actually, Table 4 represents almost all the most important differences between B2C and B2B marketing communications. However, there are some other differences that are not included in this table and requires a separate explanation.

When a company reviews a potential target customer it has to understand a core customer's motivation to make a purchase. In case of B2C relationships a motivation of the customer is based more on emotions rather than a real need. In some situations, customers buy a product just because it could make them happy or increase a level of enjoyment. A fact of a real necessity of such purchase plays a role of the secondary factor. (Naiduk 2013)

However, in case of B2B relationships the role of emotions is really weak. A decision making process of purchase is based more on a logic (Jensen 2015). Organisations that have a role of "customers" in B2B relationships have a really wide range of incentives for buying goods or services. They consider every purchase such as an investment that should lead to the future profit. Moreover, they want to save money and time therefore make purchase decisions basing on logics and real benefit. (Naiduk 2013) For example, in such kind of relationships customers never buy a product just because it has a good view. They want to know more about a product's features and how it can help them to save money, time and resources as well as increase a future profit. (Lake 2016)

3.3 The most effective tools of marketing communications mix within B2B context

The principal marketing tools were already discussed earlier in Chapter 2.3. However, it's important to understand that the real use of these marketing tools is very different in frame of B2B and B2C relationships. The main reason of it that the B2B relationships is more personal and often require face-to-face communication. Moreover, as was already mentioned above, potential customers in B2B relationships usually ask more information and details about particular product or service. Therefore, a seller has to choose the most effective marketing tool that is able to provide as much information as it possible to persuade a customer. (Fill 2002, 375.)

In accordance with different authors and scientific resources there are only 3 types of the most effective marketing tools that usually used in case of B2B relationships: sales promotions, personal selling and direct marketing. Actually, all other types of marketing communications tools also could be used such a component of Integrated Marketing Communication in B2B marketing program. However, their role in this content will be to inform and remind when differentiation and persuasion will be delivered through the different subtypes of personal selling, direct marketing and sales promotion. (Fill&MacKee 2011, 275-276. Fill 2002, 375).

Hereinafter, the most effective principal marketing communication tools within B2B context will be reviewed. However, in case of this thesis it's also necessary to mention some others marketing communication tools that could be used in B2B marketing. There are digital marketing and public relations. Public relations were already explained above in Chapter 2.5, therefore in next parts will be described only a particular type of public relations – sponsorship that has a significant role in this study work. Moreover, latter will be presented digital marketing as a marketing communication tool as well as three types of its: website marketing, inbound marketing, search engine marketing.

3.3.1 Sales promotion

Sales promotion could be also named as trade promotion and has the main purpose to offer buyers an additional value and motivate them to make an action. Usually, sales promotion provide a special “bonuses” to buyers that leads to an immediate response – sale. In case of B2B marketing, sales promotion is more targeted at three main types of potential customers: intermediaries, end-user customers and the sales force. (Fill&MacKee 2011, 278.)

There are a lot of reasons to use sales promotion in B2B marketing, the most important of them is that this marketing tool helps to accelerate sales and change a customer attitude to a product or service. Sales promotion provides additional bonuses to the current customers to create an immediate purchase. At the same time, it encourages the interest of the potential clients in the provided product or service that leads to start new relationships. (Hollensen 2010, 498.)

However, besides of this two reasons to use sales promotion in B2B marketing, there is a list of many other rational reasons:

1. Reach new customers
2. Reduce distributor risk
3. Reward behavior
4. Current customers holding
5. Additional value
6. Motivate action
7. Preserve cash flow
8. Increase efficiency
9. Assist segmentation, etc.

Actually, the reasons of using sales promotion in B2B marketing are really wide and sometimes even unique, because of huge variety of industries and their aims. (Fiil&Fiil 2005, 304-305.)

The common types of sales promotion includes rebates, price discounts, catalogues and brochures, competitions, gifts and many others (Hollensen 2010, 498). However, in case of this thesis, it's more important to focus more on the trade catalogues and special offers.

Trade catalogues and brochures

Catalogues and brochures is an integrated part of printed media and printed marketing. Even nowadays, when Internet and online marketing become one of the most important marketing platform it's still common when good looking and informative trade catalogue or brochure attract more customer's attention and provide effective results. (Walsall 2014)

Print catalogues and brochures represent an essential information about a company and its product. It helps customers to find and understand the core and main information about it. In other words, good structured trade catalogue has to answer on all possible customer questions before he/she starts search more information about a product or service. It means, that a well-designed trade catalogue already includes all

necessary to know information about a product and company – it already predicts possible customer's question and gives informative answers. (Friedmann 2013)

In accordance with Stefan Worm (2012), trade catalogues and brochures perform as the first “face” of the company in a communication with potential customers. For instance, a lot of manufacture companies provides special catalogues of produced products that show previous results (e.g. manufactured products, provided services, etc.) of the company and creates a kind of first impression about it's real efficiency.

Special offers

Special offers are really popular marketing tool in B2C and B2B context. The main idea of a special offer is to induce a potential customer to buy a particular product or services. In fact, a use of special offers allows a marketer to convince a potential customer that he/she receives an additional benefit after a purchase of an offered product/service. However, a customer has to follow a special regulations or terms that make a special offer valid. For example, a customer will receive a discount in case if he/she makes a purchase in a particular time period. (2014 Haim, 294.)

There are three the most popular types of special offers:

- Coupons
- Discounts
- Bonus products. (Lawton, 2015)

In order to create the most effective special offer the marketer has to know real need of the target audience. For this reason, it's necessary to conduct a research and identify what exactly potential customers want to add to offered product or service, e.g. free shipping, discount etc. (Arens et all. 2011, 223).

3.3.2 Personal Selling

B2B markets are usually smaller than B2C and require more individual, even personal approach to the target auditory. For this reason, personal selling could be considered as the most important and effective marketing communications tool in frame of B2B markets. (Fill 2002, 377)

Personal selling is presented as individualized communication that could identify and adapt to the particular wishes and needs of customers. Close contact, effective dialogue and fully understanding of customer help to build long-term business relationships. In other words, personal selling is a direct link between seller and customer that could draw a full picture of a particular customer's expectations as well as satisfy these expectations using collected information. (Kotler&Pfoertsch 2006, 110-112.) Chris Fill and Karen Fill (2005) in their book write that personal selling helps to manage customer relationships, makes them stronger and supports sustainability.

As was already wrote in Chapter 2.5 and showed in Table 3, there are some main types of personal selling that are popular nowadays: sales presentations, salesforce management, trade fairs (trade shows) and exhibitions (Hollensen 2010, 498). In case of this thesis, it's more important to focus particularly on trade fairs, shows and exhibitions.

Trade fairs, shows and exhibitions

Trade shows, fairs and exhibitions are really important part of B2B marketing work. The main idea of such marketing events is to collect together all possible suppliers of one particular industry and their potential clients in one location. Here exhibitors can show their products and services, meet and attract new customers as well as receive new orders. In case of visitors (customers), they can explore almost all possible current offers presented on the particular industry's market and make their comparison. (Fill 2002, 716.)

Usually, trade shows are organized by special trade organizations or trade units. However, nowadays, more and more firms prefer to organize own private trade exhibitions to save money and emphasize company identity and soleness. (Kotler&Kotler 2012, 520-526.)

There are a lot of different reasons to participate or attend trade fairs, shows and exhibitions. The most obvious reason is to make a sale or engage in competition. However, these aims couldn't be name as the main ones. Trade fairs, shows and

exhibitions help to organize relational exchanges and meet a potential partners or clients for long-term relationships. (Fill&MacKee 2011)

In context of industrial companies, like a case company of this thesis, there are some other important reasons to focus on trade fairs, exhibitions and shows that are presented below:

1. To meet existing customers and improve existing relationships
2. To meet prospective and potential customers in order to create new business relationships
3. To meet existing partners and members of marketing channels as well as new ones
4. To collect marketing data and search new opportunities
5. To meet lapsed customers
6. To make sales and place new orders. (Söllen 2013)

Overall, trade fairs, shows and exhibitions rise an awareness about a company and its products as well as gives an opportunity to find new customers and partners. Moreover, it helps to build corporate visibility and differentiate provided products among competitors on the market. (Kotler&Kotler 2012, 522-523.)

Some companies that have really narrow specialization prefer to use such marketing communication tool to reach a target auditory that isn't possible to reach through traditional marketing tools and researches. For example, some companies provide products and services that aren't really topical and don't have a strong demand on the traditional market and among traditional auditory. For this reason, such companies have to participate or organize special trade fairs where potential customers can find their products or services by themselves – independently. (Söllen 2013)

However, trade fairs, exhibitions and shows could not be used as an independent marketing communication tool. It always should be a part of marketing communications mix and used together with other marketing communication tools. In other words, it just reinforces general effect of company's existing marketing communication tools. (Fill&MacKee 2011, 284-286.)

3.3.3 Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing is usually never used as an independent marketing communication tool. However, it performs as a really good complement to the personal selling, helping to build awareness about a particular company, create its corporate image, provide new orders and new levels of customer management. In case of B2B marketing, direct marketing helps to decrease costs and improve general company's performance. (Fill 2002, 376.)

In accordance with Philip Kotler and Waldemar Pfoertsch (2006, 112), direct marketing could be considered as a type of personal selling. However, in contrast to personal selling, direct marketing is more focused on digital and modern technologies.

Among many different resources, direct marketing is named as the second important marketing communication tool in context of B2B relationships. Direct marketing could be described as process of seeking a potential target auditory to deliver a personalized message to it and receive an informative response from it with a view to build honest relationships. In opposite to traditional marketing communication methods, direct marketing strives to create one-to-one relationships with customers that are based on personalization and cooperation rather than ordinary straight sale. (Fill&Fill 2005, 310-314.)

Nowadays, cause of rapidly developing technologies, direct marketing could be presented in the majority of different methods. However, the most popular and effective types are: telemarketing, direct mail and web-support. (Miller 2012)

3.3.4 Sponsorship as part of public relations

As was already mentioned above, public relationships could be explained as a building and maintaining of relationships with different stakeholders in order to improve, sustain or enhance the reputation of a particular company (Fill&MacKee 2011, 279).

Public relations could be used as effective marketing communication tool in B2C and in B2B relationships equivalently. The main advantage of public relations is an ability

to provide a credibility to company's communications. (Fill 2002, 377.) There are a lot of different types of public relations, e.g. press releases, press conferences, events, lobbying, sponsorship, news stories, etc. (Kotler & Armstrong 2016, 463). In case of this thesis, sponsorship has the most important role among others forms of public relations and will be described in details.

Sponsorship

Nowadays, more and more companies pay attention to sponsorships as a marketing communication tool. There are a lot of different types of sponsorship. It could be sponsorship of sport or art events, charitable projects, annual festivals, etc. Regardless, what kind of sponsorship a company choose, it equivalently helps to participate in a particular moment of personal customers' lives, to become closer to potential target audience and broader relationships. (Kotler et. all 2009, 739-742.)

In accordance with Fill (2002, 649), "sponsorship is a commercial activity where one party permits another an opportunity to exploit an association with a target audience for fund, service and resources". In other words, sponsorship could be explained as an activity where one involved organization provides financial, in-kind or other type of support to another involved party in order to reach business objectives. (Friedman 2016)

Actually, sponsorship creates profitable and usually positive associations between a particular event and a company with two-sided benefit: marketing benefit for a sponsor and support as a benefit for a sponsee (Fill&MacKee 2011). However, it's really important to understand that sponsorship is not a type of advertising. It's a marketing activity that is related to public relations and performed as an qualitative medium while advertising – as quantitative medium. (Friedman 2016)

There are many different reasons to use a sponsorship as a marketing communication tool. The most obvious one is related to the core purpose of public relations – to build or improve company's reputation and provide a strong understanding of its corporate identity. (Jefkins&Yadin 1998, 180-182.)

Other sponsorship objectives could be separated into primary and secondary ones. The primary objectives of sponsorship are to build or increase awareness, create or improve a company's image and develop customer loyalty. The secondary objectives depend on every particular case. However, usually there are wishes to attract new customers, to support third parties and show a company from moral and ethical sides, in the best light. (Fill 2002, 652.) Moreover, using of sponsorship also increases credibility of a company and shows it as an active participant in a particular sphere of life (Fill&MacKee 2011).

Among different resources, sponsorship is separated into six types in accordance with different features. The most common features for identification sponsorship type are: a sphere of a sponsored party and a kind of provided support. Lisa McQuerrey (2016) in her scientific article presented 5 types of sponsors that identified basing on different types of provided support. All this types and its descriptions are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Types of sponsors, adopted from McQuerrey (2016)

Type of sponsor	Description
Financial sponsor	A sponsor provides a money contribution to a sponsee. It means, that a party-sponsor pays money to the second party-receiver in exchange for different benefits or opportunities that are mentioned in a sponsorship agreement.
In-Kind sponsor	A sponsor provides goods or services rather than money.
Media sponsor	A sponsor pays for media coverage of sponsee. For example, a sponsor-party may pay for or secures advertising in newspapers.
Location sponsor	A sponsor provides its facilities as a contribution to a sponsee. For example, a company-owner of music hall provides its to a sponsee for an organization of charitable concert.
Labor sponsor	A sponsor donates its employees to the second party for particular period of time that is discussed in a sponsorship agreement.
Signature sponsor	A sponsor that provides a premium amount of any kind of support in a situation when an event has a lot of different sponsors. In such case, sponsors who dentate more are considered as high-level ones (signature sponsors) and receive more benefits than others.

Sponsorship also could be classified into spheres where its occurs (Fill 2002, 653). Frank Jefkins and Daniel Yadin (1998, 182-183) identify the most popular spheres of sponsorship that are presented in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5. Spheres of sponsorship, adopted from Jefkins&Yadin (1998, 182-183.)



Sponsorship is a really effective marketing communication tool that is able to reach as ordinary target audience as well as specific one (Fill 2002, 662). Actually, target groups of sponsorship are not only those who participate in an event – it's also any other parties who are aware about this event. In other words, sponsorship is focused on really wide target audience and provides a variety of business opportunities. (Pelsmacker et al. 2013, 360-365.)

3.3.5 Digital Marketing

Nowadays, digital marketing becomes an integral part of almost all businesses as a result of rapidly developing technologies and increasing importance of Internet. Among various recourses digital marketing has different names. For example, it could be named as web marketing, e-marketing, internet or online marketing. However, it doesn't matter how to name this marketing communication tool – the main sense of it still be same. (Allen 2015)

The simplest definition of digital marketing is a reaching of marketing objectives through using digital technologies and media (Chaffey&Ellis-Chadwick, 2012). Actually, digital marketing is not really different from traditional marketing and has the same objectives – to reach a target audience, increase awareness and induce a sale.

The main distinction of digital marketing – channels that are used in order to deliver a marketing message. Instead of traditional marketing, digital one uses Internet-based media. For example, websites, social networks, search engines, etc. Overall, online or digital marketing is same with a traditional one in case of the core purpose but is really different in case of involved media. (Miller 2012)

A role of digital marketing in B2B marketing shouldn't be underestimated because it provides a numerous of advantages and opportunities. Here below are listed the most important advantages of internet marketing in context of B2B using:

1. It provides fast and actual, up-to-date information about customers and constantly changing market environment
2. Communication process becomes faster
3. It helps to decrease costs and provides faster transactions
4. A type of relationships with current third parties could be update in order to add value
5. An option to find and attract new intermediaries
6. Customer service could be improved that leads to rise of customer satisfaction level
7. An option to find new potential customers
8. A marketing message could be provided more accurate, with less noise distortion and ambiguity
9. More effective using of marketing communication mix and IMC
10. Could be used as a distribution channel to provide sales and improve productivity
11. It could improve company reputation, create or change company corporate face. (Fill 2002, 444-446.)

There are a lot of different types of digital marketing and tools that are used within internet frames: website marketing, search engine marketing, content or inbound marketing, social media marketing, email marketing, etc. (Saltman 2016). All of these types are overlapped and connected with each other. For this reason, companies usually use complex sets of some digital marketing tools and almost never use it separately from each other (Walker 2010). However, in case of this thesis will be reviewed only the most actual ones: website marketing, inbound marketing and search engine marketing.

Website marketing

Website is the most important digital marketing tool that performs as a foundation for all other online activities. There are a lot of different objectives to use a website – it serves as a digital face of a company, an online catalogue of provided products or services, a palace where customers may make an order, etc. (Miller 2012)

A well -structured and good-looking website with an actual content improves and even create a reputation of a company today. Moreover, nowadays, online presence of a company could be named as primary and necessary marketing activity that leads to successful customer relationships. (Fill&McKee 2011, 288.) The main evidences of invaluable usefulness and significance of a website as a marketing communication tool are mentioned among variety of resources. For example, in modern world, a website already shift to the first place which people check when want to find more information about a product or service (Pozin 2012).

Website could be divided into two main groups: corporate-oriented and product oriented. A main purpose of the first type of website is to provide actual information about a company and its activities. It's more focused on potential investors and employees. Corporate-oriented websites strive to support company's reputation in a society and deals more with ethical and social responsibility issues. Moreover, it provides up-to-date information concerning current and previous company performance, financial issues and possible job opportunities. In contract with corporate-oriented websites, product-oriented ones are more focused on customers and sales. The main purpose of product-oriented websites is to provide useful product-based information to potential customers in order to induce sales. This type of websites supports online transactions and online communication with customers. As a result, it improves level of customer satisfaction and has a positive impact on company's sales. (Fill 2002, 598)

In case of B2B websites, it has to be really informative and complex. Actually, it should combine elements of product-oriented and corporate-oriented websites to provide the most actual and full information. In other words, a content of B2B

websites have to include information that is interesting for all people included in purchase decision making process from the customer side. (Laubheimer, 2016)

Inbound marketing

Inbound marketing or content marketing is all about uploading of useful and unique information that is interesting for target auditory on the website. Such content has to be regular and may include articles, videos, blogs games, etc. – all things that could be interesting to customers and increase their awareness in particular sphere. (Saltman 2016)

Actually, inbound marketing is “a bridge” between people who search a particular information and people who may provide it in time. In other words, inbound marketing is an activity where a company instead of promoting different kinds of advertising provides a specific content that helps people who are searching online to find offered products. A company provides related and useful information about its products at right time and in right content. (Halligan&Shah 2014)

In recent years, content marketing became really popular marketing tool in frame of B2B sphere. Usually, B2B companies prefer to include blogs, documentation and webinars in their web content. Blogs provides up-to-date information that is interesting for current website’s visitors and at the same time could attract new ones who search corresponding information in Internet. Publishing of company’s documentation and using of webinars (web-based-seminar) help to show transparency of activities and as a result establish authority and credibility. (Leone, 2015)

Inbound marketing has a really great significance in B2B context. B2B companies often have a really wide range of potential customers from different spheres. As a result, the same content of a website couldn’t be actual and relevant for potential customers from different spheres equally. For this reason, B2B companies should have strong understanding of all target groups and adopt a website’s content for all of them. It means, that no matter how different company’s target group – all potential customers still can find a relevant and useful for them information in a website’s content. (Laubheimer, 2016)

Search engine marketing

Search engine marketing (SEM) is online marketing tool that reinforces online presence of a company or a person in the Internet. It uses a set of paid or unpaid strategies to increase website traffic on search engines. (Balley 2011, 4-6.) The most popular SEM tools is search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC). However, in a reality SEM is really complex and use a numbers of different strategies (Kennedy&Hauksson, 2012). In case of this thesis it's more important to review only the most actual for B2B marketing – SEO and PPC.

Talking about B2B, SEO could be named as one of the most popular marketing tools that company prefer to include in their digital marketing plans (Miller 2012). SEO allows a company to place its website on the high ranking or premium positions in different search engines for pay or naturally – using correct title and preview content. All found results display on a left side of a browser page. (Fill&MacKee 2011, 289; Moran&Hunt 2015, 10.) In other words, the main purpose of using SEO is to increase a website traffic and awareness about company in general (Saltman 2016).

Actually, the nature of search SEO is really clean. People have an idea and would like to search more information concerning it in Internet. In accordance with statistics, usually, people check only first 1-3 pages that are found on their request – as a result, websites of first pages are more popular and have more chances to catch a customer. (Lee 2016)

PPC have the same purpose with SEO – to increase website traffic and catch more visitors. However, in contrast to SEO, PPC is couldn't be organized naturally – it always requires payment. Moreover, in opposite to SEO, PPC found results are displayed in a right side of a browser page as well as in lift side – above and below other serch results. (Moran&Hunt 2015, 10-11.)

Overall, PPC is an online advertisement that usually consists of title and short description. The name of this online marketing tool explains a core idea of it using. Pay-per-click means that an advertiser doesn't have to pay for the placement of advertisement itself. It's necessary to pay only for customers "clicks" on published advertisement. (Saltman 2016)

Both SEO and PPC is based on special keywords that people search. For this reason, an adviser has to select keywords really accurate in order to achieve the most effective results. (Miller 2012)

4 INTRODUCTION TO CASE COMPANY

This chapter is about a commissioning organization of the thesis. Chapter describes company's background and its current operations. Moreover, there is information about main company's customer segments with examples of implemented projects related to them. Then, unique features of the company are reviewed. In the conclusion of this chapter own experience concerning previous company's marketing communications that was received during the professional training period in Geoclima S.R.L is presented.

4.1 Discription of Geoclima S.R.L. and its opeartions

Geoclima S.R.L. is Italian B2B company that specializes in designing, developing and production of special chillers for utilization in air conditioning and refrigeration systems since 1994. The headquarter of the company is located in Italy, Ronchi dei Legionari. It also includes the main production site (more than 5000 m²) and test center. During the time period since 1994 until nowadays, company has become really international – its sales network operates more than in 50 countries all over the world including authorized distributors.

In present time, Geoclima S.R.L. has already two additional production facilities in Russia and Thailand. Moreover, company's sales offices are also located in Austria, thailand, Russian and Australia (Figure 6). As a result, in the company works 116 employees in total who produces more than 500 machines per year.

FIGURE 6. Global presence of Geoclima S.R.L.



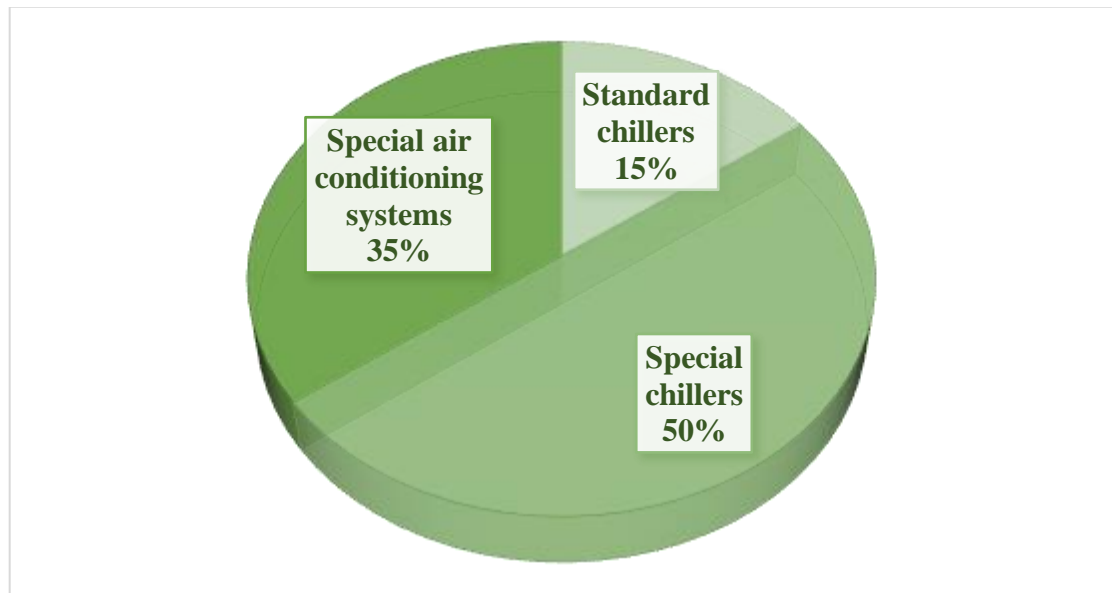
The product line could be divided into 3 main categories: special chillers (cooling systems), standard chillers and special air conditioning systems (ventilation systems). In addition, company produces spare parts for machines separately in order of warranty issues. The production line of the company is described in details in Table 6 and illustrated in Appendix 1.

TABLE 6. The product line of Geoclimate S.R.L.

Standard/special chillers	Special air conditioning systems
Cooling chillers Air coolers Heat transfer equipment Pressure vessels Diffusers (air distributors) with HEPA filters	Air-conditioning installation Ventilation equipment Laminar ceilings Central air conditioners Air treatment equipment

In accordance with company's annual report for last year, the annual turnover is approximately 30 million Euro. The detailed information about product shares included in turnover of the company is presented in Figure 7.

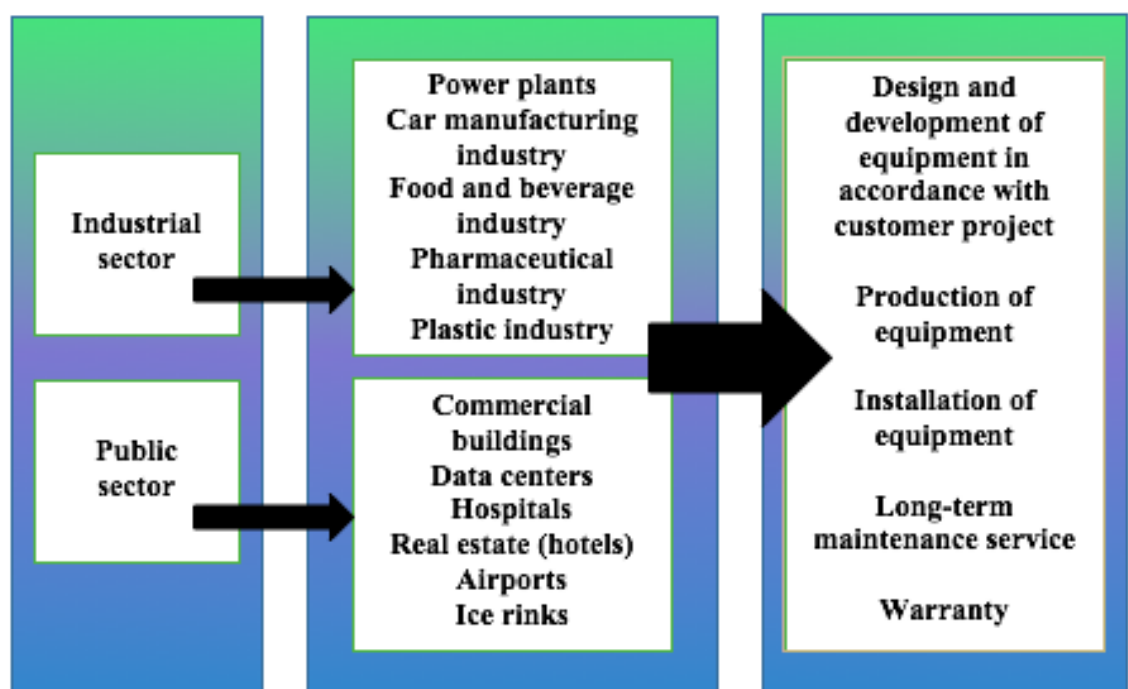
FIGURE 7. Company's annual turnover in products shares



Geoclima S.R.L. has a wide range of corporate clients such as plants, ice rinks, hotels, real estate developers, etc. The main common characteristic of all company's clients is a need of qualitative, compact and flexible cooling, air conditioning, heating or refrigeration system that is able to service large-scale facilities.

The personal discussion with the establisher and owner of the company, helped to identify the main target groups and organize them in Figure 8. Moreover, he named the main services that Geoclima S.R.L. provides to clients.

FIGURE 8. Customer segmentation and primary company's services



Geoclima S.R.L. already has a strong and long experience to work with different types of customers. One of the last company's projects was implemented for Australia's ice rink that located in Melbourne and named as "MediBank IceHouse". The main problem of this project was a lack of space for cooling equipment location. Moreover, it had to be placed in ceiling, under ice arena. For these reasons, the customer needed a chiller that has small dimension and that is possible to assemble in the ceiling. In the result, Geoclima S.R.L. developed a unique chiller especially for this project (Appendix 2).

Another example of already well-completed company's project is a developed and produced air conditioning and cooling chiller for energy center in airport "Pulokovo" in Saint-Petersburg, Russia (Appendix 3).

4.2 Company's uniqueness and competitive advantages

In spite of company's narrow industry, Geoclima S.R.L. still has a wide range of competitors. In context of whole world, the most aggressive and strong competitors are presented by American brands: Daikin, Carrier, Trane and York. In frame of Europe, the most powerful competitors are presented by Italian and French brands: Ciat, Airwell, Wesper, RC Group, Clivet, Bluebox, KTK, Aermec and Sabina.

However, despite of wide range of competitors, Geoclima S.R.L. has a really strong competitive advantage – an individual approach for every customer's project. The company receives a project from a client and develops an individual chiller specially for this project in accordance with customer requests. In other words, Geoclima S.R.L. provides really high level of product customization. As a result, the company could provide HVAC&R (heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration) solutions almost for all large-scale facilities, supporting the high level of quality and customer satisfaction.

However, the company focuses not only on the quality, productivity and flexibility of produced machines – it also strives to reduce harmful impact on the environment. Geoclima S.R.L. is the first company in its industry that started to use HFO-1234ze and R290 gases (refrigerants) instead of CO₂ in order to decrease The Global Warming Potential.

4.3 Own experience received in Geoclima S.R.L. as a part of thesis research

One of the reasons why Geoclima S.R.L. was chosen as a commissioning party for this thesis is an own experience received during professional training and further work in this company. It gave an opportunity to know company from the inside, become closer to company's activities and personnel.

Geoclima S.R.L. is an owner of charitable fund "GEOforCHILDREN" that strives to help orphans in Russia. During my working period the company organized charitable project that was focused on assistance to orphans and served as a marketing communication tool at the same time. I was worked as a project manager of this event therefore know it in details. Charitable project is a cycle tour "RIDE TO MOSCOW" in a distance more than 2800 km. The departure was from Italy on the 29th of July and arriving in Russia on the 17th of August. The whole cycle tour consisted of 17 main stages that's located through Eastern Europe including Slovenia, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland and Belarus. All stages of the cycle tour were open for participation and required only a special registration fee. This fee was transferred in charitable fund "GEOforCHILDREN" and performed as a denotation. The main idea of this project was to collect a money to establish a Career Guidance Center for orphans in Russia.

As was mentioned above Geoclima S.R.L is an organization of the charitable cycle tour. However, the company is also a main sponsor of Career Guidance Center for orphans – Geoclima S.R.L. also invests own money and covers a most of expenses to build and establish it. I

n a reality, "RIDE TO MOSCOW" cycle tour is a public relations marketing communication tool that is named as sponsorship and was described in details in Chapter 3.3.4. Geoclima S.R.L. is a financial and signature sponsor of the project that strives to improve company's reputation and create positive corporate identity in the eyes of society. The company shows its concernment in a problem of orphans and performs as active participant in a process of its solution. As a result, it helps to increase credibility and company awareness as well as to show itself in moral and ethical light. Company strives to contribute to society and impact on a problem of orphans in order to accelerated its solution.

5 METHODOLOGY

This chapter is focused on data collection and subsequent analysis of received information in order to find the best answers on this thesis's questions that is mentioned in Chapter 1. Firstly, a framework of applied research methods is described and explained the main reasons of them selection. After it, in the second subchapter, applied research methods are described in theory. All used research methods are classified as qualitative and consist of interviews, benchmarking and review of company's website analytics. In the last part a conducted data collection process and analysis in practice are presented.

5.1 Research methods framework

As was already mentioned above this study is based on qualitative research method and includes a series of semi-structured interviews, website benchmarking and review of company's website statistic. Actually, the framework of this thesis research is based on 2 main types of data: primary and secondary.

In accordance with a theory, primary data is an original data collected by people directly involved in a particular research through conducted surveys, interviews, etc. Secondary data, conversely, is any published data that was already collected some time ago by other people and for other research. (Sapsford&Jupp 2006 142-143.)

In context of this thesis, primary data is presented by conducted personal semi-structured interviews and benchmarking when a review of website analytics and using own working experience mentioned in Chapter 4.3 perform as resources of secondary data. In fact, the sources of primary data created a main structure of the research while secondary data served as additional one that filled empty spaces that still existed after primary research. As a result, the combination of primary and secondary data helped to collect the most reliable information and create a completed picture of the research.

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to collected primary data: interview with CEO of Geoclima S.R.L., interview with head-manager of marketing and sales department and 3 interviews with a current new company's clients.

Interviews with CEO and head-manager of marketing and sales department were selected to understand initial view on the research problems and on the current company's situation overall as well as to collect necessary information firsthand. Other 3 interviews were conducted with current new clients in order to understand their perception of Geoclima S.R.L. performance, receive an information about existing customer relationships and communication as well as to know customer's expectations and their real level of received satisfaction. The internal view from company's personnel and external view from clients help to identify differences in the perception of the company and its performance from opposite sides.

Other research method applied in this study work to collect primary information is benchmarking that was chosen to make a comparison between case company and its competitors. As a result, it help to identify advantages and disadvantages of Geoclima S.R.L. in relation to its competitors in case of marketing and selling process issues. In case of this thesis, benchmarking is conducted basing on websites compression and analysis of its content that provide reliable information about competitors marketing and selling activities.

As was mentioned before, secondary information was collected through own experience that was received during the working period in the case company and through analysis of the company's website analytics provided by Geoclima S.R.L. for the thesis research. The main purpose of the secondary information is to supplement primary data in order to give the best answers on the thesis questions. Moreover, website analytics is also used to understand the website traffic and some customer preferences.

5.2 Research methods in theory

Qualitative research is methodological approach that used in really wide range of different researches and scientific activities with a purpose to collect reliable information. In other words, it's a form of investigation of some particular case in order to generate new knowledge. (King&Horrocks 2010)

In contrast to quantitative method, qualitative research based on the in-depth view of situation and non-numerical, empirical data (Brwnnen 2013, 14-17). There are a

various methods of data collection used in qualitative research, however the most popular are: interviews, observation, focus groups and action research (Boeije 2010, 67-70). In context of this thesis it's necessary to focus on semi-structured interviews and benchmarking.

5.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interview is an in-depth interview that conducted openly with a purpose to explore particular topic. Before interview, researcher prepare a special list of question and themes that is necessary to cover. However, in contrast to other types of interviews, in semi-structure interview researcher doesn't use "fixed" questions, conversely, he/she prepares open questions that could be supplemented or excluded during interview process. In other words, researcher creates a special template of questions that serves as main structure of the interview, however, a real content formed naturally. (Schuh&Assosiates, 2009)

The order of question could be changed depending of conversation flow, some questions may be added and some of them excluded. The main advantage of semi-structured interview is an ability to use additional questions that occurred during conversation in order to provide more completed information. (Saunders et. all. 2009, 320)

To organize and conduct the most effective semi-structured interview it's necessary to have strong understanding of research topic and objective, well-developed listening and writing skills, questioning skills and good theoretical knowledge of interview process. Moreover, it's necessary to identify right people for participation in interview, who are able to provide reliable and relevant information. (Galleta, 2013)

The process of work with semi-structured interview could be divided into three main stages: preparation, conducting and analysis. All these stages require careful preparation and could be implemented hurriedly. (Saunders et. all. 2009, 321.)

The first stage is about identifying of interview respondents, first contact with chosen people and creation of the interview plan. Actually, interview plan has a really wide meaning. It includes interview outline, list of open questions and approved topics. As

soon as interview plan is ready, it's necessary to contact with chosen people and discuss a conditions of future interview. If it's necessary, it's possible to provide created interview outline to them. (Schuh&Assosiates, 2009)

The second stage is about an implementation of the semi-structured interview (Laforest 2009, 1-3). There are seven the most important issues that have to be compulsory considered and discussed before interview:

1. *Introduction yourself and purposes of the interview*: a researcher has to introduce him/herself and explain real purposes of the interview and research overall. It's important that purposes of a conducted research don't come into conflict with interviewed person's notions, ideas, attitudes and views.
2. *Consent and confidentiality*: an interviewed person has to provide an agreement to the interview. Moreover, privacy policy and anonymity have to be discussed and provided before interview.
3. *Location*: it's necessary to discuss and choose a place where the interview will be conducted beforehand. It's also compulsory to discuss in what style interview will be conducted: face-to-face, online, by telephone, etc.
4. *Time*: it's necessary to create time-schedule of the interview and inform opposite side about total interview duration. Also, a time when interview starts have to be chosen beforehand. An appointment should be make in a comfortable for interviewed person time.
5. *Language and translation*: a researcher has to discuss with interviewed party what language will be used in the interview. In case of different languages, it's possible to invite a third party on the interview who is able to translate a conversation. However, an idea to invite any third party on the interview has to be discusses with interviewed person beforehand and implemented only after received agreement.
6. *Type of interview recording*: It's necessary to ask an agreement to interview recording. It's possible to use digital devises or make some notes on the paper. However, all possible types of interview recording have to be discussed beforehand. (Raworth et. al. 2012)

The interview conversation has to be conducted in relax and comfortable environment for both parties. Researcher has to avoid close questions and use more open ones. Moreover, it's necessary to keep track of interview flow to avoid ambiguity and

change of topic. (Zorn, 2016) In the end the interview, researcher could ask if a respondent has some question concerning interview and then thank him/her. Also, it's possible to repeat about anonymity and confidentiality issues. (Raworth et. al. 2012)

The last stage is analysis of collected information. For better results, it's necessary to start analysis as soon as it possible after conducted interview. In case, when a researcher used more than one recording methods, for example notes and voice recorder, he/she has to combine all received information in order to fill possible gaps and avoid misunderstanding. (Laforest 2009, 4.)

In general, qualitative data analysis includes 4 main stages: identifying, coding, categorizing of topics that were found in the collected data and reporting. There are a lot of different ways to implement a stage of identifying useful data. However, the most popular ways are to use additional methodology (e.g. scientific literature, theory) or use different software programs, e.g. CAQDAS – Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis. (Woods 2011)

Stages of coding that are described as a processes of separation and organizing identified useful data into themes, ideas, topics, concepts, keywords, etc. The main idea of these stages is to combine information in a number of specific groups (e.g. table) that could help to make a comparison and further analysis (reporting) easier (Taylot&Gibbs 2010).

The last stage is reporting. It begins as soon as all received information gathered in specific topic groups and a researcher identified the main ideas and points expressed in a particular topic. The main sense of this stage is summarized all identified ideas and topics into one textual document that will help in future to make research conclusions and support results. The useful data that was organized into specific topic groups (e.g. table) in earlier stage serves as a main structure of reporting and helps to make smooth transitions from topic to topic. (Woods 2011)

5.2.2 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a qualitative tool that is based on the measurement of quality level of particular company activities or business issues and comparison it with another in

purpose to improve company's performance and competitiveness (Stapenhusrt 2009, 3). In accordance with Andersen and Pettersen (1996, 4), the initial definition of benchmarking is "a process of continuously measuring and comparing one's business processes against comparable processes in leading organizations to obtain information that will help the organization identify and implement improvements". In simple words, benchmarking helps companies to find their weak sides and improve it by the learning from the bests. (Kyro 2003, 210-225.)

Nowadays, benchmarking has a really wide meaning and could be conducted in different levels, e.g. comparison of company's departments, whole organizations, industries, etc. However, the core idea of benchmarking stays the same – it's "a process of improving quality through comparison". (Needle 2004, 433.)

There are 2 main types of benchmarking:

1. *Internal*: an evaluation and comparison of the performance inside of organization, team, department, etc.
2. *External*: an evaluation and comparison of an organization across industry. (Codling 1996, 9-12.)

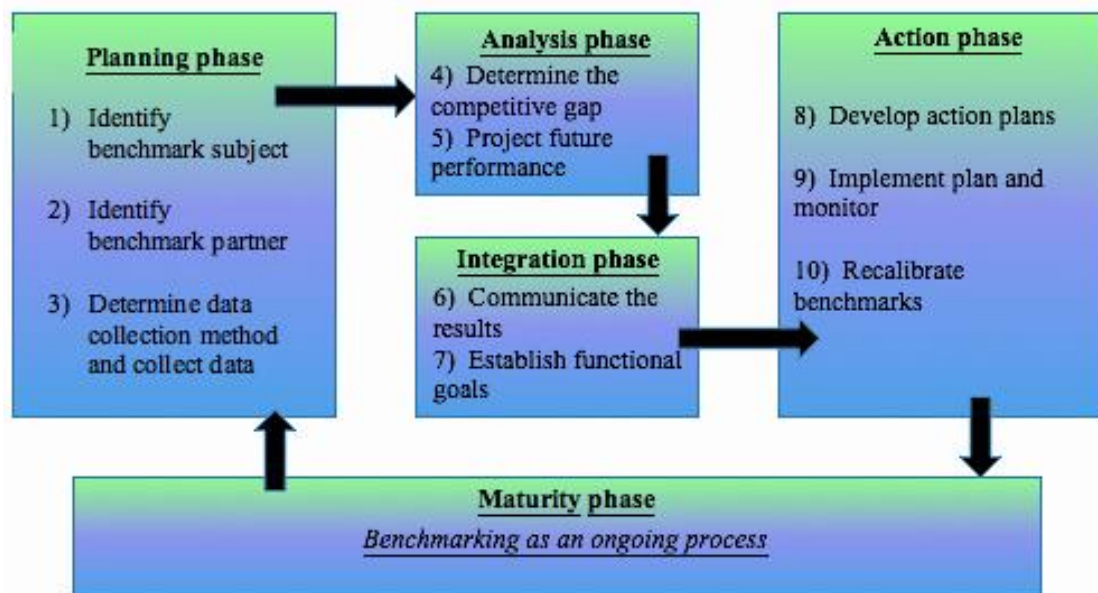
In modern business world internal and external benchmarking types considered as too general ones and were expanded to different sub-branches that specialize in specific issues. There is a list of the most popular benchmarking branches:

1. *Product benchmarking*: this type considers products and services, their characteristics and futures
2. *Competitive benchmarking*: also named as corporate benchmarking and considers company's product and performance oriented issues in context of its competitors. This branch also could study finance, R&D, marketing, H&R, etc.
3. *Process benchmarking*: is based on measurement and comparison of company's performance and functionality
4. *Strategic benchmarking*: is an evaluation and comparison of implemented strategies and decisions of other companies in order to improve own company's strategy and performance overall
5. *Global benchmarking*: extension of others benchmarking types in global scale
6. *Marketing benchmarking*: extension of competitive benchmarking that studies and compares marketing activities. (Andersen and Pettersen 1996, 4-5; Agarwal 2016)

In context of this thesis is necessary to focus more on marketing benchmarking and more specifically on its subtype – benchmarking of website marketing. In recent years, more and more B2B companies use benchmarking for websites marketing. This type considers company’s Internet presence and compares it with competitors. In other words, website benchmarking deals with features of websites or blogs and strives to improve it. (Drickhamer 2012) Overall, the main idea of website benchmarking is to evaluate company’s website and compare it with competitors in order to receive new ideas and make improvements (Vorhies and Morgan, 2005).

The common process of any benchmarking type is separated into 4 phases and consists of 10 stages that presented in Figure 9.

FIGURE 9. Ten steps of benchmarking process, adopted by Armstrong et. al. (1999, 65)



In the first phase of benchmarking process researcher has to identify what is necessary to measure and evaluate. At the same time, he/she has to choose a number of organizations with which the comparison will be implemented. (Armstrong et. al.

1995, 65.) In case of website content marketing benchmarking, it's necessary to identify a number of websites that will be involved in benchmarking process as well as which website's features should be estimated. As soon as researcher identify issues for evaluation, he/she has to choose a method and collect information (Drickhamer 2012).

The second, stage is analysis phase that is based on processing of collected information and identification company's performance "gaps". In reality, these "gaps" are identified disadvantages and weak sides of a company during analysis of the collected information. Determining of company's "gaps" provides an understanding of issues that company has to improve. When all possible "gaps" are known, researcher has to project future performance. In case of website content marketing benchmarking, a researcher creates a plan how to improve website, e.g. which new website features have to be used. (Armstrong et. al. 1995, 65.)

In the third phase, all benchmarking findings have to be combined and accepted in order to review company's performance goals and establish new targets. Fourth phase is about creation of action plans, their implementation and progress monitoring. As a result, occurs new standards of company's performance that is necessary to achieve. (Drickhamer 2012).

The last one is maturity phase that helps to understand whether the company achieves a superior performance level and whether benchmarking process has turned into an integral part of company's regular management process. (Akdeniz et. al. 2010, 154-156.)

Features used in B2B website benchmarking

As was already mentioned earlier, this study work includes benchmarking for website marketing. For this reason, it's necessary to describe the main B2B website features that should be considered in a process of benchmarking. Theoretical understanding of essential B2B website features helps to identify the most important and useful criteria used in benchmarking process and avoid research time wasting.

1. *Company background and first impression* – the website should provide general information about a company and its activities. It includes description of company and its operations, products and service, FAQ and contact information. The main sense of these points is to create a positive first impression about a company and a conviction of credibility that is really important in case of first time visitors. Moreover, good B2B website has to include sections: “About us”, “Our mission and vision”, “Our aims and values”, etc. It provides honesty and transparency of company’s operations. (Power 2013)
2. *Well-organized website structure and navigation* – these features could be considered as the most important website characteristics. A website should be understandable and easy to use for a visitor. It’s necessary to use different navigation tools that help a visitor to find needed information fast, in one-two clicks only. For this reason, a company has to think about a correct separation of information into specific sections that for instance includes: reductive navigation (e.g. narrow selection by specific features such a price, product line, application, industry, customer group etc.), section with the most popular products/services, company’s recommendations depending of customer group, etc. (Macdonald 2016)
3. *Actual content* – a content of a website has to be constantly updated and includes unique information that is interested for potential visitors. For example, it’s possible to create “News”, “Media” and “Our projects” sections (Power 2013).
4. *Link connection* – this feature is also about well-organized website navigation but required a separate description. All articles and textual parts has to be connected with each other that helps a visitor to transfer form one point to another quickly, without losing the sense. Such connections serve as a bridges and could be implemented through using of links. Links could be hidden in a text and have a view of words or noted as “suggestions” under the article. (Nygaard 2003)
5. *Contacts* – an information about how to connect with a company is a necessary part of website. A visitor has to know e-mails, phones and fax of a company. Moreover, it’s really important to provide addresses of company offices. Nowadays, it’s really *popular* and useful to add an online map on a website

with a marks of existing company's addresses. In case, if a company has a presence in social networks a website has to inform about it though links.

6. *Internal website search* – some company's websites are really informative so sometimes it's really hard for a potential visitor to find required information. For this reason, it's recommended to use internal website search engines that help visitors to find a request faster using keywords and key sentences. Furthermore, website search engine and some website sections could be modified with search filters that help to narrow a number of found results. (Porta 2009)
7. *Call-to-action website components* – it's necessary to show website visitors that a company cares of them and wants to cooperate. Moreover, well-made website has to convince a visitor to make an action – to purchase. For this reason, a website could be modified with different “call-to-action” components, for instance: “Call back” button, “Contact us!” online mail form, “Make an appointment” button, etc. Another option to convince to action is using of “Live-chat” on a website. It provides customer support and consultation in real time. Moreover, “Life-chats” serves also as an instantaneous online communication channel with customers. (Cacik 2014)

In case of B2B companies', websites often considered as a primary marketing tool therefore it's really important to pay a lot of attention to its state (Miller 2012).

5.2.3 Website analytics

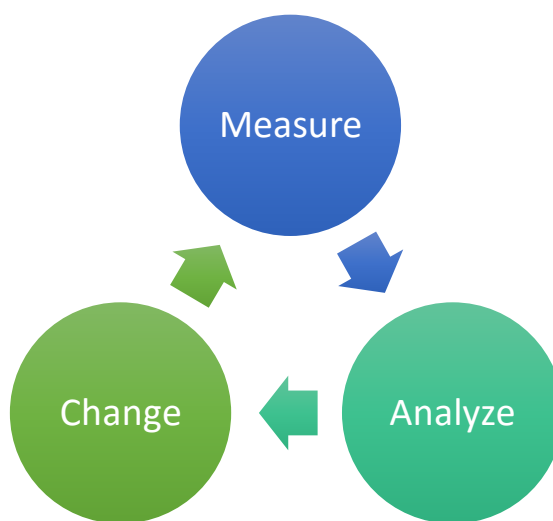
As was already mentioned above, the research of this thesis includes a review of company's website analytics. For this reason, it's necessary to provide theoretical definitions of some terms that help to conduct the most effective analysis of website analytics.

In accordance with Justin Cutroni (2010, 1-3), website analytics is an analysis of qualitative and (or) quantitative data of a particular website. The main purpose of such analysis is to estimate current online presence of the webiste and customer's online experience in order to implement some improvements that will later transfer into desired outcomes. In simple words, website analytics could be described as process of analysis of website visitors' behavior. Well-conducted analysis helps to update a

website in accordance with potential visitors wishes. Correctly updated website attracts new visitors and in case of commercial organizations leads to new customers and sale (Rouse 2005).

The implementation of the website analysis in practice consists of 3 main phases that organize a cyclical process: measure, analyze and change (Figure 10).

FIGURE 10. The web analytics process, adopted from Cutroni (2010, 3)



On closer inspection, the process of effective website analytics consists of 7 steps included in phases that are illustrated in Figure 10. Here below presented and explained 7 steps of website analytics:

1. *Target* – on this stage a researcher has to define what goals he/she wants to achieve. Also, it's necessary to identify the most important target visitors
2. *Access* – here researcher has to analyze all available website data and pays special attention on website traffic. As a result, researcher will identify existing “gaps”
3. *Focus* – researcher has to analyses identified “gaps” and decides which one is necessary to fill
4. *Plan* – researcher has to develop a plan how he/she is going to close identified “gaps”. As soon as, a plan is ready, it's necessary to evaluate it to understand its possible effectiveness.
5. *Act* – this stage of action where created and evaluated plan becomes into life.

6. *Measure* – in this stage researcher evaluated how successful and effective was using of web analytics
7. *Refine* – this stage is the way back to the first stage of the process – time of new goals. (Kaushik 2010)

The main purpose of website analytics process is to collect data and use it to drive continuous improvement. It's important to understand that in a practice website analytics isn't a once-only activity, conversely, it's systematic process that provide better results only in case of regular implementation. (Cutroni 2010, 1-3.)

One more term that should be defined in a theory for this study work is a website traffic. Actually, website traffic is a base of any online business and really important index of successful online presence. The simplest definition of website traffic is an amount of website visitors, a number of reviewed website's pages, traffic sources and a duration of time which a visitor spent for a particular website page. (Fabre 2012)

There are 4 main website traffic sources types:

- *Direct traffic* – comes when a visitor types website URL into browser
- *Organic traffic* – comes when a visitor finds a website through online search in Web search engine, e.g. Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.
- *Social traffic* – come when a visitor finds a website through social media, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- *Referral traffic* – comes when a visitor finds a website through external links published in Web. (Alton 2015)

Actually, as was already mentioned, website traffic provides a mass of information. Therefore, it's necessary to discuss some others terms that were used in this study work: a bounce rate, sessions duration and pages per session.

Bounce rate is based on a measurement of website visitors that view only one page and then exit a website. It's estimated in percentage and shows a relevance of a website. The high percentage of bounce rate is an evidence of irrelevance of a website. Actually, the bounce rate standard for a good website is from 25% to 30% - in case of lower or higher indexes it's necessary to upgrade a website. (Peyton 2014) A number

of reviewed pages has to be at least 2 pages. Taking about an average session duration – it's also has to be at least 2 minutes. (Bloom 2016)

Website analytics also considered an amount and type of visitors. There are two main types of visitors: new and returning. In accordance with a reviewed resource, new visitors are those who review a website for the first time and returning ones – who already visited it before. However, it's necessary to understand that the same person may check a particular website from different devices and then he/she will be recorded as “two new visitors”. A ratio between new and returning visitors is extremely important index that describes a real relevance of a website. The golden mean of this ratio is 50/50. In reality, an amount of returning visitors should be at least 20% for an effective website. However, it's necessary to understand that an amount of returning visitors shouldn't be higher than an amount of new ones. (Karr 2015)

5.3 Data collection

This study work includes 5 semi-structured interviews, benchmarking of competitors' websites and analysis of the case company's website analytics for current year and last month periods. The process of data collection in details for every particular case are presented below.

5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

For research purposes were conducted 5 semi-structured interviews: interview with CEO and owner of Geoclima S.R.L., interview with head-manager of sales and marketing (S&M) department and three interviews with current new clients of the company. The common characteristics of conducted interviews and information about every particular case are presented in next paragraphs.

It was necessary to collect as much useful information as it possible and at the same time to create a comfortable atmosphere of unconstrained dialoged where an interviewed party feels calmness and confidence. For these reasons, it was decided to choose and apply semi-structured interview type that is based on open questions and provides an opportunity to ask additional and secondary questions. The templates of interview themes and question were developed with a focus on thesis research questions in order to collect information that will be extremely helpful to give the most comprehensive answers.

All participants involved in interviews were identified beforehand and invited. During the invitation all participants were informed about purposes of interview and thesis research as well as were described benefits of participation. All interviews' themes and questions were prepared in advance and sent to participants for familiarization. Also, all interviews' dates were agreed in advance and in accordance with participants' wishes in order to choose a time that is comfortable for any particular invited for interview person.

Before interviews all participants were informed about anonymity and confidentiality issues. Moreover, a type of interview recording was agreed beforehand and as a result permission for using notes and Dictaphone was received. All interviews were conducted in Skype. The main reason of such decision was a problem of distance and different locations – Russia, Italy and Finland.

In the beginning of interviews all participants were repeatedly informed about research purposes and confidentiality issues. Also, during interviews attention was paid not only on content of received answers but also on other verbal and non-verbal communication issues (tone of voice, gesture and body language, reaction on asked questions).

After interviews participants were thanked and informed again about anonymity. Furthermore, all written notes were organized in Word documents and sent to interviews for examination and confirmation. It allowed to provide higher level of credibility and relevance in the research.

Interview with CEO and owner of Geoclima S.R.L.

Interview with CEO and owner of Geoclima S.R.L. was conducted in Skype on 19th of October. The main purposes of this interview was to receive initial view on company's current performance and problems. Moreover, the discussion with CEO helps to collect necessary information about company's background, unique features and competitive advantages as well as understand company customer segmentation. All this information is presented in Chapter 4 that describes Geoclima S.R.L. Also, interview with company's CEO explained real current goals and future plans.

Talking in general, this interview helped to create completed pictures of desired and current company image and market position that are necessary to know for developing useful marketing suggestions and recommendations. Outline of the interview with used open questions is presented in Appendix 4. It's necessary to mention that dialoged with CEO played a significant role in the research and contributed to the development of marketing communications improvements.

Interview with case company's head-manager of marketing and sales department

The interview with head-manager of S&M department was also conducted in Skype 19th of October. This interview was separate into 4 main themes: company's brand, product and services, marketing communications and selling actions and company's internet presence. Understanding of these themes was necessary to create and estimate a picture of company's selling processes, relationships with customers and marketing activities.

The huge attention was paid on first contact marketing communications and internet company presence. Moreover, it was important to know about previous applied marketing communication tools and channels in order to estimate their effectiveness and usefulness. Also, head-manager was interviewed about current marketing communications and asked about primary ones.

Another issues that were necessary to discuss are about post purchase communication with clients and company's marketing and sales plans in the nearest future. Other open questions that were used are presented in interview outline (Appendix 5).

Interview with a current new customer of Geoclima S.R.L.

The interviews were conducted with 3 client-companies on 20th and 21st of October in Skype. It was necessary to interview at least few company's clients to collect comprehensive information and to provide credibility in the research. For this reasons, participants were selected from different industries and countries: Italian recreation center, construction company and thermoelectric plant in Russia.

The interview with Italian customer was conducted in English and two others – in Russian. The real names of interviewed companies and their representatives are excluded from this thesis in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements.

The main purpose of these interviews was to understand customer's behavior in selection and purchasing processes. Moreover, it was important to know external view on the performance of Geoclima S.R.L. and identify customers' attitude to it. Also, some questions were related to search information process, first contact marketing channels, post-purchase communication and website using.

In the end of every particular interview, participants were asked about their comments, recommendation and complains concerning the case company. This information is extremely important because provides an opportunity to understand customer real needs and wishes. The outline of interviews is presented in Appendix 6 (1) and 6 (2).

5.3.2 Benchmarking

According to the theory, a website is an internet face of a company and serves as a foundation for all other online activities. In case of Geoclima S.R.L., the website is really significant and even primary marketing communication tool that plays a huge role in the communication process with current and potential clients.

In accordance with personal discussion with head-manager of marketing and sales department, the website of Geoclima S.R.L. is rarely updated only with some content issues and never with a structure. For this reason, it was intended to use benchmarking in this study work with the main purpose to develop improvements for the case company's website. Moreover, CEO of Geoclima S.R.L. mentioned in the interview that a company is ready for the website renovation and interested in any useful suggestions and recommendations.

The respondents for benchmarking were selected from the case company's competitors. The main reason of such decision is a necessity to understand what exactly a potential customer wants to find on a website of a company that specializes in conditioning and refrigeration chillers for large-scale facilities. The best way to do

it is to review a websites of companies that operates in the same industry and with same target customer groups.

As a result, applied benchmarking helped to identify disadvantages and “gaps” of the case company’s website in comparison with competitors as well as to find new website solutions and develop recommendations. The list of reviewed competitors’ websites is presented in Appendix 7.

The features of B2B website that were reviewed, estimated and compared in benchmarking process are presented in Appendix 8 (1) and 8 (2). They were selected beforehand and in accordance with a theory described in Chapter 5.2.2. Moreover, all of reviewed B2B website features are divided into special categories that provides a general picture of a website’s parts that were estimated.

5.3.3 Website analytics

With a purpose to improve online presence of Geoclima S.R.L. it was necessary to review company’s website analytics. The website analytics was collected with Google Analytics tool and provided to researcher by company for two periods: last month and current year. The main reason of using of website analytics for two time periods is an ability to create a general view of the website presence.

Actually, during the review of company’s website analytics the focus was kept on website traffic and includes some other criteria: most popular pages, return visits, visitor region and language, sources from where visitors come and general website attendance. This information helped to understand what particular issues are interesting for potential customers, what they search and how they know about the website. As a result, after analysis of collected information was possible to suggest some recommendations concerning website improvements. Moreover, it helped to identify what other online tools is possible to include in online marketing plan of Geoclima S.R.L. Website analytics data is presented in Chapter 6.3.

5.4 Data analysis

Interviews

In accordance with a theory that described in Chapter 5.2.1., in order to reach more completed and comprehensive results, analysis of collected data has to be started as soon as it possible after conducted interview. For this reason, all analysis for this thesis were implemented immediately after interviews. Moreover, in case when a researcher used few recording methods it's necessary to combine them into one.

Actually, as was also mentioned in a theory, a process of semi-structured interview analysis includes 4 stages (identifying, coding, categorizing and reporting) that have to be implement in sequence. All interviews analysis applied in this study work were conducted in appliance with theoretical recommendations.

As was already mention above in Chapter 5.3.1., all 5 interviews were recorded with a using of Dictaphone and researcher notes. For this reason, after interviews all notes were carefully reviewed and combined in common Word document. The voice records were listened a couple of times and the most useful information and clear answers were identified and then also recorded in common Word document. After it all collected information was separated into topics that were predetermined before and mentioned in interviews' outlines (Appendix 4, 5 and 6).

Moreover, a special attention was paid on repeated words, sentences and senses. It helped to understand what sort of collected information has a greater meaning for interviewed person and what is uninteresting at all.

Also, in case of interviews with the company's customers, attention was paid on similarity or distinctions of their answers concerning the same questions. Furthermore, the recommendations, wishes and complains of interviewed participants concerning current performance of Geoclima S.R.L. were taken into account. All received results were separated into head-topics and recorded.

Benchmarking

First of all, in accordance with a theory recommendations were developed a table with main website features that should be estimated (Appendix 8). Respondents involved in benchmarking were chosen from competitors – the full list of them presented in

Appendix 7. After it, all listed competitors' websites were reviewed and found features recorded. At the same time, an additional focus was kept on unique features of websites that were also recorded.

Other stage of benchmarking was an estimation of the case's company website. Firstly, it was reviewed in order to find website features mentioned in benchmarking table. After it, the case company's website was compared with competitors' websites with regard to identified website features. The main purpose was to understand what website features competitors use but Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't. This process provided an understanding of existing case company's website disadvantages and helped to create ideas for future potential improvements.

The main stage of benchmarking process was to evaluate identified new websites features from the viewpoint of a possibility to transfer and apply them on the website of Geoclima S.R.L. All results were separated into main head-topic depending of common characteristics and reported.

Website analytics

As soon as Geoclima S.R.L. provided company's website analytics it was closely examined. A researcher attention was mainly paid on a website traffic and some other indicators that listed in Chapter 5.3.3. The main purpose was to understand how visitors come on the website and what online tools guide them. Also, it was necessary to understand visitor's behaviour on the website.

As was mentioned earlier, the research includes website analytics for two periods – last month and current year. The comparison of these periods was conducted to receive a completed picture of website activity. The data about most popular pages and an amount of return visits provided information about the most interested content for potential customers, a location and region – information about their country and language and a type of traffic – a way how they come on the website.

In the result, analysis of website analytics gave an understanding of possible online tools that could be used in order to improve Geoclima S.R.L. internet presence and increase visitors flow. Furthermore, some received results helped to develop improvements for website content and structure. All data and results were recorded.

6 RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter describes received results of data collection and data analysis processes that were conducted in the research work for this thesis. This chapter is separated into 3 subchapters that discuss results of semi-interviews, benchmarking and website analytics. All included in subchapters results are separated into specific topics.

6.1 Results of interviews

This subchapter presents results of semi-structured interviews with CEO, head-manager and 3 current new clients of Geoclima S.R.L. All results are separated into specific topics and reported in chronological order of a conducted interview to create smooth transitions from theme to theme.

6.1.1 Interview with CEO and owner of Geoclima S.R.L.

Company's brand

Geoclima S.R.L. strives to promote an image of a customer and project oriented engineering company that focuses on unique approach to every particular customer, high-quality project implementation, efficiency, sustainability and flexibility. The main company's competitive advantage is the high level of customization. In the result, Geoclima S.R.L. is ready to work with different projects taking into consideration all customers preferences, regardless of the complexity level.

Moreover, Geoclima S.R.L. represents itself as a creator of innovative and high technology solutions that are oriented on a reduction of harmful impact on the environment. Company's R&D department constantly searches and develops innovative technical solutions in order to reduce harmful impact on the environment and support high-quality product standards.

Furthermore, the company's owner was asked to explain a slogan of Geoclima S.R.L. As result, it was discovered that "Think Forward >>" slogan means that the company develops and uses technologies of the future. At the same time, Geoclima S.R.L. constantly searches new innovative solution and cares about future of the planet. In other words, the company doesn't design machines for current moment only, it designs technical solutions with a purpose of their relevance in future. Finally, it was concluded that all basic characteristics of the company are reflected in the slogan and terms of reliability and efficiency of products are always included in the provided solutions.

In the reality, Geoclima S.R.L. complies with the provided face. The company strives to show its best during the whole communication process with a client, from the design stage until installation and further maintenance services. In the result, company's customers come back again and make new orders that leads to the brand loyalty and positive customer feedbacks.

Customer and customer relationships

CEO of Geoclima S.R.L. provided information about customer segmentation and main customer target groups that was already mentioned in Chapter 4.1 and organized in Figure 7. Moreover, owner of the case company mentioned that usually the company works with large-scale facilities that have a specific conditions and require specialized equipment that is able to work effective in it. Also, it was investigated that the main sales share is created by manufacturing industries, plants and data centers. The whole orders of the company could be divided into direct sales to the final users and ones that involve third parties – distributors.

Customer relationships is really significate aspect for the company. For this reason, the company supports a client with actual information and actions during the whole purchase process and after it. Firstly, Geoclima S.R.L. explores and analyzes a client's project and requirements in order to estimate an ability to implement it. Then, the

company together with a client develop the best technical solution in accordance with requirements and preferences. In the stage of unit production, Geoclima S.R.L. still maintains a contact with customer – it negotiates transportation issues and allows to monitor production process on a plant. Also, the company provides installation of purchased products and offers a special training programs for customer's employees. Finally, Geoclima S.R.L. provides warranty and maintenance services.

It was investigated that in current moment company doesn't have any specific ideas and plans concerning development and improvement of customer relationships. The CEO told that they will continue to serve current and future clients in the same way and strive to support relationships with previous ones. However, he also mentioned that may be the company will change some regulations but it will depend of a situation in future.

Product and Services

The company specializes in a unique approach to every particular customer project and creates an individual machine that meets specific customer requirements. However, the company also have a permanent range of products that are produced before and stored in a warehouse. These products considered as universal ones and could be applied in facility with normal conditions. Such products don't require pre-order and could be installed immediately. Also, it was discovered that Geoclima S.R.L. constantly expands a range of regular product. However, an individual production and customization are still considered as primary products. The existing product line of Geoclima S.R.L. described in Chapter 4.1 and organized in Table 7.

Geoclima S.R.L. also provides a number of additional services: an installation of equipment, a maintenance of installed machines, training programs for users and warranty. However all of them related only to company's products. In other words, the company never serves products of alien production. Moreover, the regulations of a product warranty also follow this policy - warranty is valid only in case if a client constantly uses annual maintenance that is provided by Geoclima S.R.L. It means that if a client decided to buy a maintenance from other company besides of the case company and after it machine broke down – a warranty doesn't cover expenses for

repairs. Moreover, the company provides all services for additional payment with an adaptation of installation.

Company doesn't have any special price offers, promotions or bonuses with the exception of some discounts on wholesale or large purchases. However, Geoclima S.R.L. offers special and individual product solutions that are oriented specifically on a particular customer or customer group.

Partners

The main partners of Geoclima S.R.L. is its clients – the company cooperates with them and develop the most effective solution. However, the company also works with a wide range of international distributors that provides new contracts and clients. Company exports products through the authorized distributors and representatives more than in 50 countries all over the world.

Other company's partners are:

- “Geoservice” – subsidiary company of Geoclima S.R.L. The authorized service center in Moscow, Russia that provides consulting and technical support, installation services and maintenance, tools and spare parts
- Clima Tech – subsidiary company of Geoclima S.R.L. The sales office in Austria with 35 years of working experience. Sales offices specializes on air handling units for indoor and outdoor installation
- Crom. S.R.L. – subsidiary company of Geoclima S.R.L. Design and production plant that specialized on heat exchangers, sheet metal processing and precision of joinery. Located in Italy.
- Geoflange – cooperate with Geoclima S.R.L. since 2015 and specialized on manufacturing and selling of connections for piping, mechanic details, flanges and other components in construction of HVAC&R systems.

The future of Geoclima S.R.L.

CEO of Geoclima S.R.L. predetermines a future growth of the company. However, it was noticed that the company's owner considers the current period as a bad time for Geoclima S.R.L. because of weak economic situation on the market. In spite of it, the company strives to be stable, productive and effective in any times. Moreover, it was

discovered during the interview that CEO plans to build new production facilities and expand a distributor net in the future. Furthermore, recently company opened new plant in Thailand and now strives to organize stable production and explore new target market in Asia. At the same time, Geoclima S.R.L. has a presence in Russia and continues to expand its influence in this market.

6.1.2 Interview with head-manager of sales and marketing department

Company's brand

Head-manager of S&M department confirmed words of the company's CEO concerning the company's image provided to society. The company strives to represent itself as a strong leader on the market that develops reliable and effective solution for every particular customer request. Also, the head-manager considers Geoclima S.R.L. as the innovative developer of HVAC&R systems that combines new technologies, efficiency, reliability, flexibility and environment-oriented solutions in all offered products.

Moreover, she noticed that desired and real image of the company are pretty similar and constantly supported with company's actions and product releases. All company's actions are always coordinated with provided to the society promises as well as company's values, policy and views.

Customer relationships and selling process

The main purpose of the question included in these themes was to understand how Geoclima S.R.L. support relationships with customers in process of purchase and after it. Moreover, it was important to understand how selling process is going. The head-manager of sales described the structure of purchase process and give some comments concerning post-purchase communication with clients. The main stages of purchase process are presented below:

- *Formalization stage* – in this stage company learns a client's project and requirements. In practice, a client explains what he/she wants to receive in the result, what features and standards a chiller should have and what current conditions of its installations exists (e.g. area scale, air temperature, etc.). The

case company has a number of highly qualified engineers who visit customer's facility and estimate its conditions.

- *Research and Development stage* – on this stage R&D department of the Geoclima S.R.L. develops a project of chiller in accordance with customer requirements and explored conditions.
- *Confirmation stage* – a developed project with drafts are presented to a client for the approval.
- *Production stage* – this stage starts only after received customer confirmation of developed project. In case of some project defects it's transferred back on the stage of R&D for further revision. The production duration is agreed with customer beforehand.
- *Test stage* – as soon as a machine is produced it has to be examined and estimated in special Test Center. A machine is considered as finished one only in case of successful performance on examination.
- *Transportation stage* – in this stage the company and client negotiate transportation issues. It includes expenses, documentation and customs issues.
- *Installation stage* – an installation of produced equipment is provided by Geoclima S.R.L. and included in price.
- *Post-installation stage* – this stage includes additional services that Geoclima S.R.L. provides to a client after product installation. It includes annual maintenance, training programs, technical support, modernization programs and spare parts. All post-installation services are provided for additional payment with exception of warranty cases.

Geoclima S.R.L. is really oriented on customization. For this reason, a purchase process of individually developed products requires time and close cooperation with a client. However, in case of regular product line the purchase process much shorter – the company just check a stock and select the most suitable unit for the particular customer project. Moreover, some clients know beforehand what exactly they need and able to choose suitable model independently. Actually, in accordance with head-manager's words, the purchase process of regular products has the same structure but with exception of R&D, production and test stages. On the confirmation stage a client reviews selected machine and affirms his/her order. All other purchase process stages stay the same.

Post-installation stage reflects almost all existing post-purchase communications with clients. Geoclima S.R.L. provides additional services and warranty. Also the company informs previous clients about new developments and researches through newsletters and press releases.

Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't have a systematic feedback system. The company provides only one type of feedback that a client has to return after one month of product using. In accordance with company's regulations, a client has to fill a special form about bought unit after one month from a date of its installation. Also, it was discovered that a client has to contact case company's office directly in case of any complains in future.

Primary marketing communication

The head-manager of S&M department named three main marketing communication tools: the website, word-of-mouth and personal selling. However, the company's website is considered as the foremost marketing communication tool among them. Geoclima S.R.L. uploads information about offered products there and strives to constantly update it. The company has a regular product line on their website and an information about previously implemented projects. Moreover, the head-manager noticed that the website is the most active marketing tool in relation of first-contact with customers.

However, personal selling is also highly significant tool in the marketing program of Geoclima S.R.L. It was discovered that a personal communication is an inseparable part of the company's individual approach to customers. Geoclima S.R.L. always invite their potential customers in company's sales offices where provides personal presentation of company's products. Also, CEO of the company personally conduct negotiations about new possible contracts with personal visits or by phone.

Word-of-mouth is also considered as a primary marketing communication tool of Geoclima S.R.L. that has a powerful effect on the company image. The main reason of it is a company's narrow industry where an information dissemination works really quick. As a result, company's innovations and research results are discussed and potential customer knows about Geoclima S.R.L. However, the powerful effect of

word-of-mouth couldn't provide a total guarantee of customer flow. Therefore, in order to convince customers to come and push them to the purchase decision company uses personal selling tools.

Other marketing communications tools

Geoclima S.R.L. uses some types of outdoor advertising. Company places its logo on corporate cars, vans and uniform. Moreover, company also provide some souvenirs with a logo to clients for free: e.g. small calendars or pens.

Company participates in HVAC&R systems exhibitions where represents its products and researchers. Geoclima S.R.L. is a regular participant of exhibitions in Bangkok (Tai) and Italy. The respondent, was also asked about other countries, however she answered that the company doesn't participate often outside of Italy (except of Bangkok). The company participated only few times in Russia.

With a help of secondary questions, it was discovered that Geoclima S.R.L. uses some social networks. The company has accounts in Tweeter and LinkedIn where posts information about research results, successful examination of new-developed equipment, new products, open vacancies, etc. Actually, all workers have an access to the Tweeter account, so sometimes they post interesting photos of moments from working days or company's events. It was also identified that Geoclom S.R.L. has a channel in YouTube. However, it was considered as ineffective.

During the interview a head-manager was asked about marketing effect of "RIDE TO MOSCOW" charitable cycle tour where Geoclima S.R.L. was a signature and financial sponsor. The head-manager said that they don't consider cycle tour as a marketing tool and organized it only with charitable purposes. However, after some secondary questions concerning this topic was discovered that all participants of cycle tour had a sportswear with Geoclima S.R.L. logo. Moreover, the head-manager of S&M department confirm that "RIDE TO MOSCOW" cycle tour had a positive impact on reputation of company and its brand image. For example, company received a lot of good and pleasant feedbacks from partners, clients and other people who were interested in this project.

6.1.3 Interview with customer 1

Company background and idea of purchase

Customer №1 is a recreation center in Italy, Saturnia that provides a wide range of resort services: spa procedures, swimming and thermal pools, fitness center, wellness programs, golf, etc. The center also offers accommodation and restaurant service.

In this year, the administration of the recreation center decided to carry out some repair works. It also includes a replacement of old air conditioning system by new one. The chillers had to be placed on a roof and matched to old chiller's mounts. Moreover, the customer needed an air conditioning machine that is able to serve all area of the recreation center and works quite.

Information search process

The client-company decided to search and choose the most suitable seller of air conditioning systems independently to avoid extra costs for agents' services. Also, representative of the company mentioned that during the information search they used mostly internet and direct calls.

However, with a help of secondary questions was discovered that a client visited construction technology exhibition ones but didn't find anything special. The exhibition was in Milano where some construction solutions including air conditioning systems were presented.

Considered product criteria and selection process

The representative of recreation center named a number of primary criteria that were considered in selection process. The most important were a noise reduction system and an ability to serves the whole recreation center. The respondent explained that a machine had to be installed on the roof of the center, however some guest-rooms are located on the last floor. For this reason, the ability of air conditioning system to work quiet without bothering of guests was extremely important. Also, efficiency and

productivity of air conditioning system played a huge role in the selection process. The client needed only one machine that is able to serve the whole recreation center.

Moreover, the client mentioned that the old mounts are built in a roof so could not be replaced. For this reason, it was necessary to find a machine that is possible to place on the old mounts. Also, the size of the unit was considered. The recreation center doesn't have a lot of space on the roof and the entrance is plenty narrow. Therefore, it was necessary to find an oversized machine that is easy to transfer on a roof. Finally, the price factor also played an important role in the selection process.

In the result, the customer chose two Italian companies and considered them as a potential seller. The decisive factor in selection process was a duration of whole purchase process – the client wanted to buy and install a machine within 3 weeks as maximum. By second questions it was discovered that Geoclima S.R.L. promised to produce and install a machine in 2 weeks. One weeks was necessary to design a project. In case of other company, it argued that the whole process from a design to installation of machine requires at least a month.

Purchase process and post-purchase communication

The whole purchase process required three weeks. The design and production phases was implemented in time however the phase of installation was a little late because of transportation delay for 2 days. The customer was informed about delay in time.

Also, the customer noticed that a design stage was really quick – they received a finished project of the machine already after 3 days instead of agreed 5 working days. Furthermore, it was mentioned that a design of a machine was a remake of included in regular product line chiller. In other words, Geoclima S.R.L. just adopted already produced chiller to old mounts that are built in the center's roof.

The customer-company representative was also asked about general communication process during purchase process. He told that Geoclima S.R.L. always was in contact

and provided actual information about purchased product including production progress and all deadlines.

The transportation of the machine was negotiated beforehand and customer-client was responsible for all expenses, while Geoclima S.R.L. was responsible for the transportation process in practice and deadlines. Moreover, the representative noticed that an installation stage was implemented in two days and was included in a price of the ordered machine.

Post-purchase communication includes annual maintenance of the chiller and feedback form after one month of using it. Unfortunately, the representative of recreation center couldn't describe the quality of annual machine maintenance because it will be only in two months for the first time. However, the client already sent a special evaluation form where described an efficiency, reliability and general state of the air condition system. Furthermore, after few secondary questions was discovered that client also purchased a training program for the recreation center staff. The training program includes practical education of the machine management and required an additional payment.

Website efficiency

The website of the case company was a resource of the first contact – the customer knew about Geoclima S.R.L. through its website that was found in Internet among all other search results in Google. It means that the client didn't use a direct link to the website of Geoclima S.R.L. For this reason, it was decided to ask a secondary question in order to understand how quick the website was found – the respondent told that the website wasn't among first search results.

To understand the process of the customer Internet searching the responded was asked about key words that were used. As a result, it was discovered that the respondent used the next combination of words “*air conditioning systems Italy*”. Then, he just reviewed found results.

The first impression about website was positive, the representative of recreation center described it as colorful and informative. However, he also noticed that there was a problem to find a list of air conditioning systems among others machines. Moreover, some secondary questions helped to investigate that for the respondent was also hard to understand for what exactly purposes some machines have to be used. For these reasons, the client decided to contact with Geoclima S.R.L. directly – by phone. In the result, the company’s agent made a personal appointment for the client in their Italian office.

Moreover, the representative was asked about attractive website features that influenced on the decision to contact with Geoclima S.R.L. rather than to continue further searching. In the result, it was discovered that the client liked that the website includes information about previous projects. Furthermore, he found almost similar project and study suggested technical solution. Finally, it was decided to contact with the case company.

Brand face of Geoclima S.R.L. and customer impression

The representative of recreation center describes Geoclima S.R.L. as strong and innovative company that provides new solutions and technologies. Moreover, he noticed that he likes company’s individual approach.

In order to know more information concerning brand image of Geoclima S.R.L. from customer view, the respondent was asked about “Ride to Moscow” charitable cycle tour. It was discovered that the client-company was informed about this event and even invited to participate or become a sponsor. However, the client-company refused. The reason of renouncement wasn’t described clearly. For this reason, the respondent was asked about a general attitude to the charitable cycle tour – he named it as “a good deed”.

Suggestions for service improvements

In general, the client was satisfied with received service and performance of Geoclima S.R.L. during purchase process – the recreation center received the air conditioning machine that meets all named requirements. Also, it was investigated that the client

really cared about machine installation but Geoclima S.R.L. installed the machine without any problems.

In spite of it, the respondent was still asked about any suggestions or recommendation for possible service improvements. The first suggestion was related to transportation issue. The customer thinks that it's better to include transportation costs in a product price. Also, the respondent noticed that they were surprised by the news that a training programs and education of a machine management are provided for additional payment. He concluded that it should be provided for free.

Further communication and relationships with Geoclima S.R.L.

The client is going to support further relationships with Geoclima S.R.L. in relation to post-purchase services, e.g. an annual maintenance. However, in case of new product purchases the respondent told that they don't think that it will be necessary in the coming years.

6.1.4 Interview with customer 2

Company background and idea of purchase

Customer №2 is Russian construction company, the main office is located in Moscow. The company operates in construction industry already 8 years and the majority of clients is related to private sector. However, the company also works with some clients from public sector too. Actually, it was discovered that a construction of data center is a company's first experience in this sphere. Moreover, it was also first and single experience for Geoclima S.R.L. to work with a construction company – usually company works with facilities' owners directly.

In accordance with the construction project, a building of data center has to be equipped with an air conditioning system. It was necessary to install an air

conditioning system that will be able to work in energy saving mode and cool the whole building at the same time.

Information search process

In accordance with representative of the construction company, they are the active participant of different construction exhibitions where they search new materials and technologies. The company's agents attend almost all construction exhibitions in Moscow and near to it. Moreover, sometimes company sends its agents abroad to attend some interesting fairs and exhibitions.

In this particular case, the construction company decided to search different options through distributors, in Internet and also visit one exhibition. The customer already had a base of possible sellers because of its previous experience, however, all of them specializes more on small-scale facilities and residential use. Therefore, it was decided to search some options in the Internet and visit climatic equipment exhibition in "Crocus Expo", Moscow. After few secondary questions, was identified that initially the construction company didn't know about exhibition and wasn't going to visit it. However, during the Internet searching process the company found information about exhibition of HVAC technologies and decided to visit it.

In the result the company knew about Geoclima S.R.L. from exhibition and contacted with it and some other sellers. However, the respondent also mentioned that they also contact with some companies that didn't participate in the exhibition and were found in Internet.

Considered product criteria and selection process

The representative of construction company named a number of the most important criteria that a machine had to meet. In accordance with his words, the machine had to have a low energy consumption and be able to serve and cool all data center. Moreover, the secondary questions helped to discover that the construction company also considered efficiency and reliability of a machine as well as its size. Another important feature was a requirement of rare machine maintenance.

In the result the company chose three possible sellers: two French companies and Geoclima S.R.L. All of them were ready to provide an air conditioning system that meets client's requirements. Actually, the respondent told that firstly they decided to work with French seller. However, after negotiation process they changed their decision and chose Geoclima S.R.L. The reason to change a final decision was a problem with a transportation of the machine from France to Russia. It required almost two weeks and then the construction company would have been late in accordance with its schedule. However, Geoclima S.R.L. has a plant in Russia and offered the customer to produce the air conditioning system on the territory of Russia – it solved a problem of transportation. Moreover, it was discovered that the customer also didn't want to pay extra money for a long transfer from France to Russia.

Purchase process and post purchase communication

The whole purchase process required a month and all stages were completed in time. The design and production stage had three weeks' duration and transportation and installation – a week. In accordance with representative of construction company the design of final air conditioning system was changed twice. Firstly, Geoclims S.R.L. suggested a project of an air conditioning system that consisted from one machine only. It was good however there was a problem of installation – the machine dimensions did not allow to locate it reasonable in the utility room. For this reason, it was necessary to redesign the system. The second project included 3 separate machines that could be installed densely in the technical space.

During the production stage Geoclima S.R.L. supported constant communication with the construction company. The client visited the plant and check a process of the chillers production few times. Also, the representative of Geoclima S.R.L. provided a free instruction how to use the air conditioning system.

The construction company was responsible for transportation of the air conditioning system. Initially, there were two options to transfer chillers from the plant. One option was to pay extra money and then Geoclima S.R.L. would transport it to the data center. Another option was to transport chillers independently. In the result, the construction company chose the second option and decided to transport machines by itself. The respondent told that they had all needed equipment for it and free vans so it

wasn't a problem to deliver machines. Moreover, the respondent also noticed that the installation stage was implemented in time and was included in a price of the air conditioning system.

Post-purchase communication consisted of an evaluation from only – the construction company sent a special feedback about the current state of machines. Therefore, the respondent was also asked about future annual maintenance. It was discovered that the construction company is not responsible for after-sales services. The company will surrender all air conditioning system's documentation and contacts to the owners of the data center and they will make a decision. However, the respondent noticed that probably the data center will buy an annual maintenance from Geoclima S.R.L.

Website efficiency

The respondent told that they didn't use the website a lot (only two-three times) and contacted Geoclima S.R.L. directly. For this reason, the representative of the construction company was asked some secondary questions related to the purposes of website visiting. As a result, it was discovered that the client visited the website only in order to find some information about the company's previous experience and check direct contacts of representatives in Russia. Also, the representative told that they checked the regular product line on the website but didn't find enough information. He noticed that there are a lot of machines presented but it's hard to understand their specialization and compare with each other. Moreover, the customer used a word "mess" when talking about the machines presented on the website. In the result, the construction company decided to contact Geoclima S.R.L. directly and ask all interested information.

Exhibition and personal selling efficiency

The respondent was asked about first-contact with Geoclima S.R.L. that occurred on the exhibition. He described that on the exhibition was presented a lot of HVAC technologies sellers from different countries, so it was really difficult to choose somebody one. However, the representatives of Geoclima S.R.L. were really informative and communicative. They told about the company's products and

demonstrated one chiller. Also, they provided company's contacts and asked contacts of the client. Moreover, it was discovered that Geoclima S.R.L. contacted with the construction company first – the agent sent some catalogues on e-mail and then called by phone in a couple of days.

Brand face of Geoclima S.R.L. and customer impression

Geoclima S.R.L. was described as “effective”, “reliable” and “innovative”. Moreover, the respondent was satisfied with the company's performance and provided solution. The client liked that Geoclima S.R.L. developed individual solution especially for its case. Furthermore, the construction company's representative noticed that they were really surprised with an enthusiasm of Geoclima to develop a machine with lower energy consumption.

Suggestions for service improvements

As was mentioned above the construction company was satisfied with received service. However, the respondent still was asked to say some comments and recommendations. He told that it's good idea to change the website because sometimes it's difficult to find something specific. For example, for him it was hard to deal with product line presented on the website. Moreover, the customer noticed that it's better to provide transportation of products for free, at least in frame of Russia.

Further communication and relationships with Geoclima S.R.L.

The respondent named Geoclima S.R.L. as “a great find” and conclude that the construction company is ready for new orders. He explained that the construction company had a huge base of climatic sellers that are oriented on small-scale facilities and residential use but didn't have any company that is able to develop machine for large-scale facilities and for unique request. Therefore, they consider Geoclima S.R.L. as “a partner for cooperation in future projects”.

6.1.5 Interview with customer №3

Company background and idea of purchase

Customer №3 is a cogeneration plant in Russia that consists of 7 power generating units. The cogeneration plant produces and provides electrical energy and thermal energy for 7 districts in Moscow and near to it. In the end of 2015 the administration decided to change ventilation system in the non-industrial part of plant that includes some offices, canteen and rest rooms for the staff.

Information search process

During the information search process, the customer visited few exhibitions, reviewed options in the Internet and contacted with some distributors. Moreover, the respondent mentioned that a ventilation system replacement is a usual procedure for the plant therefore they already had a strong understanding how and where search different possible options.

In accordance with representative of the cogeneration plant, the most effective way to know about different sellers was to contact with various distributors. However, the independent search also gave some results.

Considered product criteria and selection process

The main criteria that the customer considered were an efficiency of a ventilations system and its ability to serve the whole non-industrial building. Moreover, it's was important to find a machine that is able to work in environment with high temperatures. After some secondary questions, the respondent confirmed that a price issue was also considered. Talking about size of the machine, the responded noticed that it had to be equal to the old one or even smaller. In other words, the system had to be flexible and compact. Also, the client wanted to receive a ventilation system as soon as it possible.

The client considered a number of sellers: few Italian companies including Geolcima S.R.L., one Russian company and one French company. The respondent was asked about a decisive factor that influenced on the final decision to choose the case company. In accordance with his words, all considered companies were able to provide a ventilation system that meets customer requirements, however all of them named different delivery time. Majority of the sellers required more than a month to produce and deliver a unit. It was too long for the client. However, Geoclima S.R.L. offered to do it in a month as maximum.

The client knew about Geoclima S.R.L. through its distributor in Russia that helped to contact with the company directly. Moreover, it was discovered that a client checked a website before contact with a company, during decision making process and already after purchase.

Purchase process

After negotiation with a client it was agreed that the whole purchase process from the design stage until installation of the ventilation system will be completed in a one month. The respondent confirmed that Geoclima S.R.L. implemented the order in time and all stages were complete in accordance with deadlines.

The design stage required more than a week but the presented project of the machine was immediately approved by the client and didn't require any changes or upgrades. The respondent noticed, that the ability of the system to work with high temperatures was extremely important criteria that Geoclima S.R.L. considered – in the result, the chiller was able to work at +60 °C.

The production and transportation stages were conducted in two weeks. After some secondary questions it was investigated that a production of the machine was implemented in Russian plant rather than Italian one. For this reason, the client had an opportunity to follow the production process. The transportation issues were negotiated beforehand. In accordance with received information, Geoclima S.R.L. was fully responsible for the transportation of the ventilation system. This service was provided for extra payment.

The installation stage was implemented quickly, in accordance with deadline, and had a duration of three days. Moreover, the installation service was included in the price of the machine.

Post purchase communication

The customer №3 provided the most comprehensive information about a post purchase communication. Presently, the cogeneration plant already purchased an annual maintenance of the ventilation system, a training program for the staff and used a warranty once. The respondent was asked some secondary questions to know more information about every particular case.

The annual maintenance required an additional payment and included a general examination of the machine. In accordance with respondent, the maintenance was implemented well and only in a one day. Moreover, it was discovered that a day of annual maintenance had to be chosen beforehand, at least two weeks before. The representative also told that he personally contacted with Geoclima S.R.L. in order to make an appointment for the annual maintenance. Firstly, he tried to buy an annual maintenance on the company's website but couldn't do it because there is no such option. So he decided to call in service office by phone. Furthermore, he mentioned that they didn't know about a regulation to book an annual maintenance at least two weeks before and knew it only after a call to the company.

As was mentioned before, the client also bought a training program for the staff. It also required an additional payment and included 3 days of education. Moreover, in the end of education the staff had to pass a special examination where Geoclima S.R.L. could estimate their knowledge. All participants received certificates that confirmed their ability to work with installed ventilation system. However, this certificate doesn't provide an ability to make an annual maintenance independently.

Moreover, the respondent told that they already used a warranty - they called a repairman from Geoservice once because of strange noises in the ventilation system. In a result, there were some problems with a machine's compressor that was replaced by new one. After repair, the client had to fill an evaluative form again. The warranty call and service were provided for free.

Website efficiency

The customer №3 was performed as an active user of the company's website despite of the fact that the first contact with Geoclima S.R.L. occurred through distributor. In accordance with respondent's words, they checked a website prior to contact with Geoclima S.R.L. in order to know its previous experience. Moreover, the client also checked some contacts and address of the sales office in Russia.

During the decision making process the client reviewed a regular product line of the company that is presented on the website. In contrast to interviewed before clients, the representative of the cogeneration plant described a regular product section of the website as understandable enough. However, he also noticed that the cogeneration plant has a strong experience in HVAC technologies so it wasn't a problem to sort out presented on the website machines.

The client also used a website already after purchase. As it was discovered, the respondent tried to buy a maintenance service, inform about warranty case and find information about training programs on the website. However, there was a lack of needed information, so it was necessary to contact with Geoclima S.R.L. by phone.

In general, the representative of the cogeneration plant described a website of the case company as colorful and attractive. However, he also noticed that the website is informative only for potential clients but not for existing clients. In other words, there is not enough information for customers who search information about additional and post purchase services. Moreover, the respondent was disappointed because of an absence of an ability to contact with Geoclima S.R.L. online.

Suggestions for service improvements

The customer was satisfied with received product and services. Moreover, the respondent emphasized the high-quality of the receive annual maintenance. He liked that the annual maintenance was implemented only in a one day and even didn't require to stop a work of the ventilation system. He decribed it like a high-level

service. Also, the client estimated a quick response to the warranty request and well-performed repair of the compressor.

The respondent was asked about recommendations concerning possible service improvements. As a result, he suggested to provide a transpiration of a machines for free. Moreover, he noticed that the website of the case company should be update a little and provide more information concerning post purchase services. Also, the representative of the cogeneration plant suggested to think about other ways to contact with Geoclima, except of phone or e-mail.

Further communication and relationships with Geoclima S.R.L.

The cogeneration plant is going to continue to purchase the annual maintenance of the ventilation system in the future. Nevertheless, after few secondary questions it was investigate that in case of cheaper substitute the client is ready to change the service company of the ventilation system. However, now they don't consider any other options except of the case company.

Moreover, the respondent told that they know about researches and developments of innovative HVAC technologies for power and cogeneration plants that Gecolima S.R.L. provides. For this reason, they consider Geoclima S.R.L. as a potential supplier of new equipment for industrial part of the plant in future.

6.2 Benchmarking results

This subchapter describes benchmarking results received in a process of reviewing and comparing competitors' websites. All websites were reviewed in accordance with website features that are presented in Appendix 8 (1) and 8 (2). Moreover, all results are separated into specific topics that are based on common characteristics. The list of reviewed websites presented in Appendix 7.

General website content

All reviewed competitors' websites include general description of a company and its activities. Moreover, some websites provide a history of a company to emphasize their long and strong experience in HVAC&R industry. For example, DAIKIN company provides a general history of the company as well as a history of company's technologies and innovations in separate blogs. However, another competitor AERMIC prefers to place company history in chronological order accenting important dates and events.

It was noticed that almost all reviewed websites organize information about product range into separate sections depending on customer group or product type. For example, KTK, RC Group, and DAIKIN companies have a separation into product types while TRANE uses a separation depending on customer group. Moreover, some companies prefer to apply both types of product range separation, e.g. AERMIC uses separations into product types as well as into customer groups.

The majority of the websites includes an information about previous implemented projects. It was noticed that BlueBox and KTK companies also use a separation of previous projects into different categories. For example, BlueBox divides products into groups depending on country, application (customer group or industry) and type of product. Moreover, some companies upload pictures and drawings of implemented project on their websites. The website of AERMIC uses a smooth transition from a customer group to implemented project for this particular customer group. Also, some websites provide an information for dialers and distributors in a separate website section.

During the benchmarking process was paid a separated attention on the product descriptions. All reviewed websites include a description of the presented products. However, some of them use just a few words while others provide a compressive article. Almost all websites are completed with product pictures. Moreover, TRANE also uploads some videos that describe and show how every particular machine works. Also, it was discovered that some descriptions of the products include links to the pages with examples of implemented previously projects.

Some websites include unique content concerning researches, developments, innovations, industry events etc. Usually, all textual information is supported with

high-quality images and videos. Also, some companies add links to the social networks, e.g. Tweeter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.

Website navigation

The majority of reviewed websites offers an interactive search to their visitors, e.g. RC Group and CIAT companies. Moreover, some competitors apply special filters to narrow search results. For example, BlueBox offers a special “product selection” option that helps a visitor to find a product in accordance with particular features. This section is separated into 3 steps and includes 7 search filters. The first step suggests to select a capacity range of a product, the second stage – an installation type and the third one – an application type, an efficiency target and a project drive.

It was noticed that all considered websites have a language change possibility and some of them have an option to change a region. The majority of websites provide information in English, Italian, French, German, Russian and Spanish languages. Moreover, DAIKIN offers “Find your region” option that works with a current customer geolocation or Zip Code.

Some websites use “back-to-top” bottom and floating menu navigation. Also, as was mentioned above, the most of websites includes links in a content to transfer visitors from page to page. TRANE includes links in some pictures as well.

Conviction to make a purchase

It was identified that the majority of reviewed competitors prefers to inform their potential customers about provided advertising campaigns, special offers, bonuses and discounts through their websites. For instance, DAIKIN, Airwell and BlueBox post information about current special offers and seasonal discounts in websites’ home pages. Such informative blogs are supplemented with links to full descriptions.

AERMIC has a special request form that allows customers to contact with the company online. This option provides an opportunity to ask a question or leave a

feedback or complain online. Furthermore, some reviewed companies use online contact service “Call back request”, “Make an appointment” and “Live chat”. Airwell provides an option to order products and services online. Also, TRANE include a live blog in the content of the website where a visitor can ask a question or just a negotiate some issues with other users. FAQ section is included in a content of all reviewed websites.

Credibility

All websites are supplemented with “contact” sections that include: addresses of offices, numbers, faxes and e-mails. It was noticed that some websites also provide an online map with marked company’s sales offices, e.g. AERMIC. Also, TRANE uses a search filter to find the nearest office; it asks a visitor to choose a country and write a Zip Code. DAIKIN and some other companies also post information about Board of directors and other primary personnel that is supplemented with photos and contact information.

The majority of the competitors include “News” section in a website content that provides information about past and coming events. Also they post information about open vacancies and a possibility of internship. Moreover, almost all websites have a separate section “Communication and Media” that talks about previous and current advertising, press releases, presentations and annual reports. It was also considered that case company’s competitors prefer to upload their awards and certificates on the websites.

Customer support and post-purchase service

It was noticed that the half of the reviewed websites has “after sales services” section that includes necessary information to support already existing clients, e.g. CLIVET, DAIKIN, etc. This section provides information about additional services, spare parts, warranty issues and other information that could improve efficiency of already installed products. Moreover, some companies include information about training programs and seminars in “after sales services” section or organize it into separate blog.

As was already mentioned above, some websites are supplemented with an option to fill an online feedback and leave a complain request or suggestion concerning received service. Moreover, it was noticed that competitors also upload supportive literature and documentation on their websites.

6.3 Results of website analytics

This subchapter describes results that were produced after reviewing of a case company's website analytics. The data was reviewed and analysed for two periods: current year and last month. Firstly, indexes for two periods were compared to each other. In the result, it was discovered that reviewed data for one year and data for a one month have the same tendency. After comparison, all received results were formulated and separated into topics.

Website traffic

The first issue that was reviewed is a ratio between new and returning visitors. Information was organized into diagrams in Figure 11 and Figure 12.

Presented diagrams show that that amount of returning visitors for the current year is 35,9% and for the previous month is 33,8%. In accordance with a theory, presented indexes are complied with the norm and are higher than a minimum recommendation at least 20%. However, as was previously mentioned, the golden mean for a ration between new and returning visitors is 50/50, so it was concluded that an amount of returning visitors has to be increased.

FIGURE 11. Ratio between new and returning visitors for the current year, adopted from website analytics provided by Geoclima S.R.L.

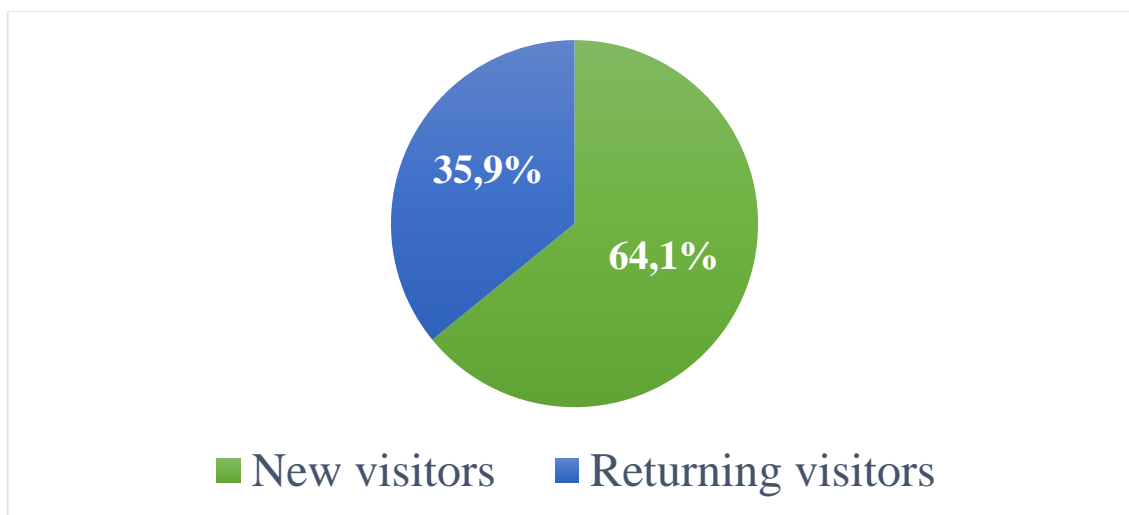
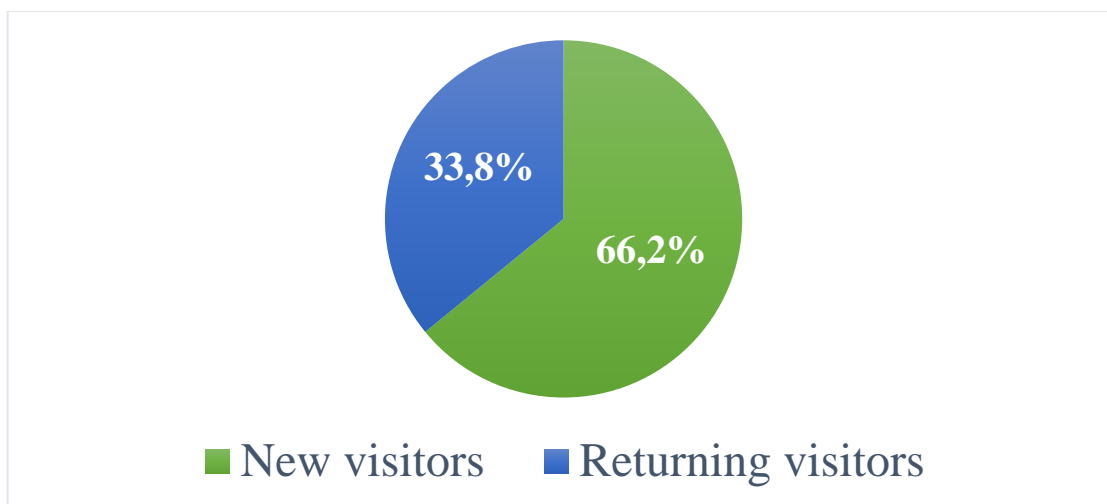


FIGURE 12. Ratio between new and returning visitors for the last month, adopted from website analytics provided by Geoclima S.R.L.

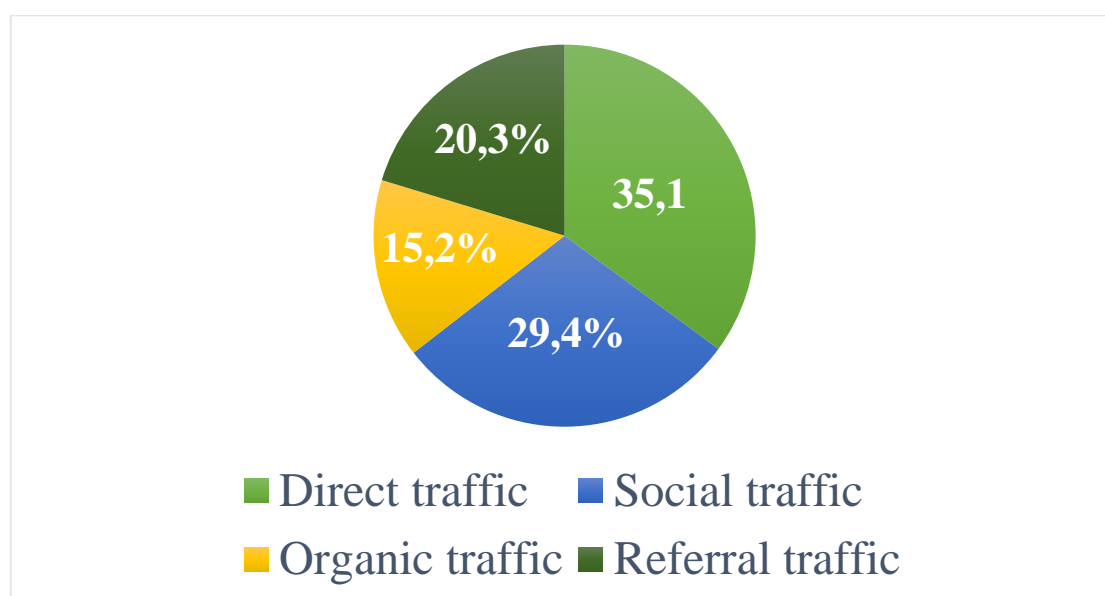


A bounce rate for the previous month is 63.50% and for the current year is 56,58%. website has to be in the range from 25% to 30%. Actually, the current bounce rates of the case company's website are much higher than it has to be and requires an immediate improvement.

Moreover, the sessions duration and an amount pages for the session were considered. These parameters are complied with the recommended minimum norm. The session duration for the last month is 02.34 min. and for the current year 03.04 min, when an amount of reviewed pages per session is 2,17 and 2,44 respectively. However, these indexes still might be increased.

Information about website traffic sources for the current year is organised in the chart (Figure 13). In accordance with reviewed data, the lowest amount of visitors finds the website through online search in Web search engine, only 15,2%. This fact demonstrates that the case company's website doesn't have a place among search results of the first pages. The most popular traffic sources are direct URL (35,1%) and social media (29,4%). It allows to conclude, that the majority of visitors is presented by current customers or clients who already know about Geoclima S.R.L. before. The referral traffic is 20,3% - there are some links in Web that transfer potential customers on the case company's website.

FIGURE 13. Website traffic sources for the current year, adopted from website analytics provided by Geoclima S.R.L.



Popular content, attendance period and language region

It was discovered, that “contact” and “about us” pages are the most popular among website visitors. Moreover, potential costumers usually review pages about “stock chillers” and “turbomisers”. It was noticed, that pages with “g-range” and “v-range” product have a low popularity. However, in accordance with reviewed statistics, people often check information about previous projects and “application” page. The “news” section is also visited, but Geoclima S.R.L. updates the content of this page really rare. Finally, it was investigated that the period from May until October is the more frequented then others.

Review of website analysis helped to identify the most common regions and languages of website visitors. All received results are combined in Table 7 that provides identified language codes, languages and regions.

TABLE 7. Language codes, languages and regions of the website’s visitors, adopted from website analytics provided by Geoclima S.R.L

Code	Language and region
en-us	English (USA)
en-gb	English (United Kingdom)
en-au	English (Australia)
it-it	Italian (Italy, Switzerland)
ru	Russian (Russia)
es	Spanish (Spain, Costa Rica, Mexico, etc.)
pt-br	Portuguese (Brazil)
zh-cn	Chinese Simple (
fr	French (France, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, etc.)
pl	Polish (Poland)

Website analytics shows that the most popular languages of visitors are English (US) and English (GB). Also, a huge flow of visitors comes from Russian, Italian, French and Spanish speaking regions. Moreover, a lot of visitors come from Australia, Portugal, Brazil and China. Also Polish language was noticed in the data for the last month. Some percentage of regions and languages couldn’t be identified and was considered as “not set”.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter finalizes the whole research of the thesis and provides answers on the research questions. Firstly, the final outcomes of the whole research process presented. Then, all formulated suggestions and recommendations described in details. The final subchapter evaluates the reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the conducted research.

7.1 Final outcomes

Research questions that were stated in the beginning of this thesis consider an efficiency of current marketing communication and a possibility of using new ones. The results of interviews, benchmarking and website analytics reviewing helped to formulate relevant suggestions and recommendations for marketing communications improvement and development. The first question of the research for this study work was:

Q1: How to improve current marketing communications to attract new clients, increase brand awareness and total sales?

To answer this question, it was necessary to analyze current marketing activities of the case company and identify its weaknesses and gaps. It was discovered that the website, personal selling and word of mouth are considered as a primary marketing tools. However, it was also identified that all developed marketing communications are more related on new clients and have a weak connection with current clients. There is a problem of post-purchase communication that requires an immediate improvement. For this reason, Geoclima S.R.L. has to develop post-purchase communication with customers. It considers issues of customer satisfaction after sales: providing of supportive information and actions to the clients who already bought company's primary products.

Moreover, the second part of Q1 is also related to increasing of primary products sales. It was concluded, that it's necessary to extend the current online marketing activities and improve current personal selling activities to incite potential clients to make a purchase. All suggested improvements are discussed more in the Chapter 7.2.

The second question that was explored in this study work is:

Q2: What kinds of new marketing communications could be developed and used to attract new clients, increase brand awareness and total sales?

The conducted research showed that there is a necessity to include new types of marketing activities into company's marketing program. First of all, the case company has to consider a possibility of e-commerce implementation and an extension of communication channels with potential customers. Moreover, it was discovered that

sponsorship programs have a positive effect on the case company's reputation and market presence overall. Another, marketing innovation that has to be implemented is sales promotion: different types of sales promotion could attract new customers and increase sales of Geoclima S.R.L. Finally, the interview with construction company shows that Geoclima S.R.L. should consider a possibility of partnership.

Overall, it was discovered that the main marketing problems of the case company are: a lack of communication options with customers, weak online presence and an absence of after sales support. All recommendations are described in details in Chapter 7.2.

7.2 Recommendations to Geoclima S.R.L

This subchapter provides suggestions and recommendations for Geoclima S.R.L. that are related to possible marketing communications improvement and development. It's necessary to mention that all formulated suggestions and recommendations are based on the research outcomes that are presented in Chapter 6. However, all formulated suggestions and recommendations aren't considered from financial side of their implementation. For this reason, it's necessary to provide financial and investment analysis of all presented recommendation and suggestions before their inclusion. In order to reach a high level of understanding all provided suggestions and recommendations are separated into topics.

Expansion of personal selling activities and application of direct marketing

It was discovered that personal selling is considered as a primary marketing tool of the case company. However, received outcomes showed that personal selling activities still have to be extended in order to attract new customers. The interview with the head-manager of S&M department confirm that personal selling activities of the case company are outdated and have not been changed since their first implementation.

In accordance with a theory (Chapter 3.3.2.) trade shows, fairs and exhibitions are considered as really effective marketing tool in context of B2B relations. It provides a huge possibility to find new customers and improve company's market position in its industry. However, the conducted research showed that Geoclima S.R.L. participates

in a really narrow range of HVAC events, only in Asia and Italy. Also, received outcomes show that Russia (and CIS countries) France, Germany, UK, USA, Spain and Australia perform as a markets with a high demand on HVAC products. For these reasons, it's suggested to find new exhibitions options for the participation.

The conducted independent research allowed to formulate a list of possible HVAC exhibitions for period 2016-2018 that could be considered for a participation of Geoclima S.R.L. All received results are presented in Appendix 9. Created table consists of countries with a high demand in HVAC products and examples of exhibitions related to the same theme. All suggested exhibitions, fairs and trade shows are internarial and has relation to B2B sector (provide products for business customers). It's necessary to notice, that there are a lot of other HVAC events all over the world that has to be examined and consider for potential participation.

In accordance with the theory (Chapter 3.3.3.), direct marketing is a good complement to the personal selling activities. For this reason, an application of direct marketing in case of Geoclima S.R.L. was considered. Research outcomes show that the case company doesn't use any types of direct marketing at the present time. Therefore, it's suggested to involve a direct contact with potential customers. Direct contact could be conducted through direct e-mails and calls to potential customers. Company's e-mails have to include a press release of the offered product range and reliable information about company's activities. It's suggested to provide a constant market research to find potential clients and induce a communication process through first contact call or e-mail.

Moreover, a participation in HVAC exhibitions, fairs and trade shows provides a good opportunity to collect a base of the potential customers in order to further direct contact with them.

The framework of direct marketing implementation in case of Geoclima S.R.L. is cyclical and consists of the few steps: market research, study of a potential customer's problem and providing of relevant solution. Geoclima S.R.L. has to act as an exciter of the communication with customers.

Partnership

The research resulted received after interview with the construction company (Chapter 6.1.4.) provide a reason to consider a possibility of partnership programs application. In current moment, Geoclima S.R.L. has a really narrow range of partners that are presented mostly by affiliated companies (Gesoervice, Clima Tech, etc.). Therefore, it's suggested to search new partners among construction companies of commercial and large-scale facilities. The main idea is to sign contracts with different construction companies that operates in public or industrial sector and provide climatic support for their project on a permanent basis. In the result, Geoclima S.R.L. will increase the sales flow of primary products through cooperation with various construction companies.

However, it has to be noticed that a partnership requires a revision of current sales regulations and development new ones especially for partnership programs. New regulation may include special bounces, discounts and special offers for the constant partners.

Sales promotion

In accordance with research results, the period from the beginning of May until the end of October is considered as the most profitable time for the case company. In other time Geoclima S.R.L. has a lack of orders. Moreover, it was discovered that customers are dissatisfied with a fact of an additional payment for transportation issues and some post-purchase service. Therefore, it's suggested to involve sales promotion activities into marketing plan of the company. The main idea of sales promotion implementation is to increase sales flow and improve level of customer satisfaction.

In case of Geoclima S.R.L., it's suggested to consider next types of sales promotion: special offers, bounces and may be some types of discounts. There is a list of possible sales promotion activities that are relevant in the context of the case company:

- Special offer to provide transportation for free to clients who made an order in the particular period of time
- Special offer to provide first annual maintenance for free

- Special offers and bonuses for construction companies (partners) and some other particular customer groups
- Special offer to provide a training program for free to the clients who made an order in the particular period of time, etc.

The potential and current clients have to be informed about any discounts and special offers beforehand. For this reason, it's necessary to upload relevant information on the company's website and supplement it with understandable terms and regulations.

Sponsorship

The interview with head-manager of S&M department shows that Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't consider "Ride to Moscow" charitable project as a direct marketing tool. In spite of this, its positive influence on the case company image was confirmed by research outcomes (Chapter 6.1.). Therefore, it's suggested to continue a development of the charitable fund "GEOforCHILDREN" and perform as a signature sponsor.

However, in accordance with the theory (Chapter 3.3.4.) there are a lot of other social spheres for sponsorship. For example, sport industry is considered as one of the most popular. The main reason of such popularity is an amount of people who are interested in sport events. Moreover, during the personal communication with CEO of the case company, it was discovered that he and some other company's employees are really interested in cycling sport, especially in cycle races and tennis. For this reason, it's recommended to Geoclima S.R.L. to perform as a financial sponsor of cycling or (and) tennis sport activities and events in the frame of company's target markets: Europe, Russia and Asia.

As a result of financial sponsorship in sport and charity, the case company will improve its reputation on the market and increase word-of mouth effect. Moreover, it will present Geolcima S.R.L. as an active participant of society who cares about cultural and moral life aspects.

Expansion of digital marketing

SEO and PPC application

Received research outcomes show that the current position of the case company's website among generic search results in Web should be improved. Currently, Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't use any online marketing tools that could increase a visitors traffic of the website. As a result, organic traffic of the website is only 15,2%. Moreover, the interviewed customers confirmed that it's hard to find the website of Geoclima S.R.L. in Internet without direct URL. For this reason, it's suggested to use SEM tools: search engine optimization or(and) pay-per-click. An application of SEM tools will increase a visitor traffic and replace the website of Geoclima S.R.L. on the first position among search results.

To add more utility to this study work, some keywords for an application in SEM tools were selected through "Google AdWords" and presented in Table 8. All presented keywords are selected depending of their search popularity in Web and relation to the industry of the case company. It's necessary to mention that search popularity presents an amount of searches for a particular keyword.

TABLE 8. Keywords for search engine optimization, created using Google AdWords

Keyword	Search popularity	Keywords	Search popularity
HVAC	301000	Evaporative cooling	14800
Ventilation	246000	HVAC contractors	12100
Evaporative cooler	165000	Air conditioning systems	12100
Chillers	135000	Commercial air conditioning	9900
Heat pump	90500	Heating systems	9900
Heating and cooling	40500	HVAC unit	9900
Central air conditioner	40500	Ventilation system	9900
HVAC systems	27100	Condensing unit	8100
Central AC unit	18100	Central air conditioning	8100
Water chiller	18100	HVAC Engineering	5400
Cooling systems	18100	Refrigeration systems	5400

It's suggested to use SEO or (and) PPC also in local search engines of the particular target markets, e.g. in "Yandex.ru" (Russia), where "Yandex Direct" is an analogue of

“Google AdWords”. However, keywords in Table 8 are selected for application in Google and could be irrelevant in context of other search engines. Therefore, it’s necessary to carry out an additional work and identify suitable keywords for every particular search engine.

Online store

It is suggested to add an option of online shopping on the website. Online store will provide products of regular range, spare parts and after sales services. For instance, it will be possible to order an annual maintenance in the case company’s website and pay for it online. In the result, it will save customer time and increase a level of customer satisfaction. It’s supposed that as soon as a potential customer place an order on the website, Geoclima S.R.L. contacts with him/her by phone or e-mail to confirm an order and discuss purchase terms.

The website utilization

It’s recommended to review the structure, navigation and some content of the case company’s website. All suggested improvements are presented below:

Translation of the website

The current version of the website is translated only into English, Italian, German and Russian languages. However, the research results show that there is a huge flow of visitors comes from French and Spanish speaking regions. For this reason, it’s recommended to translate the website into Spanish and French languages as well. In the result, it will change the position of the case company’s website in search engines of French and Spanish speaking regions and increase website visibility. In addition, it’s recommended to add Chinese (Simple) language.

Moreover, it was identified that some parts of the current website version are presented only in Italian or English languages. Therefore, it’s suggested to translate these parts into other presented on the website languages, e.g. “ThinkForward>>” page.

Online contact services

It's suggested to include online contact service "Make an appointment" in the structure of the website. This online service provides an option to send a request for an appointment with Geoclima S.R.L., choose the closest sales office and comfortable time for it online. Moreover, a visitor can track the state of the registered appointment and, if necessary, cancel it. The main idea of "Make an appointment" online service is to save customer time and provide new way of communication.

Moreover, it's recommended to add an online form through which a visitor can contact with the case company in Internet. An example of online form is presented in Appendix 10. It provides an opportunity to write a feedback, suggestion, complain or ask a question concerning company's products online.

Furthermore, an application of a live blog on the website will be a good complement to general content. Live blog provides an option to ask a question or negotiate a particular topic with other users openly. Public discussion of company's products and services increases a level of credibility and transparency of company's activities. The most popular and discussed questions might be organized in FAQ section.

It's also recommended to add "Live-chat" option in the structure of the case company's website. "Live-chat" service provides an online customer support in real time and helps to identify the most relevant customer questions and needs.

Website structure and navigation

It's recommended to organize products into separate sections depending on their application and customer group. The products should be separated into next sections: commercial, data centers, food industry, power stations, public spaces, car manufacturing industry, pharmaceutical industry, hospitals, plastic industry and other industrial facilities. All these sections should include description of application in industry, offered products and links to the previous projects. The example of corresponding product separation and organization is presented in Appendix 11(1) and 11(2).

Moreover, it's necessary to separate regular product range into groups depending of their product line, e.g. ventilation systems, evaporative systems, spare parts, condensing units, etc.

Also it's suggested to provide information for distributors in the separate section of the website. In case of an acceptance of the idea concerning partnerships with construction companies, it's also necessary to create a page with relevant for them information.

The information about previously implemented projects should be separated into sections: general reference list, applications, product, country.

It's suggested to use search filters in case of regular product line. An application of search filters helps a potential customer to choose the most suitable machine from regular product range especially for his/her request. The example of product selector is presented in Appendix 12(1) and 12(2).

The "back-to-top" button should be made more eye-catching cause now it's really hard to notice it. Also, "back-to-top" button could be supplemented with a floating menu. Such complement will save customer time and improve website navigation.

After sales services

Currently, the website of Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't provide any information about post-purchase services. For this reason, it's suggested to create a separate section "After sales services" that will provide all necessary and interesting information for current clients: training programs, an annual maintenance, repair services and warranty issues. Furthermore, it's suggested to open a "hot line" to provide consultation concerning any after sales issues.

In accordance to received results, a day of annual request has to be chooses at least two weeks before. Therefore, it's suggested to add an option of online request for annual maintenance on the website that allows to check free dates for service and choose more suitable one.

Also, it was discovered that Geoclima S.R.L. doesn't estimate a level of customer satisfaction after received post purchase services. For this reason, it's recommended to collect feedbacks after every provided service in order to collect information for service quality improvement.

News section

Current “News” section is updated only one or two times per months in spite of its popularity among website visitors. Therefore, it’s suggested to increase news flow and supplement it with information about future company’s events. Also, the case company should search a unique article content that will be interesting for website’s visitors and distinct from competitors’ ones.

Regular product range description

It’s suggested to supplement textual descriptions of products from regular range with more pictures – now it’s only one picture and pdf file with technical data sheet. All pictures should be supported with zoom option. Also, it’s recommended to upload videos that shows how every particular chiller works.

Board of directors and primary personnel information

It’s recommended to provide information about board of directors and primary personnel on the website. It’s necessary to publish name and positions of primary representative people of the case company and supplement it with their photos, direct contacts numbers and e-mails.

Further recommendations

All interviewed customers would like to avoid a payment for a chiller transportation. For this reason, it’s recommended to consider a suggestion to provide a transportation for free in the regions of case company’s plants: Russia (Europe part), Italy and Thailand. Providing a free transportation increases company’s utility in customer eyes and adds new competitive advantage.

It’s also suggested to provide online service where will be possible to track a current location of an order during the whole delivery process.

7.3 Evaluation of the research

This thesis work is based on theoretical understanding B2B marketing communications and qualitative research method. The theoretical part of this study work is connected to data collection and analysis process as well as is reflected in research results and thesis conclusions. Moreover, the theoretical description of marketing communication process was confirmed in the interviews' results.

In accordance with theory, an effective qualitative research has to meet next criteria: conformability, transferability, dependability and credibility (Eriksson&Kovalainen 2008, 294). Nevertheless, it's necessary to mention that a transferability of the research couldn't be estimated clearly because of this study work's uniqueness. In other words, there is no similar case to compare received results. The main reason of it is an absence of other available marketing researches for the case company. In spite of this, all thesis outcomes are estimated as relevant and are real for practical implementation.

The dependency is confirmed by the logical structure of this thesis and smooth transitions from topic to topic. Moreover, some information was organised into graphical objectives in order to increase a level of visibility and understanding of the thesis. Also, the whole material is separated into topics and subtopics to guide a reader in a correct way. Finally, the text of the study is included references to other chapters in order to support the textuality of content and plot line.

In case of credibility, it's justified through the check of interviews' results by respondents. In other words, all respondents were introduced in interviews' contents and themes beforehand. Moreover, the structure of interviews were negotiated. After conducted interviews all participants were provided with interview results in order to avoid misunderstanding and exclude a possibility of false data using.

Almost the same procedure were applied to website analytic analysis. Firstly, the considered issues were named to the case company. Then, all research results received after website analytic reviewing were provided to the case company for the confirmation. In addition, the benchmarking was implemented only with constantly updated and highly active websites.

Data collection and data analysis processes are presented in details in order to show a reader how research outcomes were received. Also, data collection and analysis processes are supported with the theory and performed in accordance with it. Finally, all provided suggestion and recommendations are supplemented with evidences from research results chapter.

In order to achieve high level of conformability the content of this study work was reviewed to check reasonable connections between data analysis, research results and received final outcomes. Furthermore, to avoid irrelevant and ineffective thesis solutions, all suggestions and recommendations were checked from theoretical side of their implementation.

8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

First of all, it's necessary to mention that this study work is considered as a connection between me and commissioning company and finalized my relationships with Geoclma S.R.L. I had an internship period and one year of further working experience in the case company. For these reason, I already had a basic understanding of current situation of the company and its problems. The close connection to the commissioning party gave me an opportunity to analyze the company performance from initial view. However, it was a lack of external view and understanding of customer attitude to the company. Therefore, the conducted research was also focused on the exploring and analysis of the company's performance from the customer positions.

The industry of Geoclma S.R.L. is really specific and focused on the narrow range of consumers. For this reason, it was decided that a qualitative research method is more suitable for this study work and able to provide more compressive results. The close relationships with a case company helped to collected more reliable information and identify the main company weaknesses.

As a result, it was produced and formulated several suggestions and recommendations concerning marketing communications of Geoclma S.R.L. However, formulated suggestions are focused not only on the improvement of brand awareness but also on the increase of company's sales and level of customer satisfaction.

I was always interested in marketing sphere. However, I was more focused on B2C and traditional marketing. This study work helped me to understand marketing activities from B2B side and extend my knowledge. Moreover, during the research process I understand how to work with data and convert it into real results. Also, this study helped me to understand a power of online marketing and learn new options of its implementation.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that this work provided me valuable experience in B2B marketing communications. Moreover, it aroused my interest to B2B marketing in general and created a wish to continue my involvement in similar projects in the future

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Examples of company's produced machines



APPENDIX 2. Melbourne ice rink refrigeration system



APPENDIX 3. Cooling chiller for energy center in airport “Pulkovo”



APPENDIX 4. Outline of the interview with the CEO and owner of Geoclima S.R.L.

Topic	Example of questions
Company's brand	<p>What are company's mission and vision?</p> <p>What characteristics associate with the company?</p> <p>What face the company strives to promote to the clients and society?</p>
Current customers groups	<p>What is the current customer segmentation?</p> <p>What are the most important customer groups for the company now?</p> <p>What customer groups create the main share of the customer sales?</p>
Customer relationships	<p>How are you going to develop customer relationships in the near future?</p> <p>How are you going to support relationships with current and previous clients in the future?</p>
Products and Services	<p>What kind of products and services the company offers to identified customer groups?</p> <p>Does the company provide special offers for identified customer groups?</p>
Partners	<p>What are the main company's partners?</p> <p>What kinds of cooperation exist?</p>
Future company's plans	<p>What are your company's future goals and objectives? What are you going to achieve in the nearest future?</p>

APPENDIX 5. Outline of the interview with head-manager of company's marketing and sales department

Topic	Example of questions
Company's brand	What is current company's image? Is it desired company's image or it has to be changed?
Product and Services	How does the company maintain contact with customers after purchase? How do you estimate customer experience? How often?
Marketing communications and selling activities	What are current company's marketing communications? Could you please describe it? What kind of specific marketing communications company has? Which marketing communications company considers as primary ones? Could you name please previous used marketing communication tools? Where any previous marketing communication tools ineffective? Effective? How clients usually know about company? What are the most effective marketing communication tools in case of first contact? How are you going to reach new customers in the nearest future? Could you please describe selling process to new customers? How is it going? What kind of selling activities and events do you provide to attract new customers? What kind of bonuses, additional services or special programs do you provide to the customers? How effective was "RIDE TO MOSCOW" charitable cycle tour from the marketing side?
Internet presence	What kind of online marketing tools company uses? What internet presence except of company's website exists?

APPENDIX 6 (1) Outline of the interview with current company’s clients

***all interviews are conducted through the use of personal online conference in Skype**

Introduction	<p>Introduction of researcher and purposes of the interview. Presentation of the interview’s content and its main topics (reiteration).</p> <p>Explanation of future using of collected information (reiteration).</p> <p>Affirmation of anonymity and negotiation of interview recording.</p>
Topic	Example of questions
Customer – company background	In what industry and country do you operate?
First contact with Geoclima S.R.L.	<p>How did you know about Geoclima S.R.L.?</p> <p>Did you check any resources before direct contact with Geoclima S.R.L.? Which?</p>
Selection process and Geoclima S.R.L. performance	<p>What were the main reasons to choose Geoclima S.R.L.?</p> <p>What were the primary criteria that you considered in your selection and decision making processes?</p> <p>What kinds of resources were reviewed in a process of seller selection?</p> <p>Could you please describe the performed buying process?</p> <p>What kind of additional options or bounces company-seller provided to you?</p> <p>What recommendations, complaints and wishes do you have concerning company-seller performance?</p> <p>What kind of post-purchase communication exists?</p> <p>What do you think about a continuation relationships with Geoclima S.R.L. and possible future orders?</p>

[Continues]

APPENDIX 6 (2) Outline of the interview with current company's clients
(continuation)

Website	<p>How do you find company website?</p> <p>How useful is company's website?</p> <p>How easy was to find necessary information on this website?</p> <p>What kind of information is necessary to add in the website content in your opinion?</p> <p>What kind of recommendations, complains and wishes do you have concerning company's website?</p>
Brand face of Geoclima S.R.L.	<p>What do you think about company's face on the market and in the society?</p>
GEOforCHILDREN	<p>What do you think about charitable fund GEOforCHILDREN and "RIDE TO MOSCOW" cycle tour?</p>
Conclusion	<p>Reiteration of affirmation of anonymity.</p> <p>Clarifying possible questions from interviewed side</p> <p>Acknowledgements</p>

APPENDIX 7. The list of reviewed competitors' website for benchmarking purposes

1. <http://global.aermec.com/> (Aermec, Italy)
2. <https://www.daikin.com/> (Daikin, Japan)
3. <http://www.trane.com/> (Trane, USA)
4. <http://www.clivet.com/> (Clivet, Italy)
5. <https://www.rcgroup.it/> (RC Group, Italy)
6. <http://www.blueboxcooling.com/> (Blueboxcooling, Italy)
7. <http://www.ktk.it/> (KTK Klimatechnik, Italy)
8. <http://www.airwell-residential.com/> (Airwell Residential, France)
9. <http://www.ciat.com/> (Ciat, France)
10. <http://www.york.com/> (York, USA).

APPENDIX 8 (1). Website features used in benchmarking

Category	Website features
General website content	<p>Description of a company, its activities and provided products/services included in website content</p> <p>Provided product and services are organized in separate sections especially for different customer groups (e.g. industrial, commercial, data centers, etc.)</p> <p>Product range is separated and organized in special groups depending on their product line (e.g. ventilation, air cooling chillers, heating systems, etc.)</p> <p>Information about previously implemented project is included in website content and organized into groups depending on common characteristics (e.g. location, applied equipment, industry, etc.)</p> <p>Descriptions of products/services included direct link on a page with a implemented project where a particular product/service were applied</p> <p>Products description are supported with high-quality images</p> <p>Textual information supported with images/videos</p> <p>Using of unique content (e.g. researches, innovations, etc.)</p> <p>Information for diallers and distributors</p>
Website navigation	<p>Interactive search</p> <p>Using of filters to narrow search results</p> <p>Using of links in the articles</p> <p>Language and region change possibility</p> <p>Using of easy-to-read front</p>

[Continues]

APPENDIX 8 (2). Website features used in benchmarking (continuation)

Conviction to make a purchase	Online contact services “Call back request” and “Make an appointment” Using of “Live-chat” on a website to provide online customer support in real time Timely information of any provided advertising campaigns, special offers, bonuses and discounts Map with existing company’s sales offices FAQ section
Credibility	Contacts Full addresses of existing company’s offices Information about primary personnel and Board of directors with photos and contacts Description of previously completed projects includes accurate information (date, location, customer group and industry, applied equipment) News section Communication and Media Awards and certificates Information about coming events
Customer support and post-purchase service	After sales section Product documentation and literature Customer complains and suggestion form

APPENDIX 9. HVAC exhibitions for period 2016-2018

Country	City	Name	Cycle	Next date
France	Chambery	HABITAT & JARDIN, CHAUFFAGE & CLIM	Once year	April 2017
	Paris	INTERCLIMA + ELEC	Every 2 years	06.11. - 10.11.2017
	Paris	WORLD EFFICIENCY	Every 2 years	17.10. - 19.10.2017
Germany	Essen	SANITÄR HEIZUNG KLIMA	Every 2 years	06.03. - 09.03.2018
	Essen	SHK ESSEN	Every 2 years	07.08. - 10.08.2018
	Leipzig	EFA	Every 2 years	20.09. - 22.09.2017
	Nuremberg	IFN/INTHERM	Every 2 years	10.04. - 13.04.2018
Russia	Moscow	AQUA-THERM MOSCOW	Once year	07.02. - 10.02.2017
	St. Petersburg	AQUA-THERM ST. PETERSBURG	Once year	19.04. - 21.04.2017
	Krasnoyarsk	CLIMATAQUATEX	Once year	16.05. - 19.05.2017
Spain	Madrid	CLIMATIZACIÓN	Every 2 years	28.02. - 03.03.2017
	Valencia	ECOFIRA	Once a year	01.09. - 20.09.2017
Ukraine	Kiev	AQUA-THERM KIEV	Once a year	16.05. - 19.05.2017
	Kiev	INDUSTRIAL COLD	Once a year	21.02. - 23.02.2017
Belarus	Minsk	WATER&HEAT	Once a year	28.03. - 31.03.2017
United Kingdom	London	THE FACILITIES SHOW	Once a year	20.06. - 22.07.2017
USA	San Antonio	IIAR Natural Refrigeration & Heavy Equipment Expo	-	26.02. - 01.03.2017
Australia	Melbourne	ARBS	Every 2 years	May 2018

APPENDIX 10. Online contact form on AERMEC website

Request information:

Name*

Surname*

Company

Position at the company

Country

City

E-mail*

Request Type:

Subject

Message

Fields marked with * must be filled in.

I accept the terms and conditions and privacy policy

APPENDIX 11 (1). Product separation into sections depending on their application and customer group on AERMEC website



Residential ← **Residential**

Air conditioning systems for residential use must be designed to satisfy the comfort requirements of all those who utilise it, in accordance with their specific lifestyle and habits.

houses, apartments

▶ Read more

← **Read more**



Commercial ← **Commercial**

Buildings intended for commercial use absorb a significant share of the overall energy utilised within buildings overall, this due to the major impact the commercial sector exercises on economic activities, the high performance requirements associated with these buildings and the many activities that take place within them.

hotels, offices, retail, banks, restaurants & bars, multi-use buildings

▶ Read more



Data centers ← **Data centers**

Data centres

Data centres and technological environments represent critical applications, largely due to the fact that the equipment design for these installations must meet a number of very specific criteria.

data centres, telecom

▶ Read more

APPENDIX 11 (2). Product separation into sections depending on their application and customer group on AERMEC website. Open page of “Read more” link.

AERMEC SOLUTIONS FOR FOODSTUFFS AND BEVERAGES **Application**

The food industry encompasses all production activities, from initial harvesting all the way to distribution, implemented to process and preserve food products. The refrigeration systems utilised within the food industry must answer to numerous specific and demanding requirements: cooling to various differing temperature levels; heating to achieve precise conditions depending on the production phase; preserving specific temperature and humidity conditions within the working ambients; rapid temperature transformation in order to preserve the organoleptic properties of products. For Aermec, the challenge has been to develop innovative, versatile and reliable products offering high performance and efficiency levels, integrated into smart management systems which can reduce total energy consumptions and promptly meet the needs of modern users who are increasingly aware of economic targets to be met and the application of the latest technologies. Aermec offers the benefits of an expert and reliable partner with intrinsic know-how acquired over many years within this specific industry: leading wineries, dairies, fisheries, pasta manufacturing, meat handling, and beverage industries are just some of the applications where Aermec has transformed its specific skills into successful applications.



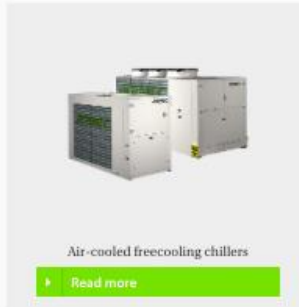
FOCUS ON

Wine - industry with flavour

Aermec has been active in the wine sector for many years on a global scale.

Products

Products



Food Industry References

References (projects)

Read more



Château Smith Haut Lafite
Martillac (France)
Wine



Cantine Vivavilli
Nogaredo (TN) (Italy)
Wine



Paulig
Coffee Plant
Borovleva (Russia)
Food & Beverage



Urra
Poultry Farm
Cheboksary (Russia)
Food & Beverage



Hesko
Bratislava (Slovakia)
Wine

APPENDIX 12 (1). Product selector on BlueBox website

STEP 01: SELECT YOUR CAPACITY RANGE

SLIDER YOUR KW RANGE 
from 0 kW *to 2000 kW*

STEP 02: INSTALLATION TYPE

select one or more options

PACKAGE AIR COOLED <input type="checkbox"/>	DX REMOTE AIR COOLED (LC VERSION) <input type="checkbox"/>	WATER COOLED <input type="checkbox"/>	DX CONDENSING UNITS (LE VERSION) <input type="checkbox"/>
---	--	---	---

COMPRESSOR TECHNOLOGY

SCREW <input type="checkbox"/>	SCREW INVERTER <input type="checkbox"/>	SCROLL <input type="checkbox"/>	SCROLL INVERTER <input type="checkbox"/>
--	---	---	--

REFRIGERANT

R1234ZE <input type="checkbox"/>	R410A <input type="checkbox"/>	R134A <input type="checkbox"/>	ALL <input type="checkbox"/>
--	--	--	--

[Continues]

APPENDIX 12 (2). Product selector on BlueBox website (continuation)

STEP 03: ADVANCED RESEARCH

select one or more option

APPLICATION TYPE 

EFFICIENCY TARGET 

PROJECT DRIVE 

RESULTS (86)  NEW RESEARCH