Linda Temonen

L8113SN

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF THE SERVICE COMPANY

Bachelor's Thesis
Business Management

May 2017

Kaakkois-Suomen
ammattikorkeakoulu

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The commissioning party of this thesis is a company called Extraajat Oy which operates in the field of outsourcing. The company provides outsourcing services for grocery stores in Finland that are looking for a company to do their recruitment processes for them as well as the education of new recruits. The company also provides rental work force for the companies that have decided to outsource some of their work as well. The company is relatively new but already has a steady client base in Finland. The company is very aware that its clients are the most important asset that they have. For that reason the company requested a customer satisfaction research to be conducted to see which areas are the ones that need development the most in the eyes of the customers. Based on that request of the company the topic of the thesis was decided: a customer satisfaction research.

The thesis has two main research questions. The first one being: How satisfied are the customers with the company operations? This research question has an aim of figuring out what are the areas of improvement in the company operations in the eyes of the customers and what are the areas that the customers are pleased with and need no further development at this stage. The second research question follows the lead of the first question: How to improve these services least favored by the customers? The thesis will give the company suggestions on how to develop their operations into the direction of their customers' preference. In order to be able to get answers for these research questions, a customer satisfaction enquiry is key. The enquiry was conducted in Finnish to ensure the full understanding of the customers, and most of all to gather as many answers as possible.

To back up the research questions and the general purpose of this thesis, the theoretical framework introduces some key topics. The theoretical framework consists of 3 main topics that are: *outsourcing, service quality* and *customer satisfaction*. The theoretical framework gives an understanding to the basics of all the three topics, gives background for the choices made in the methodology as well as in the final results, and the suggestions made for the company in order to make the services of the company more attractive in the eyes of the customers.

2 THE OUTSOURCING BUSINESS

The theoretical framework of this thesis evolves around three main topics from which the outsourcing business is the first. The thesis is conducted for a Finnish company that provides outsourcing possibilities for different sized companies which operate in the field of retailing groceries in Finland. In order to understand the benefits and risks of the field of outsourcing, it is vital to take a look at the theoretical background of outsourcing in general. After explaining what outsourcing is in general the chapter dives into the topic of outsourcing in Finland.

2.1 Outsourcing in general

What is outsourcing then? Outsourcing is a relatively easy concept to define. Outsourcing is a practise where certain business operations are transferred from a company to an outsider to be handled instead of having a separate department or a responsible employee for conducting the operation inside the company itself. This transfer of a business operation, the outsouring of a business operation, can be done to another company or to an individual. The outsourcing of business operation can also be done either domestically or internationally depending on the nature of the outsourced operation. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

Whenever a business operation is outsourced to an outsider it involves both risks and benefits for the company outsourcing their operations. These issues are covered in the following chapters together with a broader picture of what kind of different outsourcing models there are. But to understand the different models and benefits/risks it is crucial to know more about the actual concept of outsourcing.

The difference between outsourcing and subcontracting

A question ofter raised in the topic of outsourcing is the comparison between outsourcing and subcontracting. These two concepts can seem the same but in reality they are quite different. In both cases the work load is shifted from one company to another but the difference in the actual providing of the outsourced or subcontracted service is the difference between the two concepts.

When a company makes the decision to *outsource* it’s operations it gives the company providing the service the trust and freedom to perform the operations in their way and with their expertise instead of giving too strict directions and getting mixed into the process. The company which outsources the operations gives the providing company guidelines and view about the desired end-product but the methods on how to get there is completely in the hands of the service provider. But when a company is *subcontracting* a business operation the process is much more limited for the service providing company. The company who subcontracts a operation gives very strict instructions and policies on how the operation needs to be conducted as well as a descriptive and sharp image of the end-product expected. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

An example can be given to clarify the difference more: the outsourcing of car production and the subcontracting of car production. When a company outsources the car production to another company they give an desired view and specifications (suggested materials, performance levels, costs, etc.) about the end-product to the company providing the outsourcing services and leaves the production to happen under the expertise of the service provider. Whenagain if the car production was subcontracted - the company subcontracting the operation would give the subcontractor extremely detailed information on how the car must be manufactured, how the car should look, what kind of measurements each component of the car has to have, what specific materials need to be used and so on to ensure that the car manufactured by the subcontractor fits the requirements of the subcontracting company. (National Outsourcing Association, 2010. https://outsourcing101.wordpress.com/2010/06/21/outsourcing-and-subcontracting-same-difference/)

2.2 The categories of outsourcing

Outsourcing can be divided into three groups. This dividence has a solid ground and the categories are known in the world of outsourcing business. This dividence is established by the target country's location and in this case it is looked at through a Western country's eyes, through Finnish eyes, and therefore the categories and their explanations are the following:

Onshore outsourcing

Onshore outsourcing is outsourcing business that stays within "the mother country lines". The service provider is expected by the service buyer to not operate outside the country lines on any of their operations. The service provider is bound to meet these expectations and focus all their operations in land. (Krym, 2013.) The factor of working in various different cities inside "the mother country" is excluded from the list of demands by the service buyer. The service provider is free to operate in different areas and cities in that one particular country in a way that the company sees best. In Finland it is most common to find companies that have their headquarters situated in Helsinki using Eastern Finland and Northern Finland regions in their operations for lower facility costs. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

Nearshore outsourcing

In nearshore outsourcing the service provider can operate in "the mother country" as well as in all countries in Europe. For Finnish companies the countries most used in nearshore outsourcing are found in the Baltic region and in the Eastern part of Europe. A few of these countries are for instance: Estonia, Latvia, Poland, The Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. As said in the introduction of this particular chapter, these terms are looked at through Finnish eyes and based on that knowledge: the countries that are on the nearshore outsourcing green list change in accordance to the country that the terms are looked at from. To give an example, looking from the perspective of The United States: the nearshore outsourcing green list countries are Mexico and the Mediterranean countries. The perspective of Finland gives a great benefit for Finnish businesses. Since the Finnish businesses are working with countries that are relatively close to each other in nearshore outsourcing, the countries and companies work pretty much in the same time zones and have similar business cultures. This helps companies to communicate better with each other and prevents possible cultural shocks. All in all, these factors help the co-operation with businesses from another countries a lot. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

Offshore outsourcing

In offshore outsourcing the service provider operates outside the European country lines in low-cost countries. This term is most commonly used in Finland when the operations are transmitted to India but due to a recent pay raise in India other countries have taken the Finnish companies' interest. Another countries used by Finnish companies in offshore outsourcing are: China, The Philipphines, Malesia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Vietnam, South-Africa and Mauritius. (Krym, 2013.) The development of communications has made it possible for Finnish companies to co-operate with new countries as well: an example of those is Kenia. The biggest reason behind the offshore outsourcing for Finnish companies is quite obvious: saving in costs. Especially saving costs in labour hours and wages and still getting the same amount of professionality. For instance in India there are engineers that are as qualified as Finnish engineers and have a hourly pay rate that is significantly lower than Finnish wages of engineers. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

As a consequence of the ever changing economic situations and pay raises in countries such as India and China, there is one outsourcing term left to mention. This outsourcing term is called reshoring. Reshoring as a term describes the situation where the economics of a country that used to have a lot of low-cost production is brightening up and costs are also going up with the same pace. The situation in reshoring is that companies that have had either nearshore outsourcing or offshore outsourcing in these particular countries draw back their operations into their home countries because of the raise in both production and wage costs. (The Economist, 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21569570-growing-number-american-companies-are-moving-their-manufacturing-back-united) An example of these costs raising is the situation in China. The production costs of China have reached the production costs of some parts of The United States in year 2015 when all expenses are taken into account from the labour costs to the facility costs. (The Economist, 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21569572-after-decades-sending-work-across-world-companies-are-rethinking-their-offshoring)

The most commonly used outsourcing pattern is a mix of either onshore and nearshore outsourcing or a mix of all three together. If a outsourcing company is using a mixture of these outsourcing categories it is common that the company is acting in accordance with a model called onsite-model. The onsite-model explains how to implicate the foreign employees to the Finnish company operations. In the onsite-model either a few or all of the foreign employees are situated in the Finnish company that is buying the outsourcing services. It is more common for companies to institutionalize the services in a way that most of the employees work from their home countries and a few chosen employees are brought to Finland to work as contacts between the Finnish company and the foreign co-workers back at the employees' home country. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013)

The choice of in which country to widen the business operations to changes according to the business field of the company with the intention of either nearshoring or offshoring. In the perspective of Finland, or in any other country for that matter, all the business operations that are area bound: for instance, maintenance business field, need to stay mainly in onshore outsourcing because a company can't fix a leaking roof from India when the leakage is in a Finnish company's roof. But this fact doesn't stop the maintenance businesses from using nearshoring or offshoring in their other operations. (The Economist, 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21569575-companies-need-think-more-carefully-about-how-they-offshore-and-outsource-herd-instinct) The maintenance field companies are able to send some of their business operations to be handled in different countries. The Finnish maintenance field companies are found to send their broken equipment to the Baltic countries to be fixed. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

Another example of a different business field could be logistics. Logistics business is also partly area bound since the stock needs to be delivered where it needs to be delivered but that is not a reason for the companies to keep their main warehouses only in Finland. The location of the warehouses is mainly pinpointed by the material flows and lanes. The factors influencing the location of the main warehouses and offices are decided through the factors mentioned and not as much because of for example wage policies. The top countries that Finnish logistics companies have offices in are in Europe:

Belgium and The Netherlands, but the Eastern European countries have recently started to intrigue Finnish logistics companies, especially Hungary. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

When a Finnish company is operating in the field of some sort of production the 1st place for offshore outsourcing is China. The bottom reason of production field companies to move their operations to China is to save in costs. Recently it has been noticeable that production field companies have started to move their operations towards the Asian markets because of the huge growth of the market areas and subcontractors there. Because of the market growth especially in China the production costs have increased and that has made the production field companies to choose countries like Vietnam for their company operations more often in the past few years. (The Economist, 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21569575-companies-need-think-more-carefully-about-how-they-offshore-and-outsource-herd-instinct) Due to the varying costs and the general situation of the offshore outsourcing, companies need to be well aware of how much to offshore outsource their operations and where to. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

2.3 Benefits of outsourcing

There are numerous reasons for a company to make the decision to outsource some of the company operations to an outsider. If there wasn't real value in outsourcing business operations companies wouldn't even consider it. The statistics of outsourcing usage says different. Outsourcing services, when done right, is profitable for both parties of the contract and through that is a smart business move for any sized or aged company. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

One of the most obvious and tempting benefits for companies which are thinking of outsourcing business operations is saving money. A goal of every company in the world is to make profitable decisions and enjoy the end results. But how is it possible to save in costs when the company is bying a service from an outsider company, which also needs to have their own profit? It is possible and here are a few example scenarios which make it possible:

- If the company that is providing the outsourcing services has a greater productivity in the service implication than the company which is bying the service, the end result is saving in costs. The service providing company can do the task more productively and through that spend less money. This then again means that the service providing company can make a tempting and less expensive offer for the company who is considering to buy the service from an outsider instead of operating on their own and paying more for the business operation to be conducted by the companys own labour force.
- If the provider company has less expensive costs in general than the company who is interested in outsourcing their operations. The provider company may for instance have lower wage policies with its employees which immediately creates the possibility of both companies making profit.
- If the provider company is able to outsource the service that it has been given, the company can save money in for example rent costs. For instance a scenario where the service provider is located in Helsinki but has a warehouse or some other place outside of the Helsinki region where the utility costs are much lower and the operations are moved there and still conducted with the same productivity level.
- The outsourcing service provider also has an advantage of scale. For instance if there is a company which operates in the field of maintenance work or something else that has changing scenery and a lot of driving to destinations involved in order to be able to perform the work tasks needed, the company is wasting a lot of resources when the employee is driving around and moving from destination to another. If the operation would be outsourced, the service providing company could combine destinations in the same area from different customer companies and minimize the profit loss in labour hours and through that both companies would make reasonable profit. (The New York Times, 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/allbusiness/AB5221523_primary.html)

The profit earning is a strong motivator and might even be the biggest reason for companies to outsource their services but it certainly isn’t the only benefit of outsourcing business operations. Another great benefit of outsourcing services that are not in key element in the company that is looking for outsourcing services is the fact that the outsourcing service provider is more likely to do a better job in general in this specific work task. The outsourcing service providers usually tend to stick to one or a few services that they provide which makes them capable to invest much greater into the operation at hand. For the company which is looking for an outsider to do a work task the task is only a operation that needs to be done in order for the business to keep running. For the service prodiver that operation is the very reason of doing business which immediately changes the level of commitment towards the operation. The service provider gives the operation all of its time and attention, invests in good quality working tools and educates employers to full potential, because the operation is in such central role in the business. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

It is only logical that a company which operates for instance in logistics business field invests in good drivers and good equipment where as they might not spend as much time in figuring out their payroll services and softwares. When the company outsources the payroll services to another company which is specialized in the field of payroll and has the latest software and talented employees the work is done in a split of the time that it is in the logistics company. Through this both companies are able to save time, money and their nerves. (The New York Times, 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/allbusiness/AB5221523_primary.html)

When on the subject of saving time, money and nerves one great benefit of outsourcing emerges. Sometimes a company is in a situation where the work tasks that it is providing are not that interesting in the eye of the public searching for a job or the job opening is too challenging and requires a high educational level, but lacks pay grade. In this situation outsourcing comes into the picture. In this situation it is beneficial for a troubled company to give a recruitment service providing company the opportunity.

Recruitment specialized outsourcing companies have the time and resources to recruit fiercely and find those people who are capapble and willing to take on the job. There is a great turnover of employees in this kind of work tasks and a recruitment specialized outsourcing company is one of the few options that can keep up with the changes of staff, recuirt new employees and give them the necessary training in accordance to the schedules of the service bying company. Another outsourcing solutiton to this particular problem that companies face is to give the permission for the recruitment company to seek employees from foreign countries. If a paygrade in the eyes of a Finnish person seeking for a job is too low it may not be so in for example Eastern countries citizens' and it could solve a problem that a company has struggled with for a long time very beneficially. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

The above mentioned three reasons are the most common benefits of outsourcing but they're not the only three. There is a good number of other possible reasons for a company to make the decision to outsource company operations into the hands of an outsider company. These reasons gathered make a stack of reasons that is hard to go around when making the decision about outsourcing. More reasons for a company to outsource their business operations in search of beneficial influences can be:

- If a company has invested capita on a business operation which is producing severely less profit than other business operations of the company, the company might make the decision of outsourcing the particular business operation for a outsider company to draw out the capita invested in the operation and make the profit producement more even inside the company.
- If a company experiences quality checking to be uneven between its inner business operations the company might make the decision of outsourcing the particular operation to an outsider company to maintain a quality balance in their inner operations.
- If a company has an unsteady volume of work tasks and therefore an unsteady need for labour hours it is beneficial for the company to choose outsourcing instead of keep on paying the steady labour costs of their own. The company can make a contract that includes a practical pricing policy and use the services of an outsourcing company exactly according to the companys needs. If the company continues to use their inner services, they have the same labour hours to pay for no matter if the amount of work tasks is lower from time to time.
- If a company is in a situation where they have a problematic budgeting and they need to go around it outsourcing is a great beneficial way to do that. For instance, if a company has a budget area with does not include a software update which would be necessary to perform critical business operations the company can use a outsourcing service that provides services conducted with this exact updated software and charge the costs from a different area of the budget.

- If a company is facing the reality of not being able to hire the expertism needed. Sometimes owning a company in a small country like Finland sets the problem of not being able to find the needed expertise to do the job. For instance, if there is a IT-company that needs expertise that is not found in Finland or the job opening simply doesn’t interest Finnish job seekers the company might find it difficult to find possible alternatives in foreign countries since the company is not well-known in other countries. There are big, international companies known all around the world that specilalize in recruiting operations. These companies are likely to find an employer needed for a small company in Finland from another country with ease since the big company brands are known around the world and job openings in small companies are noticed through these big recruitment companies more easily. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

2.4 Risks of outsourcing

Whenever there is a business operation that has numerous benefits it always has its downsides as well. This chapter explains the problematic factors about outsourcing as well as their affects on the companies and the business. There are several reasons to not outsource the company business and we are taking a look at them in the following categories: Social and ethical issues, external issues, internal issues, joint responsibility issues and contracting out issues. (Krym, 2013.)

Social and ethical issues

The most obvious issue in this category is linked to offshore outsourcing. Every job taken offshore is one job less inshore. There is a lot of discussion about taking all the jobs into countries with low wages forcing the talented people of the mother country to live without a job. This situation is reality in several countries that have great technological businesses that have outsourced all of their producement offshore and the mother country is left with no job openings for the companies at hand. The effects of this choice to the company image is a disadvantage for the company as well. (Krym, 2013)

External issues

The number of external issues and disadvantages is amazing. The external issues are issues that the company itself has no control over and can happen with or without the company's knowledge. The external issues list is so long that it has been narrowed down to three main issues here. The first issue of the three selected here is the world itself. The political crisis and explosive situations all over the world can cut off a company's supplier in hours. There are no safe heavens in the world for companies outsourcing their businesses to other countries. The costs of then changing the providers or the location of a factory are mind blowing and not preferetable in any way. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013) The second issue of three is the problematics of data and knowledge security and privacy policies. It is always a risk to let an outsider a chance to see the company's secrets and data. A company can lose a significant amount of business if they lose a great business idea due to outsourcing some operations to another business that gets their hands on something that is too good to resist. But nowadays in most outsourcing situations the companies that the activities are outsourced to take better care of the company secrets of the outsourcing company than they do themselves. But nevertheless it is a big concern and an issue in outsourcing business. The third issue that is mentioned in this category is the business models and other potential ideas being compromised in the outsourcing process since there are no ways to patent them or make them untouchable for other companies. As a summary of this category: the company is faced with difficult questions concerning the risks of losing providers/business partners because of the general state of the world and they are faced with security related questions. (Krym, 2013)

Internal issues

The most critical internal issues concering outsourcing are related to management and the skills of the company's staff. If there is a lack of knowledge and skill an outsourcing project can be very bad for the company. If the organization or company is not ready for outsourcing it should not be taken into account at all. Outsourcing is a great business tool but if it is used wrong or without proper knowledge it can be very complex and backfire terribly. (Krym, 2013) As an example funding the outsourcing project can go wrong and therefore bring substantial financial loss for the company having a outsourcing project backfiring. The main reason for outsourcing is usually making money so in this case the lack of knowledge in outsourcing can make the outsourcement the complete opposite. The poor management and knowledge of the company who is outsourcing is not the only scenario where the outsourcing can backfire. If the company who is supposed to carry out the outsourced processes is poorly managed or doesn’t have the right setting for carrying out the operations the operation can go badly wrong and therefore cause trouble for the company trying to outsource their business operations. Another internal issue beside the problems of managing outsourcing is the expectations gone wrong. If a company has high expectations from the outsourcing process and the reality doesn’t meet up with the expectations the outsourcing operation is bound to fail in the eyes of the company who is outsourcing their operations. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

Joint responsibility and contracting issues

In outsourcing processes there is always two parties involved with each other and it is not always as pretty as it seems at first. One of the greatest problems for the parties is the financial losses that the both companies might face in the process. The parties want to make a contract for everything in order to avoid any extra finance losses and all the excess time and cost spent on documentation can be too much for some companies to begin with not to mention the following problems with company cultures, failed communication and different managing ways. To put it in short: some companies think they are ready for an outsourcing process until they really see and understand the amount of work hours, time and money that needs to be spent on the process. (Lehikoinen & Töyrylä, 2013.)

2.5 The outsourcing business in Finland

The outsourcing business in Finland is quite new compared to the traditional business models. No matter the newness of the business of outsourcing it is nowadays relatively steady in terms of supply and demand. Finnish companies have embrased the idea of outsourcing their business operations and focusing on what they are genuinely good at themselves.

The outsourcing business is embrased in the business field but hasn't quite reached the international level yet. No matter the outsourcing business isn't on the international level it is steadily growing and getting closer to the international usage percents year by year. The outsourcing businesses have institutionalized themselves as a part of Finnish business culture and the names and logos of companies which offer outsourcing services have become more and more familiar in the everyday life of business people as well as the ordinary people in the cities of Finland.

However, the outsourcing business when moving away from the bigger cities is still quite slow. The possibilities and options outside the cities are problematic what comes to outsourcing actions that are area bound. It is difficult to find outsourcing service offering companies that can offer services outside the cities for companies that need the outsourcing actions to happen in their preferred area. Of course there are companies situated away from the bigger cities that use outsourcing comfortably in business actions that do not require area bound presence, such as for example: accounting services. The outsourced action of accounting can be conducted far away and the end results is still the same as if it was conducted in the same city as the company ordering the service is located in. But for example in a scenario of outsourcing labour hours at a local supermarket's cashier, it can not be done from another city. This causes problematic situations for both the outsourcing service provider as well as the company wanting to outsource it services outside the bigger cities. The outsourcing services phenomenon is growing no matter the problems of distances or doubts of business leaders and it brings new entrepreneurs and businesses in Finland's business market which is always a good thing for the economic situation of this country. (Selin & Selin, 2005, 52-54)

3 SERVICE QUALITY

The second main topic of the Thesis is service quality. This chapter of service quality takes a deeper look in services in general as well as the world of quality control in companies. This chapter dives specifically into the world of service quality in a company: what exactly is it, how to control and further develop it together with the concept of customer satisfaction. The whole topic of this thesis evolves around these two subjects with the purpose of knowing how satisfied are the customers with the company's operations and services which is a straight result of the perceived service quality. Through this knowledge the concept of service quality becomes adequate.

3.1 What is service quality?

To fully understand what service quality is it is important to know first what a service actually is. There are some common charasteristics seen in services: these characteristics make services recognisable from other forms of customer encounters. Generally speaking, services are processes that consist of activities and/or a series of activities. These activities are mainly produced and consumed at the same time. The provider of the service is producing the service at the same time that the customer is consuming it. On the other hand it is also common for the customer to be a part of the service production process. This scenario is at hand when the customer is very much involved with the service producement when the service is something that requires interaction from the customer. For example a bank service for the customer to pay bills via the internet. The service can not produce itself – it needs assistance and involvement from the customer. In these scenarios the customer is involved with the service producement and has a straight effect on the service quality experience himself. The real topic at hand; service quality, is tightly linked to this service producing and consuming. Whilst the customer is being a part of the producement of the service, or just witnessing the service being produced, the customer has immediate reactions towards the service's quality. The customer is able to see, hear and/or experience all the different elements of the service right then and there and make a first impression on how the service process functions. To put it in short, service quality is a combination of service producement, service consuming and the immediate opinions and reactions of the customers consuming the service. These factors together make the concept of service quality. The next chapters go deeper into the subject from the point of view of the company which is producing the services as well as in the point of view of the customer who is consuming the services produced. (Grönroos, 2007, 53-55.)

3.2 Service quality: how it is perceived and categorized

When knowing what a service is and how it is produced by both the providing company and the customer, we can start to examine what service quality consists of. To put it in short: service quality is whatever the customer perceives it to be. (de Mooji ym. 2005, 203-205) To go more deep into this topic it can be said that for a company it is crucial to understand what the customers are looking for from the services and what exactly do they evaluate in the services. When a company has find out what areas are evaluated the most and how the customers perceive the quality of their services to be at the moment- they can conduct different kind of enquiries to see what kind of development would be needed in the eyes of the customers and then take action towards the hopes and dreams of the customers. If the company has a poor image on what their customers are evaluating and waiting for from the services, wrong actions can be made and therefore precious time and money spent on something that does more damage than good for the company as in taking the services into the wrong direction and causing the customers to perceive the service quality more poor than they used to. (Grönroos, 2007, 71-73.)

This term of customer perceived quality is the key when a company wants to improve their service quality. Therefore it is important to understand the concept as well as possible. There are different kind of theories and ways to categorize customer perceived quality but the most used one is the dimensions of customer perceived quality. In this theory the customer perceived quality is put in two main dimension and two additional dimensions. The fisrt two dimensions, the main dimensions, are called 1. The technical / outcome dimension and 2. The functional / process-related dimension. *The Figure 1.* below shows the dimensions and their attachment to the total perceived service quality. (Grönroos, 2007, 74-79)

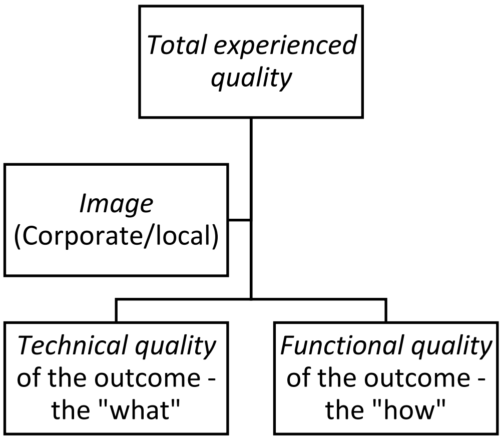


FIGURE 1. The main dimensions of customer perceived quality (Grönroos, 2007, 74-79)

The first mentioned main dimension, Technical / outcome dimension can be described with just one word: “what”. This dimension consists of evaluations based on “what” the customer is left with after the service has been provided and consumed by the customer. This dimension does not take in account all the different elements of the service, how it is produced or anything else of that matter. The dimension is only interested in what is the outcome and what the customer is left with in the end. This dimension is usually measured quite objectively by customers and seen as a simple technical solution to a problem that the customer has needed a service for. A good example of this technical dimension is the food in restaurants. A customer comes in, orders a dish of his or hers liking and sits down to enjoy it. In most cases the quality of the meal itself is seen as the total quality of the restaurant by the customer: if the meal is excellent the customer perceives the restaurant to be of excellent quality as well and if he meal is terrible the customer perceives the restaurant to be of terrible quality as well. Luckily for companies in the world this first main dimension of technical outcome is not the only dimension that is evaluated in services. (Grönroos, 2007)

The secondly mentioned main dimension, the functional quality of the outcome, the “how” is then a very different story from the first dimension introduced. There is a giant number of interactions and processes between the customer and the service provider. It takes a lot of different actions to deliver the final product to the customer and the evaluation of the smoothness of these actions needs to be taken into account when discussing the total perceived quality of a service provided. Customers are also interested in these processes of “how” the service and therefore the end result is delivered to him or her. If we use the same example as in the first dimension, a restaurant, the functional quality dimension consists of different actions and particles around the customer. In the example of a restaurant: “how” is the accessibility of the restaurant? “how” is the website of the restaurant? “how” is the appearance of the restaurant? “how” is the behaviour of the waiting staff? “how” do the waiters perform their tasks? “how” is all these different particles seen and evaluated by the customer? To put in short, the customer is very much influenced by the way “how” the service/s is delivered and how he experiences the simultaneous producing and consuming the service. (Grönroos, 2007)

These two main dimensions together create the overall perceived quality in the eyes of the customers. It is for sure that the technical outcome of a service is much more of an objective thing to evaluate and therefore easier to evaluate but it doesn’t mean that the more subjective one, the functional outcome, is less important to take into account. In a competitive situation the functional outcome is in a great role. As an example, a company nowadays finds it very hard to provide “technical” solutions that aren’t easy to copy or replace by the rivals. But if a company is providing great “functional” solutions it is a great competitive asset. Customers are more likely to use the services of a company that has great functionality and the same technical solutions as the rival that has the same technical solutions but poor functionality. In short, a company with functional operations gains great substantial value from it and is able to built competitive edge. (Grönroos, 2007)

But when evaluating these two main dimensions the customer is also aware of the service company itself, the resources, the operating methods and processes used and therefore the company “image” is of importance. The “image” of a company can affect the perceived quality in many ways. If the “image” of a company is good the customers are more likely to forgive mistakes more easily and therefore evaluate the quality to be good no matter that mistakes occurred. Then again if a company has a poor “image” the customers will most likely hold on to all mistakes made and evaluate the quality to be poor. The “image” of a company can be perceived as a kind of a filter that the customers have when they assess the different aspects of the company: the “how” the services are delivered and “what” the final end result is. These aspects: the two main dimensions and the image of a corporation together create a simple pattern for a customer to be able to evaluate the service quality. (Grönroos, 2007)

Now that the two main dimensions are covered it is time to introduce the two additional dimensions that can be seen in *Figure 2.* and as a part of the bigger picture of perceived service quality.

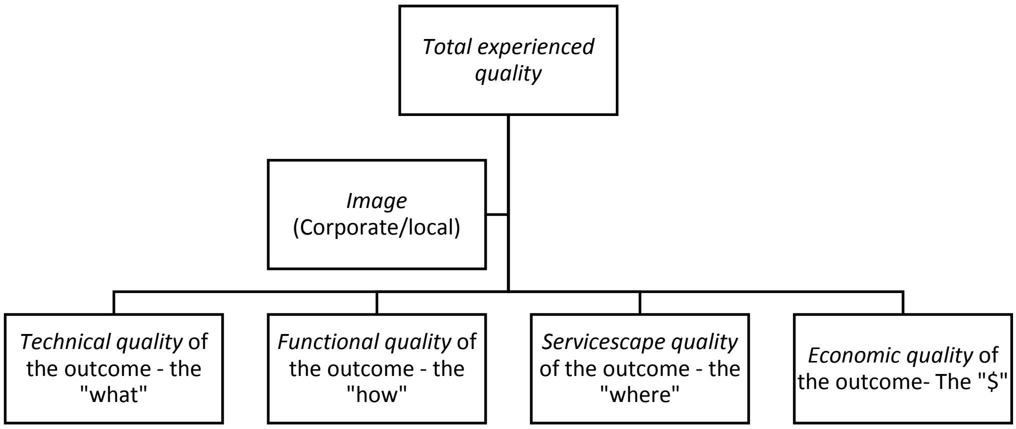


FIGURE 2. The main dimensions together with the additional dimensions of customer perceived quality (Grönroos, 2007, 74-75)

The additional dimensions shown in the above *Figure 2.* are the servicescape quality and the economic quality. To open up the two additional dimensions of customer perceived quality, the first one: serviscape quality can be summarized into one word, “where”. This servicescape quality is basically the physical environment of the service encounter. The servicescape dimension is somewhat including the same elements than the dimension of functional quality, “how” and is seen more of a part of the functional quality than a independent dimension. Using the same example as in the main dimension, a restaurant, the “where” dimension can be seen for example in the décor of the restaurant. If the décor is somewhat shabby and out-dated the experience and the expectations can be ruined and the overall service quality can suffer. Thenagain if the décor is fabulous and exceeds expectations it can have a positive effect on the total perceived quality. The distinction between the “how” and the “where” can be made in a way that the “how” includes so many different kinds of behavioural and objective points to evaluate that it makes the process more clear to use an additional dimension of “where” in the process. The second additional dimension of *economic quality* can be summarized into one single letter: “$”. It is always important to take into account the financial effects of an action. The service quality perception is no exception. The economic quality is not exactly the price of a service it is more of an perception of the possible economic consequence of the service. Since it is always important in business to take a look at the finances this additional dimension has earned it's place in the dimensions category. (Grönroos, 2007, 74-75)

3.3 The total perceived service quality

There is always two sides to the story when a certain product or a service is being assessed by the customers of a company. There is the above mentioned experienced quality that consists of different parts: "what" is being received, "how" it is received, "where" it is received and "the economic factors" of the certain product or service. But then on top of the experienced factors there is also the expectations. Whenever a person is evaluating a situation or a object, the first thing that affects the decision process and opinions towards the product or service is the expectations that the person has towars the assessed factor. After the expectations comes the reality which is the experienced quality: does the service or the object fulfill the expectations or disappoint the person by not meeting up with their expectations? In this scenario it is seen that not only the above mentioned experienced quality factors of "what", "how", "where" and "the economic factor" can provide a company with the whole truth of the customer perceived quality. *The Figure 3.* explains the dividence between these two concepts and how they together form the total perceived quality that takes into account all the expectations and perspects that the customer evaluating the product or service is going through during the evaluation process. (Grönroos, 2007, 75-79)

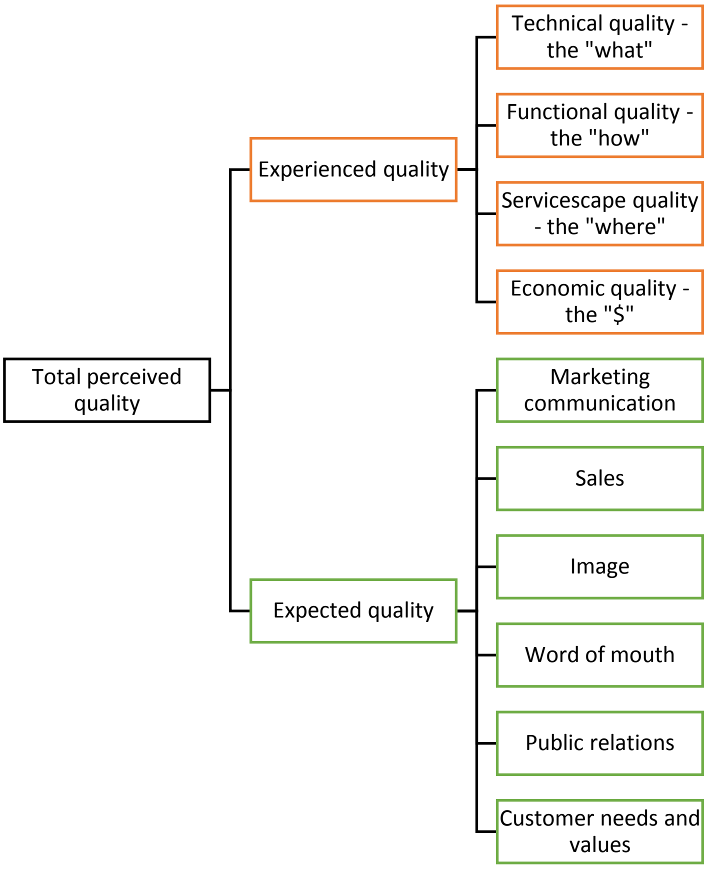


FIGURE 3. The total perceived quality

The total perceived quality consists of both the experienced quality and the expected quality. The expected quality experiences are influenced by some traditional marketing activities. These two categories, the experienced quality and expected quality work together in a way that the end result of a total quality is reached. If the expectations and the experience meet up the total quality is good and if the expectated quality is higher than the experienced quality the total quality is low. (Grönroos, 2007, 75-79)

The expected quality is a function that is influenced by a number of factors: marketing communications, sales, image, word of mouth, public relations, customer needs and values. Each of the factors has a value in the total perceived quality. Marketing communications stands for advertising, direct mail, sales promotion, websites, internet communication and sales campaigns which are all straight under the companys own control and can be altered in the direction needed. The rest of the factors are somewhat not straight under the company's own control. The sales, image, public relations and word of mouth are influenced by the customers and rivals of the company and are therefore not factors that can be altered into the desired direction if needed. Some external impacts can occur when dealing with these factors but they are basically factors that describe the company's previous performance and the prior experiences of customers. The last factor of customer needs and values are straight effective factors that have an influence on the expectations of the customer as they are. (Grönroos, 2007)

Since the total image of perceived quality consists of expectations as well as experiences it is important for a company to be consistent with all the factors that have an effect on the customer's expectations. For example, it is not a good thing for a company to run a advertising campaign that is promising the customers too much and then the reality of the services is something completely different. The expectations and the experience don't meet and it is bad reputation and low perceived quality for the company. (Länsisalmi, 2013, 20-23) It is more favourable for the company to undermine the promises in their marketing campaigns by a few levels so that the customer experiencing the services is gladly surprised by the greater value and service that he is getting compared to the lower expectations that the customer has because of the undermining advertising campaign. It is important for a company to be careful with promises in advertising and the most important thing is to not release new, great promises of improved services until they have had a good test run first to see do they actually work and give the customers the promised improvements. (Grönroos, 2007.)

To put the total perceived quality in a simple sentence, the total perceived quality is determined by the gap between the experienced quality and the expected quality. (Länsisalmi, 2013, 20-23) As a consequence of this it is important for a company to take on board people from different kind of work fields to work together in projects that have the aim of raising the total perceived quality of their company. (Grönroos, 2007)

3.4 Quality control in service business

Quality control is a key concept in any company that whishes to gain success. There are companies that manufacture objective products and then there are companies that manufacture something subjective: services. Because of the fact that services are in general series of activities that are simultaneously produced and consumed they are highly difficult to control in terms of quality. There is no ready-made scale or model for every particular service to aim for or to compare to when as in businesses that manufacture objective goods usually have a standard model or a quality scale to check when they are running their quality control programs. Every service is unique because of the different components mixed in it and the different people involved in it. It is difficult to carry out quality control when it comes to services – but it is not impossible.

Service quality control

There are a few fundamental things that a company undertaking a quality control process on their service quality levels needs to be aware of. The companies need to be creative in finding ways to analyse their product – which is in this case a service. In the service quality control the companies must focus on the experiences and the satisfactory level of the customers of the company because the customers are the factor that determines the end-quality of the product. The core understanding of what and how to control the quality of the services allows the company to develop relevant and effective quality control programs for themselves. (Grönroos, 2007.)

When a company is starting the quality control process it is crucial for the company to realise that it is common that only certain parts of a service are visible to the customers. These parts of a certain service which are visible and relatable for a customer are the ones that need the most quality control from the company itself. These parts of a service are the ones from which the customer forms the quality understanding of a company from. Customers analyse every part of these visible service actions and all the other hidden parts of the service are most of the time either unknown to the customer or just unseen by the customer – which makes it impossible for the customer to form any kind of quality understanding of them. A company might have an excellent machinery and staff working day and night making sure that all the customers are getting their services on time and exactly as promised and then the same company might have poor customer service or a poor distribution system. As a result of this the customer perceives the company's service quality to be not that great and might change provider – when in reality the company just lacks excellence in the parts that are visible for the customer. (Selin & Selin, 2005, 96-104.)

When the company is aware of the parts that are visible to the customers the company can focus their attention on improving the parts via quality control programs. The first and rather easy step in service quality control is focusing on the feedback of the customers. The company should try to find feedback trends – which area of the service collects the most of not that great feedback and to which direction the customers would like to see the service go in the future? These trends in feedbacks can identify the gaps that a company has in their service quality and give an opportunity for the company to step up their game in their service quality. (Hearst Newspapers, 2017. http://smallbusiness.chron.com/quality-control-programs-service-businesses-72730.html)

Another service quality control program can be secret customers. The company can undertake a process of using secret customers as a tool in quality control. Secret customers give more adequate data of the experienced quality and more detailed information on what parts need improvement and what parts are already reaching the standards of the companys quality control. The secret customers have a more clear understanding of what to take into account when consuming the services of the company and they can give more detailed data on what exactly need improving. (Hearst Newspapers, 2017. http://smallbusiness.chron.com/quality-control-programs-service-businesses-72730.html)

Some forms of service providing are very much linked to time and timelines. The experienced quality in the eyes of the customers can be tightly linked to the timeline given for the service to be conducted. In these cases the company can use a timeline program to control the quality of their services. The company can use programs that measure the time from the purchasing of the service to the delivering and consuming of the service. This time based program in quality control can only be used in service companies which produce services that are very much linked to time lines; for example a maintenance company where the customer expect the service to be prompt because the nature of the service is of the urgent nature. (Hearst Newspapers, 2017. http://smallbusiness.chron.com/quality-control-programs-service-businesses-72730.html)

The last but definitely not the least quality control factor in service businesses is the employees. It is crucial for a service company to realise that the quality control programs for the employees plays a huge part in the overall service quality of the company. When undertaking a process of quality control the company should establish quality programs for employees in the means of educating the staff regularly, updating the service skills of the employees and making sure that the employees feel satisfied with their jobs – because a unhappy customer service employee is a sure way to gain unpositive feedback from the customers and through that have a lower service quality rating. (Selin & Selin, 2005, 96-104.)

4 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

As it has been issued many times in the previous chapters, service quality is a factor formed by the customers' expectations as well as the experiences. Another factor falling almost into the same box is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction and service quality are both customer perceptions and more or less used in the same references. The meaning of this chapter is to give a clear understanding on what customer satisfaction is and how it is linked to service quality.

4.1 Customer satisfaction – what is it?

The purpose of these following chapters is to clarify the concept of customer satisfaction: what it is, what determines it and what are the outcomes of it?

What is customer satisfaction then? If we put the term under a technical inspection the end result explanation could be that *satisfaction* is the response given by a customer about the fulfillment level of his after using a product or a service of a providing company. *Satisfaction* is a response and it is also a judgement given by the customer with the result of positive user-experience. If the user-experience, judgement or fulfillment level of the customer would be negative instead of positive the term used would be *dissatisfaction.* So, to put it in a more understandable sentence, *customer satisfaction* is an evaluation, done by the customer, about a certain product/service when the target of evaluation is how well does the product/service meet the needs, wants and expectations of the customer. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89.)

When the term of *satisfaction* is been put into other words and studied it is important to recognize that there are a few other feelings and emotions that customers easily mix together with the feeling of satisfaction. This mixing of other types of feelings is more or less dependent on the context of the service. Examples of these other feelings that can be seen as forms of *satisfaction* or at least comparable to the feeling of *satisfaction* are: *contentment*: which is a more of a passive or unnoticeable reaction towards a service/product which is usually something really ordinary and because of that reason ignored which results to the feeling of being content about it because it doesn't raise any emotions or desires. *Pleasure:* when the product/service provides the customer with good feelings and happiness. *Delight:* the product/service really suprises the customer in a big, positive way. *Relief:* when the customer notices that something that used to bother the customer about the product/service has been removed. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

When these other emotions and concepts are taken into account, the explanation and understanding of the concept of *satisfaction* becomes a bit tricky, again. When acknowledged that the concept is very tricky we can add a little something to take into account when trying to figure out *satisfaction.* (Schmitt, 2003, 10-13.) It is common for companies that produce products and/or services to measure customer satisfaction in a certain time as if customer satisfaction was static. But it isn't. Customer satisfaction is an evolving and moving concept that is influenced by the time and the place, the surroundings and the expectations of customers. It is a fact that what satisfies the customers today – may not satisfy the customers tomorrow. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 86-88

4.2 Customer satisfaction – what determines it?

What determines the difficult concept of *customer satisfaction* then? The end-users of products and services, the customers, tend to be influenced by some factors more than others in the process of assessing the product/service at hand. These factors that influence the assessment process are the ones that actually determine the outcome of the assessment. These factors, or at least some of them, are:

Product/service features

The whole evaluation process of a product or a service is greatly influenced by the feature evaluation of the assessed product/service. The customer is expecting the features to be in a certain level and if they aren't it causes a feeling of disappointment and if the features exceed the expectations of the customer it causes a feeling of delight and joy. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89)

Consumer emotions

The feelings and the general mood of the customer has a great effect on the end-result of the satisfactory level of the customer in using a product/service. If the customer is feeling happy and for example enjoying a vacation with the family it is very likely that the products and services assessed in that state of mind are more positive than they would be if the person would assessing them from the every-day life that he is living. (Schmitt, 2003, 10-14.) Little problems and errors in the usage or consumption process don’t feel so big and terrifying when the customer is already having the time of his life because of the great feeling that he has about being on a vacation and having no stress or obligations of any kind. In the opposite scenario: if the customer is cranky and having the worst day in memory with long working hours and a load of stress the assessment of a product or a service can turn ugly. Small issues or flaws can turn into deal breakers in the customers head and the end-result can be bad in terms of satisfactory level – no matter the bad feeling was not triggered by the product or service itself originally. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89.)

The circumstances of either failure or success

When a customer is assessing the product or service he takes into account the circumstances or attributes that lead to the certain satisfactory level. Using the example that has been used before, a restaurant: the customer assessed the whole experience and after coming into the conclusion he takes into account the circumstances. If for example the food was a little bit of a disappointment the customer considers was it just a personal liking? Was it that the kitchen is so busy that the quality of the food suffers because of that? Was it that some ingredients in the dish were not according to the personal liking of the customer? People have the tendency to look at the broader picture especially when they are giving a bad review on something that they thought they’re going to enjoy. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89)

The feeling of equity and fairness

In almost all cases of assessment a person can’t help to compare his experiences to others. A customer is without a doubt thinking to himself whether he has been treated as kind and generously as the other person who is giving a excellent review on a product/service that didn't feel that great to the customer making the assessment at the time of comparement. (Schmitt, 2003, 209-212.) If we use the same example again, a restaurant: a customer is feeling that he has not been served with great hospitality or friendliness and he has expected great service because he has read excellent reviews of the restaurant's hospitality. He starts to think that is he being served fairly? Does the waiting staff treat him with the same care and kindness as they did for the other customer who gave excellent reviews? Are the customers equal to the employees of the restaurant or do they favour some customers over others? The fair game player in customers come up every time customers evaluate their state of satisfaction towards a product or a service. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89.)

"The other customers" – e.g. family, co-workers, friends, neighbors
The assessment process of a product/service is easily influenced by the opinions and feelings of the people close to the person doing the assessment. People are social and they tend to variate towards the mutual opinion rather than sticking to their own, personal likings. If a family has had a dinner in a restaurant and the person assessing the satisfactory level is the only one who enjoyed the food and the customer service he automatically starts to think that maybe he didn't see the whole truth and shifts the opinions and feeling that he has towards the more negative ones that the other people close to him had or vice versa. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89)

When taking into account all the different particles and factors, from which only a small amount is mentioned here and which have an effect on *customer satisfaction* it is relatively safe to say that the concept is very complex and not that easy to explain or understand. (Schmitt, 2003, 209-212.) Companies trying to figure out the satisfactory level of their customers need to put their minds to the concept and understand all the different elements that interfere with the assessment process that the customers go through when they are forming their satisfactory levels towards the company. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 87-89.)

4.3 Customer satisfaction – what are the outcomes?

The previous chapters have talked about the concept of customer satisfaction and the factors that determine the concept, but what are the affects of it for the company in technical terms? Why a company should take into account the general satisfactory level of customers and be interested in the opinions of their end-users?

In general it is not enough for a company to only control economic effiency, pricing tactics and rival situations – companies need to turn their heads more into the direction of their customers. And companies have done it more and more over the past decades. Customer satisfaction has been researched more and studies that show the great impact of customer satisfaction have been conducted successfully to show that customer satisfactory levels really do matter. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 89-92)

Through these studies conducted it is greatly more popular for companies to think that customer satisfaction is as important of an indicator of quality and economic value as for example corporate earnings and stock value. The Univerity of Michigan has conducted a study that shows a clear correlation between ACSI (the American Customer Satisfaction Index) average in a year and S&P 500 (A list of 500 companies in the U.S that are great in market value) earnings in the year that follows. This study shows a strong correlation between customer satisfaction and the all important earning outcomes for a company. The study shows that the more satisfied the customers, the more growth can be seen in the market value of a company in the months to follow. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 89-92)

Another great discovery of the importance of customer satisfactory control in companies is the affect that it has on customer loyalty and through that the yearly profits. The strong link between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is real. The happier the customers are with the product/services of the company more likely they are to buy the product/service again. Studies show that the customers whom are the most satisfied (if a scale of 1-5 used, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied) are the ones to stay loyal to the company in the highest rate from all the customers. The small difference between the customers who are the most satisfied (scale 1-5, the satisfactory level 5) and not so satisfied (scale 1-5, the satisfactory level 4) seems harmless but is actually a big gap. The customers who are the most satisfied are unlikely to change a provider but the customers who are just a little less satisfied change provider much more easily. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 89-92)

The outcomes of customer satisfaction are great for any company and a company undertaking a process of annual profit research should definitely compare the results of customer satisfactory levels and the profit earnings. Companies need loyal, satisfied customers in order to keep their business profitable and develop their operations into the direction where the expectations of customers are fulfilled and through that great satisfactory levels maintained.

4.4 The relationship and dividence of customer satisfaction and service quality

It is common that in not-so-professional-environments the two concepts of service quality and customer satisfaction can be more or less seen as the same thing because of their close relationship. Both of these concepts are customer perceptions but it doesn't mean that they can be grouped as one. The difference between the two concepts is in their underlying outcomes and causes. It is non-debatable that the two concepts are much alike but satisfaction is professionally seen as a more broader concept whereas the concept of service quality focuses solely on the assessment and dimensions of services. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

But as we can't divide the two concepts from each other completely it is to be said that based on the view that satisfaction is a broader concept and that service quality focuses solely on assessment and dimensions of services, the two concepts come together in a way that perceived service quality, mentioned in the previous chapters, is actually a component of satisfaction – customer satisfaction to be more precise. *The Figure 4.* below demonstrates the relationship and ultimately, the dividence, between these two concepts in a concreate and simple way. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

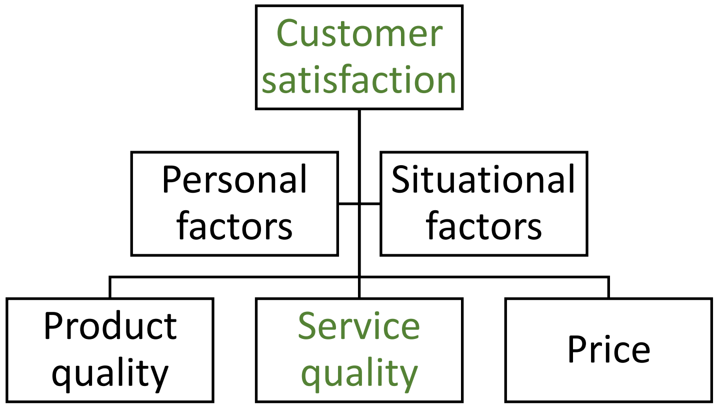


FIGURE 4. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 85)

The Figure 4. illustrates that it is actually service quality together with at least 4 other factors that create customer satisfaction. Service quality as a concept then can't be mistaken for the concept of customer satisfaction – no matter of their close bond with each other. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

To put it in short, as a sole concept service quality consists of expected service quality together with experienced service quality. If we take an example that we have used before: a restaurant, and look at the dividence of the two concepts through an example a clear difference can be seen. Service quality as a sole concept would be formed by the customer of the restaurant in the following way: the customer would have expectations towards the restaurant gathered for example from the marketing of the restaurant itself together with the word of mouth passing around about the restaurant. The customer would visit the restaurant and would then have either good or bad experiences from the restaurant. The customer would through these expected and experienced factors form a service quality opinion. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

Customer satisfaction as a sole concept forms itself from various factors including the concept of service quality. (Schmitt, 2003,213-215.) If the same example of a restaurant is used the forming of customer satisfaction includes *the product* quality: the food, *the service quality*: is the service in the restaurant as expected and is the overall experience good or not, *the price*: customers always take into account the costs of their service usage/product purchases, *the situational factors*: for example the location of the restaurant and is it easy to find and *personal factors*: for example the emotional state of the customer himself. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89.)

As seen in these clarifications through examples these two concepts of service quality and customer satisfaction are separate from each other and need to be assessed as individual concepts. But thenagain the two concepts are very much linked to each other and have a close relationship. The most critical thing for a company is to understand both the dividence and the relationship between the concepts and through that gain success. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003, 84-89)

5 THE COMPANY

The times are hectic for businesses in Finland at the moment. The race for the 1st place in sales is tough. Companies are struggling to find time for all the operations that are needed for the businesses to be able to keep on going. The solution seems too simple: hiring more staff, but the truth is very different. Times are hectic but they are also economically tight. Most businesses simply can't afford to hire more people on their payroll. There is a solution for the problem and that solution has grown even more popular in the past years. The solution is outsourcing the company operations that the company struggles to find time for. The businesses can focus on the operations that can't be outsourced and trust another company to do the operations that take too much of the company's own time. The outsourcing of operations can be conducted with a cost that is a minor percentage of the one that the company is dealing with when they're putting in extra labor hours to fill in the gaps on their own. In these situations where a company is struggling to find time for all of it's operations; outsourcing companies step in. The commissioning party of this Thesis is a company operating at this exact field of outsourcing business. The company works specifically in the business field of offering outsroucing services for the field of retailing groceries in Finland.

The commissioning party of this thesis is a company called Extraajat Oy. The author of this thesis completed her three (3) month professional training in the service of the company and through that experience was able to get a commission agreement for this thesis with the company. The company requested the author to perform a customer satisfaction research for the clients of the company and to figure out what areas of their business are the ones that need special attention and development according to the customers. In order to find out what business areas need development it is needed to take a look at the current state and situation of the company itself. The next chapters give a clear view on the company itself; when it was established, how the business is run as well as the services that the company provides.

5.1 About the company

Extraajat Oy is a relatively new, Finnish company. The company was established by its current CEO Jussi Siiriäinen in the year 2012. The company operates in the recruitment outsourcing business field and provides outsourcing opportunities and services for companies that work in the grocery retailing business in Finland. The company is small but it covers the whole country with its business area reaching cities from the southern capital Helsinki to the northern cities of Oulu and Rovaniemi. The company operates all over Finland employing 15 employees of its own and over 2,000 rental employees in various locations all across Finland. The company itself has its main offices in Helsinki, Tampere, Turku, Oulu and Jyväskylä. Since there are only 5 main offices and a whole country to cover the company has decided that the main office closest to a destination of a client handles the business with the client. This decision has made it possible for the company to not invest in more offices and employees of its own and to instead focus their talent and investements into making new clients and through that hiring new rental employees.

When taking a look at the company's finances things are looking quite good. The turnover for the year 2015 for the company was 7,4 million euros and the estimated turnover for the current year 2016 is 13 million euros. The company is steadily growing and actively hiring new employers and making new clients all around Finland. The future expectations of the company are positive and the sales are estimated to only grow in year 2017. The present clients of the company are mostly from the K-group (Kesko Oy) but in the recent year the company has made profitable deals with new clients from the S-group (SOK) as well. The company has grown its customer market and is enjoying the results. All in all the business model and strategy of the company seem to be working in the company's own favor.

5.2 Company services

The company Extraajat Oy offers a relatively small scale of services in general but the services that are provided are important for the clients of the company. Through Extraajat Oy the clients are able to get ready-for-work rental labour force for whenever it's needed. As mentioned before, Extraajat Oy specializes in grocery store retailing in Finland and the rental workers whom the company exploits to different clients are ready-for-work customer service and selling professionals or workers that have less experience but who have been trained for the work by Extraajat Oy. The company provides rental workers for many different kind of work shifts in the business area of grocery retailing. The most popular work shifts are cashier ones but there are other shifts as well, for instance: shifts where the rental worker takes care of a certain responsibility area such as dairy or meat products.

The company offers side services such as a so called "hotline" for clients to call the company and inform their need of assistance in labour force and there is always someone answering the phone. Another great service that the company has to offer is a modern and functional web service that empowers the clients to fill in their need of extra labour force on their own. The clients sign in into the website and fill in the date, hours needed and the label of the work shift, for example: a cashier needed for Monday 11th June for 8:00 AM – 4.00 PM. Then the client saves the data filled in and the work shift with it's information is sent to the mobile applications in the rental workers' phones – from where the workers are able to book work shifts for themselves from their preferred area.

5.3 Background information about the rental workers of the company

The company, Extraajat Oy, specializes in not only outsourcing labour services but also in recruitment processes. The company constantly recruits new employees all over the country to work as rental workers for the company. This chapter aims to give a understanding on the know-how and work motivation of the rental workers of the company.

The know-how and working skills of the rental workers of Extraajat Oy are based on their previous working experiences with other employers together with the practise and knowledge provided by Extraajat Oy themselves. The company recruits both un-experienced and experienced employees and the amount of practise and knowledge shared with the recruits depends greatly on their previous experience.

If the recruit has strong/noticeable experience from the industry from previous work tasks the practise provided by Extraajat Oy can be very minimal because it is not needed in order to put the recruit to work. The company makes sure that the employee has the talents required for the job but doesn’t really test it in any way before sending the recruit to the first work shifts.

If the recruit has only little or none experience from the line of business Extraajat Oy puts the recruit through the procedures that all in the same situation go through. The company has made deals with customer companies for providing the recruits with training and practise of the working skills. The customer companies train te recruits on the side of their own work tasks and try to teach the recruits all that is needed to know in order to perform the work tasks well. After only one work shift as a trainee or in some cases a few work shifts the recruits are considered to be ready for actual, payed work shifts in customer companies in need of rental work force.

The motivational levels of the recruits is assessed in the job interviews and the recruits are selected by assessing the previous experience and their situation in general. The motivation of a new recruit is quite impossible to know for sure until it is seen in the work shifts performed.

6 RESEARCH METHODS AND COLLECTION OF DATA

This chapter gives an insight to the research method used in the research conducted for he company Extraajat Oy. Which method was used, why this particular method was selected and how the actual data was collected and analysed.

6.1 Quantitative enquiry

In quantitative research surveys and enquiries are common methods when it comes to conducting researches. A questionnaire or an enquiry is a measuring object that suits the purpose of finding out opinions or getting feedback. The enquiry is either a paper form or electrical form which guides the person answering it with a series of questions that all have their unique purpose of finding out different kind of data. (Vehkalahti 2008, 11-12.) The person answering the questions has instructions on the form on how to answer the questions in theory. The decisions on how to answer are either guided by giving options to choose from or then giving the person answering the freedom to write down the answer in their own words. It is not enough to just draw up an enquiry. The questions and options given in the enquiry need to be carefully designed and picked. (Saunders & Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 482-483.)

A survey or an enquiry operates on its own and since it includes tailored questions and options it can be compared to an interview form. As in all methods of research there are factors that need to be considered in the formation process of the enquiry as well as before launching the enquiry to make sure it is usable and trustworthy. These factors are for instance: are the respondents representing the right population, can the research withdraw enough answers, are the questions measuring the right subjects and is the timing of the research right? If any doubts about the contents of the enquiry or other matters the enquiry can be tested by pre-launcing it and going through the results of the pre-launch: is the enquiry asking the right questions in order to get the right answers? (Saunders & Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 482-483.)

After the enquiry has been drawn up it is time to choose the people who are going to answer it. The population answering the enquiry need to be closely in touch with the subject of the enquiry. (Vehkalahti 2008, 11-12.) For example, if the enquiry handles matters of customer satisfaction the enquiry needs to be conducted amongst the customers of the particular company in stake. Other people can not give trusthworthy answers and data about the satisfaction levels of the customers of the company because they are not these customers themselves. Another thing to be considered when forming the population answering a enquiry is to make sure the population is big enough. One part of the trustworthiness of an enquiry is formed by the number of answers it has gained. If a enquiry reaches 10 answers the results do not represent a big group of people when on the other hand if the enquiry reaches 100 answers the results represent the opinions of a big crowd. (Saunders & Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 482-483.)

The analysis process of an enquiry starts with confirming that the results are untouched and received straight from the answering party themselves. After it is confirmed that the results truly represent the opinions of the population that has answered the enquiry it can be analysed in detail. All the questions need to be gone through with the same dedication and meaning. The results need to be examined with different approaches and the final analysis needs to represent a open view of the matter. (Saunders & Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 482-483.)

6.2 Collecting and analysing data

The chosen method of data collection was an quantitative enquiry conducted via the internet. The enquiry was sent for the customers of the company Extraajat Oy through the network of the company and it reached all the customers (approx. 500 customers). The method of an enquiry via internet was selected because the customers of the company are spread across the country and could be easily reached through the company networks. The chosen method of enquiry through internet also made it easier to reach a greater number in answers than a paper form enquiry would. By choosing an anonymous enquiry via internet it was ensured that the customers would feel more comfortable in filling the enquiry truthfully. The decision to conduct the research in Finnish was made for the same reason as the decision to conduct it via the internet. The enquiry was in Finnish to ensure as many answers as possible and minimizing the untrusthworthy of the answers because of a lack of knowledge in languages.

Before the enquiry was launched it was verified and tested by the CEO of the company. The CEO of the company tested the enquiry by performing as an answering customer and reported me back if any trouble understanding the questions or trouble in the technical aspects. On the basis of this test some changes were made and after that the enquiry was launched. The enquiry was launched 9th March 2017. The total amount of answers reached to 112 answers in the given participation period of two weeks (14 days). The amount of answers is equal to approx. 1/5 of the total number of customers of the company.

The enquiry was built to find out the satisfactory level of the customers and to find out the wants and needs of the customers in the field of improvement in the services. The enquiry was made to firstly found out the background information of the customer with questions such as: the area in which the customer operates in, the market chain in which the customer operates in, the size of the customer business, how many years the business has been a customer for the Extraajat Oy and so on. After finding out the basic information about the customer the enquiry focused on the satisfactory level of the customer by giving the customer statements and multiple choices from which to answer from. After the multiple choices were answered by the customer the enquiry had a few open questions for the customers to give their opinions and possible development ideas to ensure that they could express their true opinions on what services need improvement the most. The structure and reasonings behind the questions are presented in the following chapter translation/introduction of the enquiry and the original enquiry in Finnish can be found as the Appendix 1. on this document.

After the two weeks of response time the results were taken out from the company networks and presented to me unchanged. The results were in the form of an excel document and also visible for the author of the thesis in the company networks. The results of the enquiry were changed from amount of answers into percentages and on the basis of this percentages presented and analysed one question at a time.

6.3 Introduction of the enquiry

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize the research questions and explain the reasonings behind the questions chosen. The enquiry consisted of a total of 24 questions. These questions were divided into three main groups; background questions, statements and final questions concerning future plans.

The enquiry consisted of a total of seven background questions. The purpose of these questions was to gather information about the customers themselves who answered the enquiry. These questions were created in order to find out some basic information for example: the location of the answering party or the size of the store of the answering party.

The enquiry continued by questions which would try to find out what are the areas that are well received and what are the areas that need further improvement in the customers' eyes. On top of finding out what areas need improvement the questions aimed also to find out possible suggestions on how to improve them. These questions of the enquiry from question 8 to question 21 were placed in a chart and formed as statements. The customers were obliged to read the statement and select an option as close to their opinion as possible. The options given were:

- I completely agree
- I partly agree
- I partly disagree
- I completely disagree
- I don't know

After the statements were rated according to the options given, the following question challenged the answering party to choose two categories given in the most need of improvement in the eyes of the customers. These categories given were based on the categories used in the statements. After choosing the two areas in need of improvement the most in the opinion of the answering party they were given a chance to give suggestions on how to improve these areas in their own words to an open text box. This question was created in order to find out which areas the answering party will choose to be improved if he is asked to point them out. The question was a sort of a plan b in the situation where the results of the statements would be very much alike with each other and no clear results would be seen on the statements.

The end of the questionnaire had two questions that were created to find out what kind of thoughts about the future does the customers of the company have what comes to the collaboration between the two businesses (Extraajat Oy and the customer company). The purpose of the questions was to shead light on whether or not the company should invest in the improvements requested the most by the customers. The questions were formed as follows:

6.4 The quantitative method: analysis

To be able to analyse quantitative data correctly the researcher must be familiar with the facts and also with the data itself. It is easy to count on computer programs to calculate the answers but it is more important to understand the meaning behind the data given by the computer programs. There are several different computer programs designed to be used in analysing statistical data. To give examples these programs could be mentioned: Microsoft Office: Excel, SAS and SPSS. (Saunders & Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 151-155, 414-418)

The results were presented as an excel-document and it was the responsibility of the author of this thesis to make sure that the results were analysed and understood correctly. The first thing that was done in the analysis process was that the results were converted from number of answers into percentages of answers to make it easier to compare them with each other.

After the results were converted into percentages each question was gone through separately and it was made sure that no answering party had skipped a question which would affect the total amount of answers. After that the results were written on this document a question at a time waiting for the analysis process.

After writing all the results down and making sure that the percentages represent the true results 100% the analysis process was started. All the questions are analysed one at a time and possible reasonings behind the results are shared in the process. The enquiry had a lot of questions so the result analysing process was very long and time consuming. The analysis itself was relatively easy because the results mimitated each other strongly. There was no great differences in the dividence of results and therefore is was relatively simple to conduct no matter of the consument of time. All the enquiry results are gone through and analysed in the following chapter “research results”.

7 RESEARCH RESULTS

On this chapter the thesis dives into the part of the results of the enquiry conducted. The first part takes a look at the results of the first questions of the enquiry that are created to determine some background information about the answering party. The results are presented as dividence of answers, more precisely: in percentages of answers. The frequency distribution tables can be found as appendix 3. The next, following chapter thenagain gives an insight to the remaining questions which are created to figure out the opinions and customer satisfaction level of the answering party in the forms of statements, open questions and questions with answering options. The results of the questions are also given in percentages in this chapter.

7.1 Results of the background questions

This chapter goes through the enquiry results a question at a time from question 1 to question 7. These questions were created to gain background information about the customers who answered the enquiry conducted. This information about the results is important when considering the trustworthiness and content of the following questions that determine the state of customer satisfaction level of the company.

The question 1 was about location of the answering party and from the five given options the majority of answers were situated to the option of Southern-Finland with 65,2% of the total answers. The following option being Central-Finland with 14,3% and the third option, Western-Finland, with 13,4%. The last two options were: Northern-Finland with 4,4% and Eastern-Finland with 2,7% of the answers.

The question 2 was about in which market chain does the answering party belong to. The answers were divided as follows: 59,8% of the answerers belong to the S-market chain, 38,4% of the answerers belong to the K-market chain and the remaining 1,8% belong to some other market chain (a total of two answers: one answered belonging to a M-Market chain and one was a totally blank answer).

The question 3 was about the size of the store of the answering party. There was three options given to choose from. The answers divided in the following way: the medium sized stores has the majority of answers by 52,7% of total answers, followed by the small sized stores with 27,7% and last but not least the big stores with 19,6% of the total answers.

The question number 4 was figuring out the amount of years which the customers have been using the services of Extraajat Oy. The question itself had four options for the answering party to choose from. The answers were divided as follows: the option 1-2 years got the most answers with 34,0% of the total answers, followed by the option of

3-4 years by 25,0% of total answers. The last remaining options were: the over 4 years option with 24,0% of total answers and the “less than a year” option with the smallest percentage: 17,0%.

The next question, question 5, was about the primary rental work power provider. 80,4% of the answers were placed at the option of Extraajat Oy being the primary provider and 19,6% were placed at the option of Extraajat Oy not being the primary provider.

The question 6 figured out the most common reasons for the customers’ need of extra work power. There was five different options given for the answering party to choose from. The dividence of answers, from biggest percentage to smallest, was as follows:

- *A sick day of an employee of your own* with 60,0% of total answers
- *Need of extra work power* with 22,3% of total answers
- *A regular work shift* with 15,0% of total answers
- *A yearly vacation of an employee of your own* with 1,8% of total answers
- *Something else, what?* with 0,9% of total answers (1 answer given in this category, the answer was: “the primary rental work power provider fails to deliver”)

The question 7 was about the customers’ estimated need of rental work shifts (min 5 hours) in a month. The question had seven options to choose from. The options and the percentages of answers as follows:

- 0 (8,9%)
- 5 (35,7%)
- 10 (13,4%)
- 15 (5,4%)
- 20 (15,2%)
- 25 (4,5%)
- over 25 (16,9%)

7.2 Results of the statement questions

This chapter is formed to give an understanding on the results of the statements and to determine the true opinions and the customer satisfaction level of the customers of the company.

The statements from number 8 to 21 (edited to fit the table) together with the percentages of answers are displayed in the following Table 1. The option with the highest answering percent has been coloured red and options with zero answers have been marked with a line (-).

	I completely agree	I partly agree	I partly disagree	I completely disagree	I don't know
The services correspond with the expectations you had before becoming a customer	37,5%	51,8%	7,1%	0,9%	2,7%
The services correspond with the expectations that you have now, as a customer	49,1%	41,9%	6,3%	1,8%	0,9%
The web services are easy to use	55,4%	31,2%	5,4%	0,9%	7,1%
The web services are wide enough	55,4%	31,2%	4,5%	1,8%	7,1%
Extraajat Oy answers to your attempts of contact quickly	62,5%	33,9%	0,9%	1,8%	0,9%
The customer service is friendly	77,7%	18,7%	1,8%	0,9%	0,9%
The customer service is functional	70,5%	25,9%	1,8%	0,9%	0,9%
The actions of Extraajat Oy in problematic situations is proper	58,0%	31,3%	2,7%	-	8,0%
The pricing of services are competitive	26,8%	44,6%	8,9%	1,8%	17,9%
The delivery certainty is trustable	40,2%	46,4%	9,8%	1,8%	1,8%
It is easy to get workers for different tasks	29,5%	42,9%	16,0%	3,6%	8,0%
The workers have sufficient know-how of theory	18,8%	57,1%	19,6%	2,7%	1,8%
The workers have sufficient working skills	23,2%	50,9%	20,5	3,6%	1,8%

The rental workers coming from Extraajat Oy have a good level of motivation towards work tasks	31,2%	54,5%	12,5%	1,8%	-

TABLE 1. The dividence of answers to statements 8 to 21.

The questions from 8 to 21 were statements to which the answering party was asked to react by selecting an option closest to their opinion on the case. The results of the choosing of an option by the answering party can be seen in the Table 1. above in detail and the results in general are shared in the following paragraphs.

The first two statements try to figure out if the company Extraajat Oy is meeting up with the expectations that their customers have had before becoming customers of the company and expectations that their customers have now as customers. These both statements have gathered answers which are very much alike. Approx. 90% of the company customers think that the expectations of them both before customerhood and after have been met either completely or partly. The 10% remaining have answered that they partly disagree, disagree completely or do not know.

The two following statements are about the web services of the company. Specifically about the web services user friendliness and width. The dividence of answers is exactly the same in the options of completely agreeing and partly agreeing in both statements: 87% of the answers. The remaining 13% is divided between the options of partly disagreeing, completely disagreeing and not knowing with only minor differencies in distribution.

The next statement is figuring out the opinions of customers towards the reaction time of the company. 96% of the customers have answered that they completely agree or partly agree with the company answering to attempts of contact quickly. The remaining 4% either partly disagree, completely disagree or do not know with 2% of the answers leaning towards the completely disagreeing.

The following two statements are diving into the topic of customer service and it's friendliness and functionality. 96% of the customers have answered that they completely agree or partly agree with the statements of the company having a friendly and functional customer service. The remaining 4% of the answers lean towards either partly disagreeing, completely disagreeing or not knowing with the exactly same answer distribution rates.

The next statement is figuring out the opinions towards the actions of the company in problematic situations. 58% of the customers completely agree with the company acting proper when problematic situations occur. 31% of the customers partly agree with the company acting proper when problems occur. 3% of the customers partly agree with the statement and none (0%) of them completely disagree. The remaining 8% do not know how to answer this statement at all.

The statement following is figuring out the opinions of customers towards the pricing of services in the company Extraajat Oy and specifically their competitiveness. 71% of the customers have answered that they completely agree or partly agree with the services' pricing to be competitive. 9% of the customers have answered to partly disagreeing with the statement and 2% completely disagreeing. There is a relatively big number of customers who have answered this statement with the option of not knowing: 18%.

The next statement is concerning the delivery certainty of the company being trustable. 86% of the customers have answered that they completely or partly agree with the statement. 10% of the customers have answered that they partly disagree with the statement and the remaining 4% is divided into half for the options of completely disagreeing (2%) and not knowing (2%).

The following statement is figuring out the opinions of the customers about the easiness of getting rental workers for different working tasks. Over 70% of the answers lean towards the options of completely or partly agreeing with the statement. 16% of the answers are placed in the category of partly disagreeing with the statement and 4% of the answers is placed in the category of completely disagreeing. 8% of the answers given were placed into the category of not knowing.

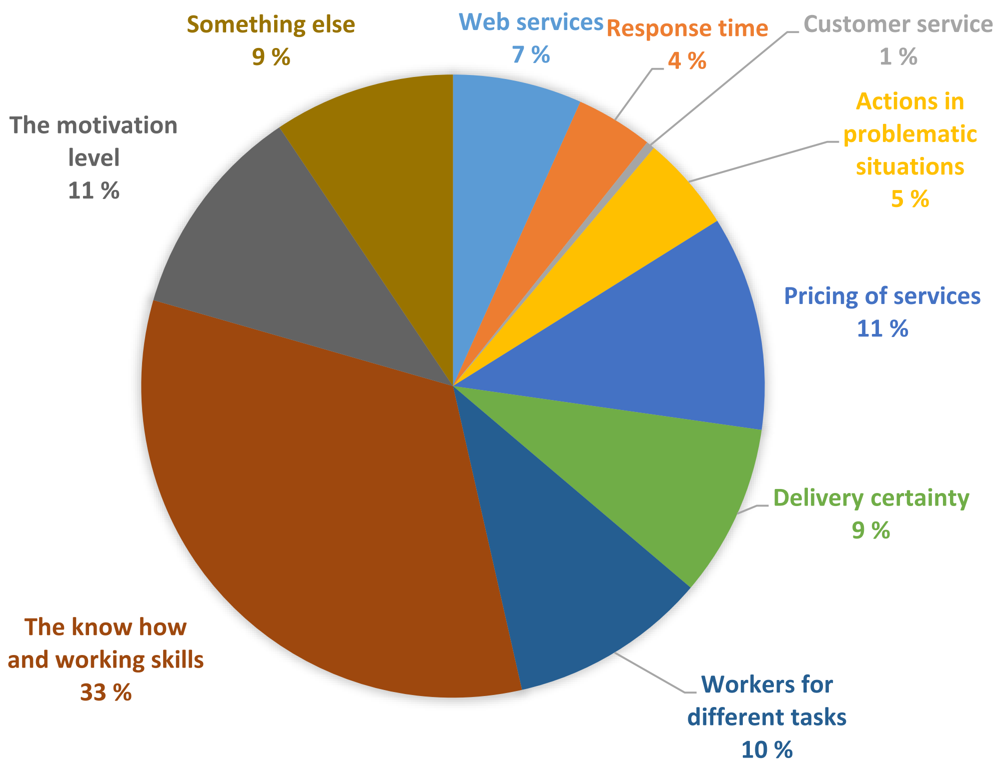
The following two statements concerned the level of know-how and working skills of the rental workers being sufficient. The distribution of answers in these statements were quite same. In both statements approx. 75% of the answers were given to the categories of either completely agreeing or partly agreeing with the statement. Spprox. 20% of the answers in both statements were given for the category of partly disagreeing and 3% of the answers to the category of completely disagreeing. In both statements the “I don’t know” category gathered 2% of the answers.

The last statement concerned the motivation of the rental workers being on a good level. Over 80% of the answers were placed to either completely agreeing or partly agreeing with the statement. The partly disagreeing category gained over 10% of the answers and the completely disagreeing category approx. 2%. In this statement, there were no answers placed on the not knowing category.

7.3 Results of the questions regarding improvements and co-operation

This chapter dives into the results of the questions regarding improvements and co-operation in the enquiry conducted. These questions searched to give depth to the opinions and satisfactory levels of the customers together with figuring out the future plans of the customers towards the co-operation with Extraajat Oy. The following paragraphs give the results of the questions.

The question number 22 asked the answering party to choose two (2) areas of service which need the most improvement in their opinion. The question had 10 options to choose from and the following Picture 1. shows how the answers were divided in percentages. The category of “something else” had the option of an open answer to a text box and is discussed in more detail separately later on.



PICTURE 1. The answering distribution of the question 22.

The category which gathered the most answers in question 22 was the one concerning the know-how and working skills of the rental workers with 33% of the total answers. The following categories are pricing of services and the motivation level of rental workers with a shared distribution of 11% of the answers in both categories. With just a percent of difference comes the next category which is getting rental workers for different work tasks easily: 10% of answers collected. Again with just a small difference of one percent comes two categories with 9% of total answers each: delivery certainty of the company Extraajat Oy and the category of something else than the ready categories given here. The following category of these two is the category of web services with 7% of total answers. 5% of total answers was gathered to the category of the actions of the company in problematic situations. The last remaining categories are response time with 4% of the total answers and customer service with 1% of the total answers.

The category of something else is a category that needs separate examination because the customers were given the chance to write their own answers to this category. Here are the concepts that came up in the open question box and together share the total percentage of 9% of the answers given in this question:

- Training of the rental workers
- Communication between Extraajat Oy and the customers

The open answer section gathered a total of 13 answers which represents the 9% of total answers given in the question. All the answers were either linked to the training of the rental workers or the communication between the company Extraajat Oy and the customer companies.

The question 23 and 24 handled the topic of the co-operation of the answering party and the company Extraajat Oy in the future as well as the same topic with the difference of the company Extraajat Oy making the changes suggested by the customers in the question 24. The questions had three topics to choose from and the following demonstrates the dividence of answers in percents (question 23 answers in black, question 24 answers in red):

- The co-operation increases (23,2%) (36,6%)
- The co-operation decreases (7,1%) (1,8%)
- The co-operations stays the same (69,7%) (61,6%)

In the case where the services would stay like they are and they would not be improved into any direction 23,2% of the customers think that the co-operation will increase but in the situation where the services would be further developed into the desired direction the percentage jumps into 36,6% which is a total increase of co-operation by 13,3%.

In the case where the services stay unchanged and as they are, 7,1% of the customers who answered this enquiry think that the co-operation between the companies would decrease. But when the customers are asked the same question with the change of improving the areas in need of it the most in the eyes of the customers the percentage drops to 1,8%. This is a drop of 5,3% in total. If the company would decide to improve the service areas in most need of attention in the eyes of the customers they would, in theory, increase their co-operation rates with the customers who first thought they will decrease the co-operation by 5,3%.

In the case where the services stay unchanged and as they are, 69,7% of the customers think that the co-operation stays the same. When the aspect of correcting the services in need of improvement is given the number changes into 61,6% which means that approx. 8% of the customers would change their co-operation with the company into some direction, according to these results, into the direction of more co-operation.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter shares the conclusions made from the results together with the suggestions made for the company on how they could possibly improve the services that according to the enquiry results need the improvement the most. The main purpose of this chapter is to answer the research questions of the thesis which are: how satisfied are the customer with the services of Extraajat Oy and how to improve the services found to be least favoured by the customers.

The development suggestions made later on in this chapter are based on the theoretical framework of this thesis together with the knowledge that the author has about the company and it’s services through her training period in the company. Service areas that are in need of improvement and are covered in the following chapters are: know-how and working skills of the rental workers and the motivation level of the rental workers. The third area in need of improvement in the eyes of the customers, which shared the same results as the motivation level of the rental workers, was the pricing of services and that is a topic which would reguire deep interviews with the head of the company Extraajat Oy together with the analysis of past and present pricing tactics – which are not covered in the making of this thesis and are therefore excluded from the chapter of giving development suggestions.

8.1 Conclusions

The main purpose of this chapter is to answer one of the research questions of this thesis: how satisfied are the customers with the services of the company Extraajat Oy? To figure out the answer to this question the results of the enquiry are converted into conclusions and they are shared in the following paragraphs.

Background questions

The background questions were formed to find out whether there are factors that need to be taken into consideration when analysing and concluding the results. There was no alerting data what came to the background questions results but some of the findings can be shared. Over a half of the total answers came from the Southern Finland region and the second and third biggest answer rates were from Central and Western Finland but which much smaller answer totals. This data indicates that most of the given answers and opinions are from customers who are situated in the Southern parts of Finland. The results of the enquiry might have beem different if the majority of answers would have come from another region. But the fact that most of the answers came from the Southern region can be explained with the simple fact that most of the company customers are situated there because the region has the overall biggest market opportunities in Finland in general. This also clarifies that the customer satisfaction rate of the company is formed mostly by the Southern region customers because they are the clear majority what comes to the customers of the company.

The following questions situated in the category of background questions figured out information such as the market chain of the customer company, the size of their store, how long have they been customers of the company, is Extraajat Oy their preferred provider of rental work force and what kind of work force needs they have. These questions were formed to see whether there would be a need to take into consideration the different kind of expectations the customer companies might have simply because of their different kind of needs appointed by either their market chain, size, length of customerhood, primality of provider or differentiative rental work force needs. No great differentations or other alarming facts were seen in the answers to these questions so the results and therefore the customer satisfaction levels are not seen to have been influenced by these factors.

Statement questions

The statement section was formed to figure out a general view of the customer satisfactory level what comes to experiencing the services. Most of the statements were formed in a way that they would find out whether or not the customers experience a service to be good or not. The statement section also aimed to figure out whether or not the company is fulfilling the expectations of the customers pre and post customerhood. These questions about experiences and expectations were formed since the theory behind the enquiry states that experiences together with expectations form the overall customer satisfaction.

To sum up all the results of the questions figuring out the customer experiences about the services it could be stated that in general the customers are satisfied with the services that the company Extraajat Oy is providing but when they are asked to point out the few areas that are in need of improvement they point them out with a clear majority. There is no great differences in the answering categories and it seems that the customers are satisfied with pretty much all the given categories. Clear majority of the answers given are placed in the categories of completely agreeing and partly agreeing which indicates the customer satisfaction to be on a good level what comes to the different services provided by the company.

The first two questions of the statement section thenagain challenged the answering party to take a look at the expectations he had towards the company before becoming a customer and after becoming a customer. According to the results the company is fulfilling the customer expectations completely or partly according to over 90% of the customers who answered the enquiry. This is a good achievement from the company referring to the theoretical knowledge where it is stated that customer expectations pre and post customerhood are in great value in the overall picture of customer satisfaction.

Questions concerning improvements and co-operation

One of the biggest reasons behind the concluding of this thesis was to find out the areas that the customers are most dissatisfied with and the questions following the statement section, the questions concerning improvements and co-operation, verified the results that were only slightly seen in the statement section.

When the customers were asked to point out the few areas of services in need of improvement the most they did it with ease in terms of dividence of the answers. The know-how and working skills together with the motivation level of the rental workers gained the majority of answers. The pricing of the services together with the lack of communication between the company and its customers and lack of training of the rental workers came after with lower answer rates but still noticable. The opinion of the customers is almost cristal clear when it comes to pointing out the area in most need of attention and improvement: the rental workers. It is a good thing for the company because instead of trying to improve loads of different areas they can focus on improving the most obvious ones with greater effort and through that gain the respect and customer satisfaction of the company customers.

According to the results it also seems that the only benefit that the company would gain from the improvements is not customer satisfaction. If the company chooses to make improvements to these areas pointed out by the customers of the company it would increase the co-operation between the company itself and it's customers according to the enquiry results. It would be beneficial to both parties to take the wished action towards better service quality.

8.2 Suggestions for improving the know-how and working skills of the rental workers

Since it is came into knowledge that the customers are unpleased with the know-how and working skills of the rental workers of Extraajat Oy, some development suggestions needed to be formed. All employment contracts start with the recruitment process. The employees of Extraajat Oy are all professionals in recruitment processes and it is not stated that they make poor choices in their recruiting decisions but let's start there where the whole process begins.

Since the company recruits both un-experienced and experienced recruits the company should put more weight on the knowledge and experience that the recruits actually have. If the recruit proves with certificates that he or she has previous experience from the line of work it doesn't automatically mean that the working skills and know-how reach the expectations of the customers of Extraajat Oy. Unexperienced recruits thenagain need different kind of instructions and practise in order to perform in their work tasks as expected. From this we come to the suggestions.

Both the experienced and un-experienced recruits could go through a recruit training tailored for them. Since these two groups need very different kind of training the contents of the training should be different. Experienced recruits don’t necessary need from-ground-up knowledge about the field of work but the only way to ensure the actual working skills and know-how of the recruits is to put them into a trainee work shift.

The first work shift should always be a training shift where the know-how and working skills of the recruit is assessed no matter the previous experience. According to the results of the first trainee shift further actions should be considered. Is the recruit ready for actual work shifts or does he need more training despite the previous experience?

The un-experienced recruits need much more attention than the recuits with previous experience. The un-experienced can be considered unable to perform the work tasks on their own because they lack important knowledge. The un-experienced recruits could attend a some kind of an event where the basics of customer service and the work field is introduced. These events could be thrown for example once or twice a month in the main offices of the company and the new recruits would attend them in order to be granted permission to get actual work shifts in customer companies. If the company Extraajat Oy feels like it does not have enough resources to hold events for the recruits they could come up with some kind of an e-course that the recruits need to complete with high enough scores to secure themselves the permission to take real work shifts from the customer companies. Extraajat Oy should invest more in the knowledge levels of the recruits in order for the recruits to perform better in the work tasks given to them in the customer companies.

The actual training of the work tasks is given by the people working for the selected customer companies that have agreed to train the recruits of Extraajat Oy. The people performing the training are training the recruits alongside their own work tasks and because of that the training is affected by possible rush hours and other problematic situations for the people trying to train the recruits. Could a solution for the training problem be trainers of Extraajat Oy performing the training in the customer companies?

If Extraajat Oy would have trainers of their own who are familiar with the expectations that the company itself and the customer companies have for the rental workers they would make sure that the recruits learn the essential working skills and know-how. The trainers of Extraajat Oy would not be influenced by rush hours or other problematic situations because they would be present only for the usage of the recruits: guiding and teaching the recruits. These trainers could give crucial information about the recruits' development and skills to Extraajat Oy and could aid the decision of when to send the recruits to real work shifts in the customer companies. The customer companies would most likely agree to this because they wouldn't lose work efficiency of their own employees but gain a few extra workers in the form of trainee recruits who are guided by a person there specifically for that purpose. If the company feels that recruiting trainees of their own would be too time consuming and expensive could they consider making some of their most trusted and praised rental workers as trainees for them? The rental workers could get paid with an hourly wage as they are when they perform a work shift for the customer companies.

Could these suggestions be put to the test for example for a period of time to see whether they have strong affects on the know-how and working skills of the rental workers if the company is not ready to make the investments in solid decisions? Extraajat Oy could consider and try these methods or some of them and see if they work in reality or just sound good on paper. It is known that some rivals of Extraajat Oy use similar techniques in their operations but whether they have better results in customer satisfaction levels is not known.

Through these techniques or other techniques that the company Extraajat Oy comes up the company would be more aware of the realistic know-how and working skills of their rental workers and through that offer their customers better service. It would be a benefit for the company to know what their rental workers know and what they are capable of doing when they are trying to find workers for certain work shifts. There would be less situations where the customer company is disappointed in the level of know-how and working skills of the rental workers.

8.3 Suggestions for improving the motivation level of the rental workers

The motivation level of employees in general can appear to be very different than it is in reality. The motivation level also shifts from time to time. It is almost impossible to see the motivational level of a employee in the recruitment process because poor motivation is easily discuised and it is hard to tell the difference between fake motivation and real motivation. The level of motivation can only be determined in action.

The customers of Extraajat Oy have shown their dissatisfaction towards the motivation level of the rental workers of Extraajat Oy. How could the company improve it? Here is a few suggestions that might shed some light to the problem.

A number of companies have <u>a program of rewarding employees</u> who show good work motivation and working results. Could Extraajat Oy benefit from a rewarding program of their own? There are hundreds and hundreds of rental workers working for the company but the program could be more of an competition between the rental workers than a rewarding program for all. Could the rewarding program work in the main offices of the company separately? A program for Sourthern Finland and a program for Central Finland and so on. The actual rewards of the program don’t need to be huge and expensive to gain interest of the employees. The rewards could be as simple as for example movie tickets, lunch tickets, gym cards or gift cards. The rewarding system could be based on for example working hours (how many shifts performed, how many hours in total) or positive feedback gained from the customer companies. Whatever the company thinks will motivate the workers the most. A reward could be given for example to a employee of the month in each main office area, chosen by the rewarding system in use. Or if it is too much to reward the employees once a month, could it be once in two or three months?

Another suggestion would be to incorporate the company blog to the motivation of employees. Maybe the company could decicate <u>an article in their blog for the employee of the month</u>? The method of choosing the employee could be for example the above mentioned positive feedback gain or great numbers of workshifts performed? Other employees would be able to read about fellow co-workers and see that the company cares about the employees that work hard and perform well in their work tasks. The blog articles would be free for the company and would most likely lift the spirits of fellow emlpoyees and make them try harder in their own work tasks. If the company would like to enhance the effect of the blog articles maybe they could show in the article that the employee has been rewarded with something, maybe a gift card or a diploma of some sort.

Motivation is a tricky thing to keep up and Extraajat Oy had hundreds of employees so it is not easy to throw events or other motivational pick-me-ups. But something can be done in order to at least try to keep up the motivation levels of the employees.

8.4 Reliability of the study

When assessing a research a few concepts are seen as the most important ones in terms of reliability. These concepts are the objectiveness and the unity of the research itself together with the concepts of data collection; the methods used, the overall technique of the research and the analysis of the researcher himself. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 139-142)

The process of reliability assessment starts with assessing the objectiveness and unity of the research. What has been researched and why? The commitment of the researcher towards the research? What is the true purpose of the research? What are the expectations? All these factors have an straight effect on the validity of the research and the end results of the research, how reliable is the analysis and the overall end-results. The process continues with the assessment of the data collection; methods used and how were the answering party selected. Another topics related to the data collection are the duration of the research and the relationship between the researcher and the answering party. The actual research and the contents of it determine if the results are matching the questions asked and vice versa. The evaluation process ends with the assessment of the reporting, has the researcher the talent to combine and analyse the results in a way to come into reliable conclusions and results? (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 139-142)

The theoretical framework of this thesis was gathered from a set of selected books, articles and other internet sources to be sure that the theory behind all that has been analysed and stated is true and trustworthy. All of the results, analysis and conclusions are based on either the theory or the enquiry that was conducted.

The enquiry conducted was made in a way that it would gather as much answers as possible. The enquiry was conducted in Finnish to ensure that the answers given are true and not false for example because of a language barrier and poor understanding of the question asked. Anonymous answers were given in the enquiry to ensure that the customers answering the enquiry would feel free to state their true opinion about the topics discussed. The enquiry was launched via the company networks to make it more attractive in the eyes of the customers and make them feel more secure and comfortable to answer it. All of the questions in the enquiry were answered by all the customers who answered the enquiry so the end results were not affected by answers missing from categories and therefore the results were trustworthy.

There was a total of 112 answers and the answers were downloaded from the enquiry platform straight to Excel and therefore no mistakes in handling the results can't have occurred when they were moved from the enquiry itself to another platform. All the results and analysis that handles either amount of answers or percentages of answers are double checked and made sure to reach the full amount of answers to ensure trusthworthiness.

9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

I started my thesis process as early as in May 2016 after I finished my three month training program in the commissioning party of the thesis, Extraajat Oy. While I was committing the training I asked the CEO of the company if they would be interested in signing up for a thesis process. The CEO agreed to give me a commission to write a customer satisfaction –related thesis which was a suggestion that I made for the topic of the thesis. My interests towards customer satisfaction in companies and human resource management business in general guided me to the direction of the topic.

After I finished the training I started to work full-time in a grocery store as a sales person and tried my best to get the thesis process started alongside the work. I wasn't really successful in starting the thesis process alongside work in the first 4 months because of the rush at work which was created by the hectic months of the summer for the grocery store business. After the summer passed I started to write the plan for the thesis and it took me some time to complete it because of some unfortunate happenings in my personal life and a period of time when I was sick quite often with the flu. I managed to get the plan ready after some time and then started to work towards the goal of finalizing the thesis.

The road to finilizing the thesis has been very long and filled with difficulties both from working life and personal life but I gained support from my thesis counsellor and family and was able to get the work done just in time for the last submitting date of the year 2017 (22^{nd} May 2017). I tried to motivate myself along the way with different kind of ways. For example we booked a vacation to Italy with my family and I promised myself that I would complete the thesis before going to the vacation so that it would feel like a prize for completing the task. Well, as I should have known, trouble knocked on the door and I couldn't finish the thesis before the trip. I took the thesis project with me to Italy and it benefitted the process in a way that I wasn't feeling the stress of working life and was able to concentrate on the thesis process alongside relaxing on the vacation.

The thesis process was tricky and time consuming in my case but I definitely think that it is beneficial for the commissioning company Extraajat Oy as well as a learning experience for myself. The company gains important knowledge on the customer satisfaction level of their customers and get a full analysis and set of development suggestions from the point of view of a outsider that might see things differently than from the inside of the company. The company can either try the suggestions made in this thesis or mold them into a more suitable direction and through that try them out.

This topic and research is easily continued even deeper by the company. I would give the suggestion for the company to further develop the research made here and go deeper into the problems underlying in the customer satisfaction levels. All in all I would say that this process has been equally beneficial to both the commissioning party and the author of this thesis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ala-Mutka Jukka, Talvela Erkki 2014. Tee asiakassuhteista tuottavia. Helsinki: Talentum.

Arantola, Heli 2016. Customer Insight: uusi väline liiketoiminnan kehittämiseen. Helsinki: WSOYPro.

Berg, Bruce L., Lune Howard 2012. Qualitative research methods for the social sciences. Pearson Education Inc.

Coming home. 2013. The Economist Jan 19th 2013.

Grönroos, Christian 2007. Service Management and Marketing. England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Herd Instinct. 2013. The Economist Jan 19th 2013.

Here, there and everywhere. 2013. The Economist Jan 19th 2013.

Interview with the CEO of the company Extraajat OY

Ingram, David 2017. Quality control programs for service businesses. Hearst Newspapers: LLC 2017

Krishnaswami, O.R. & Satyaprasad, B.G. 2010. Business Research Methods. Himalaya Publishing House

Krym, Nick 2013. Outsource it!. Pragmatic Bookshelf.

Lehikoinen Riitta, Töyrylä Ilkka 2013. Ulkoistamisen käsikirja. Helsinki: Talentum.

Länsisalmi Hannakaisa 2013. Uudista liiketoimintaa. Helsinki: Sanoma Pro Oy.

Mooji de Marieke, Kortesmäki Terhi, Lammi Miia, Lautamäki Satu, Pekkala Janne, Sinkkonen Irmeli 2005. Kompassina asiakas: näkemyksiä ja kokemuksia käyttäjälähtöisyydestä. Helsinki: Teknologiateollisuus Ry.

Naumann Earl, Giel Kathleen 1995. Customer satisfaction measurement and management. Cincinnati, Ohio: Thomson Executive Press.

Schmitt, Bernd 2003. Customer experience management. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Saunders Mark, Lewis Philip, Thornhill Adrian 2009. Research methods for business students. Pearson education Limited.

Selin Erica, Selin Jarmo 2005. Kaikki on kiinni asiakkaasta: avaimia asiakasrajapintojen hallintaan. Helsinki: Tietosanoma Oy.

The benefits of outsourcing for small businesses 2008. The New York Times Jan 1st 2008.

Tuomi, Jouni, Sarajärvi Anneli 2011. Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi. Helsinki: Tammi.

Vehkalahti, Kimmo 2008. Kyselytutkimuksen mittarit ja menetelmät. Helsinki: Tammi.

Zeithaml Valarie, Bitner Mary Jo 2003. Services Marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

APPENDIX 1(1).

The enquiry conducted via the company networks

Tämä kysely toteutetaan osana Kaakkois-Suomen Ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijan opinnäytetyötä. Tämän kyselyn tarkoituksena on kartoittaa Extraajat Oy:n yritysasiakkaiden tämänhetkistä tyytyväisyyttä sekä kerätä mahdollisia kehitysideoita. Tähän kyselyyn vastaaminen tapahtuu täysin anonyymisti ja kyselyn tuloksia hyödynnetään ainoastaan nimenomaisessa opinnäytetyössä.

1. Millä alueella yrityksenne toimii?

   ( ) Etelä-Suomi
   ( ) Itä-Suomi
   ( ) Länsi-Suomi
   ( ) Keski-Suomi
   ( ) Pohjois-Suomi

2. Mihin liikeketjuun yrityksenne kuuluu?

3. Minkä kokoinen liikekeskuksenne on?

   ( ) Pieni (Esimerkiksi Sale, K-Market, muu vastaava)
   ( ) Keskikokoinen (Esimerkiksi S-Market, K-Supermarket, muu vastaava)
   ( ) Suuri (Esimerkiksi Prisma, K-Citymarket, muu vastaava)

4. Kuinka kauan yrityksenne on käyttänyt Extraajat Oy:n palveluja?

   ( ) Alle vuoden
   ( ) 1-2 vuotta
   ( ) 3-4 vuotta
   ( ) yli 4 vuotta

5. Onko Extraajat Oy vuokratyövoimanne ensisijainen toimittaja?

   ( ) Kyllä
   ( ) Ei

6. Mikä seuraavista vaihtoehdoista on yleisin syy Extraajat Oy:n palveluiden käyttämiselle yrityksessänne? (Valitse yksi)

   ( ) Arkipäiväisen työvuoron täyttö
   ( ) Lisätyövoiman tarve
   ( ) Oman työntekijän sairastapauksen täyttö
   ( ) Oman työntekijän loma-ajan vuoron täyttö

( ) Jokin muu, mikä? _____________________

7. Kuinka monta työvuoroa (min. 5 tuntia) keskimäärin tilaatte Extraajat Oy:lta kuukaudessa?

( ) 0
( ) 5
( ) 10
( ) 15
( ) 20
( ) 25
( ) yli 25

Seuraavaksi pyydämme Teitä ottamaan kantaa seuraaviin Extraajat Oy:ta koskeviin väittämiin

	Täysin samaa mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Täysin eri mieltä	En osaa sanoa
8. Extraajat Oy:n palvelut vastaavat ennen asiakkuuttasi muodostamiasi odotuksia					
9. Extraajat Oy:n palvelut vastaavat nykysiä asiakkaan odotuksiasi					
10. Extraajat Oy:n verkkopalvelut ovat helppokäyttöiset					
11. Extraajat Oy:n verkkopalvelut ovat riittävän laajat					
12. Extraajat Oy vastaa yhteydenottoon nopeasti					
13. Extraajat Oy:n asiakaspalvelu on ystävällistä					
14. Extraajat Oy:n asiakaspalvelu on toimivaa					
15. Extraajat Oy:n toiminta ongelmatilanteissa on asianmukaista					
16. Extraajat Oy:n palveluiden hinnoittelu on kilpailukykyistä					
17. Extraajat Oy:n toimitusvarmuus on luotettavalla tasolla					
18. Extaajat Oy:n kautta saa hyvin työntekijöitä erilaisiin työtehtäviin					
19. Extraajat Oy:n kautta saapuvien työntekijöiden tietotaito on riittävää					
20. Extraajat Oy:n kautta saapuvien työntekijöiden osaaminen on riittävää					
21. Extraajat Oy:n kautta saapuvien työntekijöiden työmotivaatio on hyvä					

22. Valitse kaksi (2) mielestäsi eniten parannusta tarvitsevaa osa-aluetta ja anna mahdolliset parannusehdotuksesi alla olevaan tekstitilaan

( ) Verkkopalvelut

( ) Reagointiaika

( ) Asiakaspalvelu

( ) Toiminta ongelmatilanteissa

( ) Palveluiden hinnoittelu

( ) Toimitusvarmuus

( ) Saatavuus

( ) Työvoiman tietotaito ja osaaminen

( ) Työvoiman työmotivaatio

( ) Jokin muu, mikä? ______________________________

23. Miten arvioisitte yrityksenne ja Extraajat Oy:n yhteistyön kehitystä tulevaisuudessa?

( ) Yhteistyö lisääntyy
( ) Yhteistyö vähentyy
( ) Yhteistyö pysyy muuttumattomana

24. Miten arvioisitte yrityksenne ja Extraajat Oy:n yhteistyön kehitystä tulevaisuudessa, mikäli osoittamiinne ongelmakohtiin tehtäisiin parannuksia?

( ) Yhteistyö lisääntyisi
( ) Yhteistyö vähentyisi
( ) Yhteistyö pysyisi muuttumattomana

Suuret kiitokset osallistumisestanne kyselyyn. Opinnäytetyö on valmistuttuaan vapaasti luettavissa osoitteessa theseus.fi.

Linda Temonen
Business Management – opiskelija
Kaakkois-Suomen Ammattikorkeakoulu

APPENDIX 2 (1).

The translation of the enquiry from Finnish into English

1. In which region does your company operate in? (Southern Finland, Eastern Finland, Western Finland, Central Finland, Northern Finland)
2. In which market chain does your company belong to?
3. Of which size is your store? (small, medium, large)
4. How long have you been a customer of Extraajat Oy? (Under a year, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, over 4 years)
5. Is Extraajat Oy the primary rental work power provider of yours? (Yes, no)
6. Which of the given alternatives is the most common for your need of extra work power? (A regular work shift, need of extra work power, a sick day of an employee of your own, a yearly vacation of an employee of your own, something else, what?)
7. Estimation of how many work shifts (minimum of 5 hours) do you need from Extraajat Oy in a month? (0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, over 25)

The questions (question 8 to question 21) formed as statements were:

8. The services of Extraajat Oy correspond with the expectations you had before becoming a customer of the company
9. The services of Extraajat Oy correspond with the expectations that you have now, as a customer of the company
10. The web services of Extraajat Oy are easy to use
11. The web services of Extraajat Oy are wide enough
12. Extraajat Oy answers to your attempts of contact quickly
13. The customer service of Extraajat Oy is friendly
14. The customer service of Extraajat Oy is functional
15. The actions of Extraajat Oy in problematic situations is proper
16. The pricing of services of Extraajat Oy are competitive
17. The delivery certainty of Extraajat Oy is trustable
18. It is easy to get rental workers for different work tasks from Extraajat Oy
19. The rental workers coming from Extraajat Oy have sufficient know-how of theory
20. The rental workers coming from Extraajat Oy have sufficient working skills

The translation of the enquiry from Finnish into English

21. The rental workers coming from Extraajat Oy have a good level of motivation towards work tasks

After choosing the suitable options to the above statements the customers were asked to pick two areas that need the *most* improvement in their opinion out of the following options:

22.

- web services
- response time
- customer service
- actions in problematic situations
- pricing of services
- delivery certainty
- scale of workers for different work tasks
- the know-how and working skills of rental workers
- the motivatin level of rental workers
- something else, what?

23. How would you consider the collaboration between your company and Extraajat Oy to evolve in the future? (The collaboration stays the same, the collaboration would decrease, the collaboration stays the same)
24. How would you consider the collaboration between your company and Extraajat Oy to evolve in the future if Extraajat Oy improved the areas in need of it in your opinion? (The collaboration stays the same, the collaboration would decrease, the collaboration stays the same)

APPENDIX 3 (1).

Frequency distribution

1. In which region does your company operate in?

Options	Frequency	%
Southern Finland	73	65,18
Eastern Finland	3	2,68
Western Finland	15	13,39
Central Finland	16	14,29
Northern Finland	5	4,46
Total	112	100

2. In which market chain does your company belong to?

Options	Frequency	%
S-Group	67	59,8
K-Group	43	38,4
Something else	2	1,8
Total	112	100

3. Of which size is your store?

Options	Frequency	%
Small	31	27,68
Medium	59	52,68
Large	22	19,64
Total	112	100

4. How long have you been a customer of Extraajat Oy?

Options	Frequency	%
Under a year	19	16,96
1-2 years	38	33,93

3-4 years	28	25,00
over 4 years	27	24,11
Total	112	100

5. Is Extraajat Oy the primary rental work power provider of yours?

Options	Frequency	%
Yes	90	80,36
No	22	19,64
Total	112	100

6. Which of the given alternatives is the most common for your need of extra work power?

Options	Frequency	%
A regular work shift	17	15,18
Need of extra work force	25	22,32
A sick day of an employee of your own	67	59,82
A yearly vacation of an employee of your own	2	1,79
Something else, what?	1	0,89
Total	112	100

7. Estimation of how many work shifts (minimum of 5 hours) do you need from Extraajat Oy in a month?

Options	Frequency	%
0	10	8,93
5	40	35,71
10	15	13,39
15	6	5,36

20	17	15,18
25	5	4,46
over 25	19	16,96
Total	112	100

The frequencies for the questions 8 to question 21 (formed as statements) are presented in the table below in the following way:

Statement	Options
Example statement	Frequency %

Statement	I completely agree	I partly agree	I partly disagree	I completely disagree	I don't know
8. The services correspond with the expectations you had before becoming a customer	42 37,5%	58 51,8%	8 7,1%	1 0,9%	3 2,7%
9. The services correspond with the expectations that you have now, as a customer	55 49,1%	47 41,9%	7 6,3%	2 1,8%	1 0,9%
10. The web services are easy to use	62 55,4%	35 31,2%	5 5,4%	2 0,9%	8 7,1%
11. The web services are wide enough	62 55,4%	35 31,2%	6 4,5%	1 1,8%	8 7,1%
12. Extraajat Oy answers to your attempts of contact quickly	70 62,5%	38 33,9%	1 0,9%	2 1,8%	1 0,9%
13. The customer service is friendly	87 77,7%	21 18,7%	2 1,8%	1 0,9%	1 0,9%
14. The customer service is functional	79 70,5%	29 25,9%	2 1,8%	1 0,9%	1 0,9%
15. The actions of Extraajat Oy in problematic situations is proper	65 58,0%	35 31,3%	3 2,7%	0 0	9 8,0%

16. The pricing of services are competitive	30 26,8%	50 44,6%	10 8,9%	2 1,8%	20 17,9%
17. The delivery certainty is trustable	45 40,2%	52 46,4%	11 9,8%	2 1,8%	2 1,8%
18. It is easy to get workers for different tasks	33 29,5%	48 42,9%	18 16,0%	4 3,6%	9 8,0%
19. The workers have sufficient know-how of theory	21 18,8%	64 57,1%	22 19,6%	3 2,7%	2 1,8%
20. The workers have sufficient working skills	26 23,2%	57 50,9%	23 20,5	4 3,6%	2 1,8%
21. The rental workers coming from Extraajat Oy have a good level of motivation towards work tasks	35 31,2%	61 54,5%	14 12,5%	2 1,8%	0 0

Frequency distribution

22. Two choices were made by the answering party, therefore the total frequency / % is double.

Option	Frequency	%
Web services	15	13,39
Response time	9	8,04
Customer service	1	0,89
Actions in problematic situations	11	9,82
Pricing of services	25	22,32
Delivery certainty	20	17,86
Scale of workers for different work tasks	23	20,54
The know-how and working skills of rental workers	74	66,07
The motivation level of rental workers	25	22,32
Something else, what?	21	18,75
Total	224	200

Frequency distribution

23. How would you consider the collaboration between your company and Extraajat Oy to evolve in the future?

Options	Frequency	%
The collaboration increases	26	23,21
The collaboration would decrease	8	7,14
The collaboration stays the same	78	69,64
Total	112	100

24. How would you consider the collaboration between your company and Extraajat Oy to evolve in the future if Extraajat Oy improved the areas in need of it in your opinion?

Options	Frequency	%
The collaboration increases	41	36,61
The collaboration would decrease	2	1,79
The collaboration stays the same	69	61,61
Total	112	100