MEASURING PERFORMANCE OF SALES SUPPORT TO ENHANCE THE ORDER-TO-DELIVERY PROCESS

Case: Company X

Abstract

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Abstract

The thesis discusses and examines the sales support performance of order-to-delivery process regarding selected distributors group at Company X. By measuring sales support performance, author intends to offer recommendations on, how sales support could be improved. Also, as a result order-to-delivery process can be enhanced to selected distributors. The thesis was carried out in close cooperation with the Company X as a part of their ongoing development project.

The study was conducted through the qualitative methods by applying deductive approach. Both primary and secondary sources were used in the research process. Theoretical part of the thesis covers the concepts of order-to-delivery process and sales process by using secondary data that was collected from reliable published and electronic sources. Apart from that, internally conducted interviews at Company X helped to build the literature structure of the thesis as well. Empirical and data analyzation parts of the thesis used primary data that was collected through the Webropol survey which was answered by the selected distributors.

Empirical findings of the thesis have analyzed the distributors requirements and sales support functions in the order-to-delivery process and has put effort to meet with theoretical findings. Therefore, the thesis has resulted recommendations to implement in sales support department to enhance the order-to-delivery process and made further suggestions for the Company X.

CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

The central purpose of this chapter is to direct the reader to gain knowledge on the research topic of the study. Chapter starts with explaining the research background and continues to thesis objectives, research questions and limitations. Theoretical framework defines the main theories that are connected in the study and following section illustrate the research methods and data collection process. The final section of the chapter, thesis structure provides the key steps that author took through the thesis to reach the conclusion.

1.1   Research Background

The ability to deliver right product, in right place, at right time, is a critical requirement for any company in modern world. Being in the business for a reasonable time and having fair amount of experience, companies know that it is one of the vital factors to deliver a product to their customer by covering all requirements if they want to succeed in the long run in the business. That is why companies are constantly seeking to find their exact customer needs on timely manner. (Capgemini 2018.)

Today most companies are facing the difficulty of meeting their customer's requirements, by not fully understanding the key expectations. To understand the customer, companies must engage with the customer adequately and must listen and react quickly to any concerns that customers have. By establishing a proper connection with customers, companies are able to identify the critical point of their businesses and able to recognize their customers' demands.

Depending on the company, whether it supplies service or product, there are number of processes involved both internally and externally in a company operation. These processes are the essential factors that drive companies to meet their targets. When it come to production sector companies, the processes can be divided into two parts: core processes and support processes. Core processes can be defined as the end-to-end or cross functional processes that directly deliver value to external or intermediaries of company. Core processes also known as the primary processes which represent the company's frontline activities and performance also help to achieve company goals and objectives. Support processes are enabling processes designed to assist the value-delivering core processes by providing the resources and infrastructure required by core processes. The main difference between support and core processes is that support processes add value to internal customers and do not directly deliver value to external customers, while core processes do. (Myers 2016.)

The case company in regard to this thesis has noticed that, they have a possibility to improve one of their support processes which is the sales support to help their upcoming development project. They believe the improvement of the sales support is directly going to impact on the core process of order-to-delivery at Company X. Order-to-delivery process is one of the vital processes in Company X therefore, it takes the responsibility of delivering product/s to the customer from very first place of ordering. It has a unique value to both company itself and to their customer. Hence, depending on how well the order-to-delivery process functions between Company X and customers, it determines the company's stability to create a value to its customers. However, currently Company X is discussing the challenge of how to improve their sales support regarding their distributors. As a result, they can enhance the order-to-delivery process. (Interviewee 1, 2018.)

This study helps Company X understand their critical points of sales support regarding their distributors in the process of order-to-delivery. By measuring the performance of sales support and identifying the critical points of it, sales support department at Company X is able to take the necessary actions to improve their support. Therefore, ultimately it helps to enhance the order-to-delivery process as well. This research is based on the survey questionnaire that author has sent to selected distributors in 2019.

1.2   Thesis Objectives, Research Questions and Limitations

The thesis goal is to provide the Company X a deeper understanding on how sales support process can be improved regarding their distributors in process of order-to-delivery. Therefore, thesis proceeds with concerning the facts of comparing to present operations and to seek the possible developments on how Company X could improve the sales support process in a manner that both parties – distributors and company gain benefit from it.

To carry out any research, researcher needs to recognize the key question of the research. Considering research question is the leading element in conducting a research towards. It clarifies and helps the reader to grip what is the main issue that researcher tries to figure out through the research. In this section, author has established three research questions as one main research question and two sub-questions. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012, 43.) In the end, main research question and sub/questions are inseparable from each other. The purpose of setting two sub-questions is that main research question cannot be answered all at once. Establishing sub-questions were necessary to manage the study and it also clarifies what the focus areas are that author should follow to find the answer to the main research question. They also define the major areas that connect to the research and allow one to answer the main question in a step by step manner.

(Scribbr 2018.) Below, author has stated the main research question and sub-questions for the thesis.

The main research question:

How to improve the order-to-delivery process by adding value to sales support?

The sub-questions:

What are the critical requirements of distributors in regard to sales support?

How sales support functions could be changed?

As per limitations, there are certain limitations used in this thesis. Most important factor of using limitations in a study is that it makes the study critical and close to reality. Therefore, it can be argued. (Price & Murnan 2004, 66-67.) As the first limitation, thesis only focuses on Company X, which means the results can be applied only to Company X. As per reason, author has processed all elements according to Company X conditions.

Apart from that, author has decided to whom the survey questionnaires will be sent. Therefore, with an agreement with the Company X, it was decided that survey will be sent to five selected distributors which operate globally. Company X believes that these distributors answers will impact on a great extent to find out the critical points of sales support.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework consists the key theories that are involved in a research. It helps the reader understand the main topics that are connected in the thesis as well as to lead the reader throughout the thesis by providing boundaries. (Abend 2008.)

In this thesis, chapter two and three concern with the main theories used in the research. Chapter two discusses the theories that are related to order-to-delivery process. Firstly, it starts with explaining what a process is and how a certain process functions in an organization. Then same chapter dives deeper to give insights to elements such as order-to-delivery between customer and organization, lead time and delivery reliability. Once those particular topics are clarified, the last part of the second chapter describes the process management. Chapter three, as the second theoretical chapter of the thesis, starts by introducing sales process then continues with its functions and finishes with elaborating critical points of sales support.

1.4   Research Methods and Data Collection

In this sub-chapter, author defines the research approach, methods and data collections mechanism that are involved in this research. By doing so, author's intention is to disclose the key tactics that are used to conduct this research to the reader.

The very first step of the research, the approach. There are two common approaches use in the research field: inductive and deductive. The main difference between these two approaches is that inductive approach is concerned with generating a new theory by gathering data while deductive approach aims at testing an existing theory by collecting data. Author has selected the deductive approach for this research. Therefore, research uses the theory/s to create the hypothesis and empirical analysis for testing the hypothesis. (Chantal 2013.)

Once the approach is selected, next stage is the research method. Before, we get into the idea of research methods, I would like to bring your attention to the question of what does research mean? It means - a systematic study of materials and sources. By adding the theoretical analysis methods to a certain research, it becomes a research method. (Anon 2017.) Research methods are used for gathering information and general aim of any research is to generate measurable and testable data, gradually adding to the accumulation of human knowledge (Shuttleworth 2018).

When it's come to research methods in general, there are two key methods that are used for proceeding a research. These are known as qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative research method focuses on statistical, mathematical or numerical data that are collected through various sources such surveys, polls, questionnaires and face to face interviews and the goal is to examine the relationship between variables. (DeFranzo 2011.)

In qualitative research method, data is based on the individual interviews, surveys, opinions, motivations of a focus group. The purpose of the qualitative research is to explore the meaning of people's experiences, cultures, or a case. (Anon 2018.)

The major difference between these two methods is that quantitative method data is based on numbers and statistics while qualitative method data is based on the text. If we take a step further and explore the data category more closely, quantitative method is focuses on hard, reliable data while qualitative method dives deeper into the problem and offers additional richness and strong outcome. As a conclusion, quantitative research is more quantifiable yet, less depth of information compared to qualitative research. (U.S. Department of Energy 2018.)

Data is one of the fundamental for carry out a research in any given area. Data assists the researcher in wider manner to conduct the research forward. It supplies the necessary components to build the research for great extent. Figure 1 shows the research method that author used to collect data.
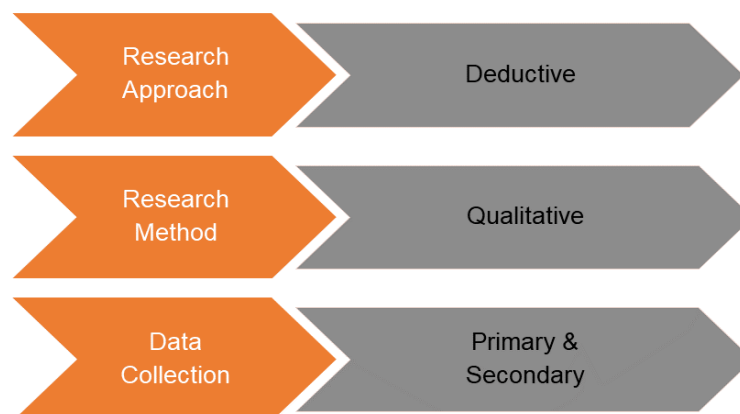
Figure 1 Research Methods and Data Collection

Author has decided to rely on qualitative method while adapting deductive approach for the research. This research includes both primary and secondary data gathered from various sources. Primary data were collected from the survey and internal interviews at Company X which are carried out by the author. Secondary data were collected from published and electronic sources as books, websites, articles and journals.

Primary data refers to the data collected by the author himself for the study (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 77). Therefore, primary data was the pinnacle for this research because, it provides the answers for research questions while secondary data used to build up the literature review of the research and to connect the theoretical and empirical parts in the research.

1.5   Thesis Structure

Underneath Figure 2 illustrates the structure of the thesis.

Figure 2 Thesis Structure

Thesis structure presented in Figure 2, guides the reader to realize the entire research process at once. It shows the certain steps th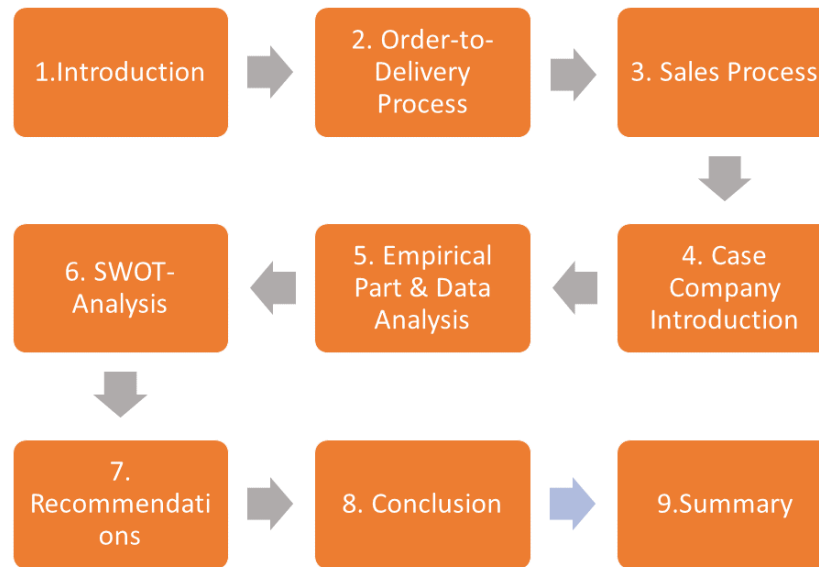at author has followed to reach out the findings. The thesis structure contains nine chapters in total. First chapter begins with an introduction and intention of this chapter is to explicate the importance of the thesis topic and present the main theories and research methods that are used in the study. Rest of the thesis is divided into two major sections, theoretical and empirical. Theoretical part consists of chapters two and three. Main concern of chapter two and three are to bring forwards the theoretical sensibility to the reader regarding the study and to show how particular theories connect to the research.

Therefore, chapter two aims at giving reasonable theories related to order-to-delivery process. Chapter three discussion begins with sales process and continues with sales support functions and ends with explaining the key issues of sales support regarding their customers in different timelines. Fourth chapter introduces the Company X and takes the responsibility of discussing the order-to-delivery process of the company, role of the sales support and distributors. Following chapter five plays the role of empirical part of the thesis. Therefore, it explains the data collection process - how data was collected and how data was analyzed along the process.

The last section of the thesis includes the chapter six, seven, eight and nine. Chapter six is where author presents SWOT-analysis based on the survey results while chapter seven presents the recommendations to the study. Once chapter eight delivers the conclusion of the thesis, final chapter – chapter nine finalizes the thesis by serving the summary.

2 ORDER-TO-DELIVERY PROCESS

This chapter covers the theoretical parts of the thesis that author has stated in the theoretical framework. The theories of this chapter provide introduction to main concepts within order-to-delivery process.

2.1 Process in an Organization

By the definition, process is a planned and repetitive sequence of steps and activities by which a clearly defined product, service or some other output is delivered (Savonen 2019). Processes are the rudiments to bringing great outcomes in organizations. Managing processes by using unique strategies, organizations have better opportunity to reach their targets.
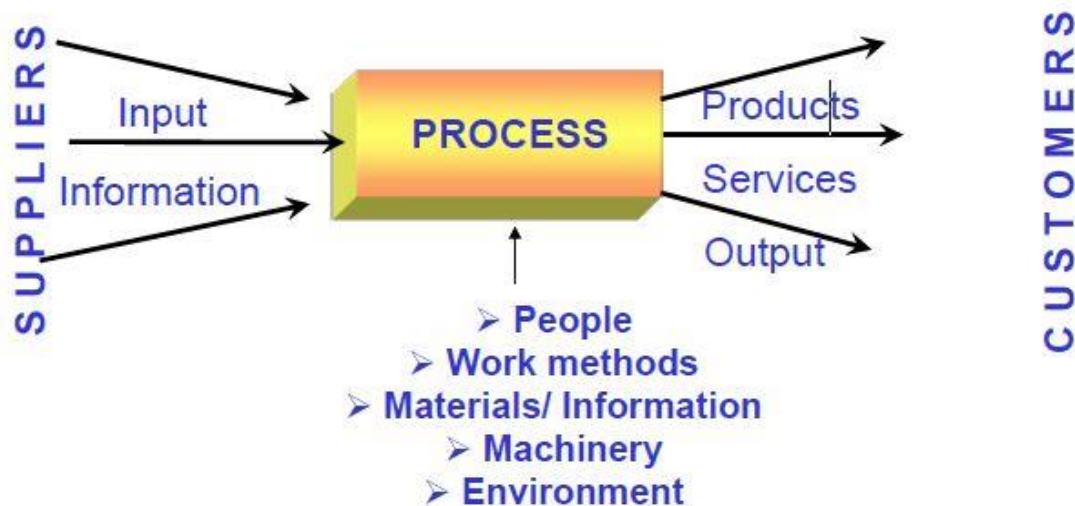
Figure 3 Organizational Process (Savonen 2019)

Figure 3 discloses the common process and its involvement with different counter parties in an organization. A process starts by giving input to it. Input can be defined as resources – information, raw materials and people depending on the organization. Next step is the process itself that tries to convert the input into output using various methods, information, machinery, materials, employees. Output also takes a different position in organizations depending on the process. In general, outputs of an organization can be defined as turnover, salaries, finished products or services. (Savonen 2019.)

Process can be measured by its stakeholder's subject to the output. Organizations are constantly measuring and assessing both process performance and output against their

target values. Ambition of doing so, they could recognize the lacking points and take proper steps to overcome the challenges. (Savonen 2019.)

2.2   Order-to-Delivery Process

Order-to-Delivery (ODP) is a common term used in supply chain management. The concept of ODP is relatively consistent within the production sector even if the process can be described in different levels of detail. ODP is a process that flows over multiple different functions within an organization. It can be considered one of the most critical processes within logistics. (Forslund, Jonsson & Mattsson 2008, 41-53.)
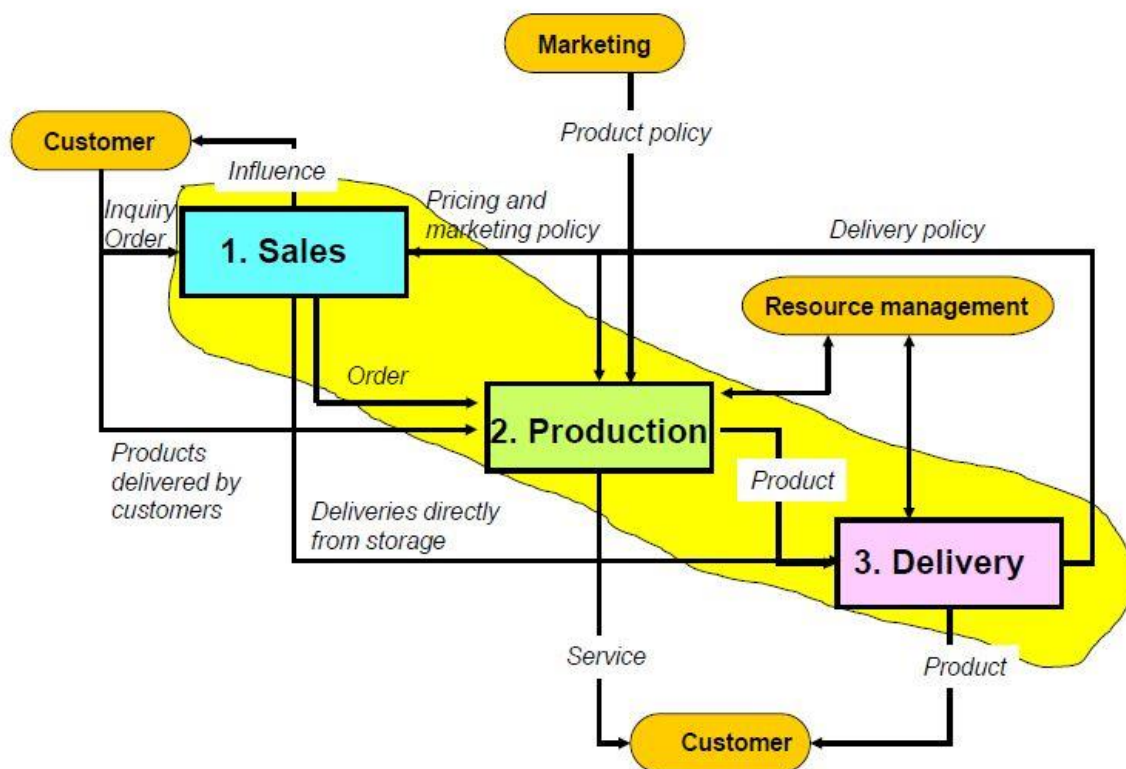
Figure 4 Order-to-Delivery Process in an Organization (Savonen 2019)

Above positioned Figure 4 explicates the order-to-delivery process with the involvement of various branches in an organization. Also, it consists the major processes and minor processes. Major or core processes in the organization can be defined as sales, production and delivery while minor or support processes defined as product policy, delivery policy, order etc.

Core processes are also known as the business processes in modern world. Hence, these are the processes that get the most attention in the organizations. For example, product

development, customer relationship and order-to-delivery can be put into the category of core processes while strategic planning, financial planning, annual planning or quality control defined as support processes. In an organization, support processes assist the core processes in a way that core processes are carried out more efficiently and effectively. Therefore, one is able to achieve an organization's targets. If we consider an organization which has various levels of management, executives are concentrating on the core processes while managers and frontline employees are keening on the support processes. At the end of the day, both core and support processes need each other's help to maintain and run the organization. (Kuusisto 2019.)

2.2.1 Order-to-Delivery between Customer and Organization

According to Jonsson, Mattson & Forslund (2008, 41-53), order-to-delivery process between a customer and organization can be described as the following steps.
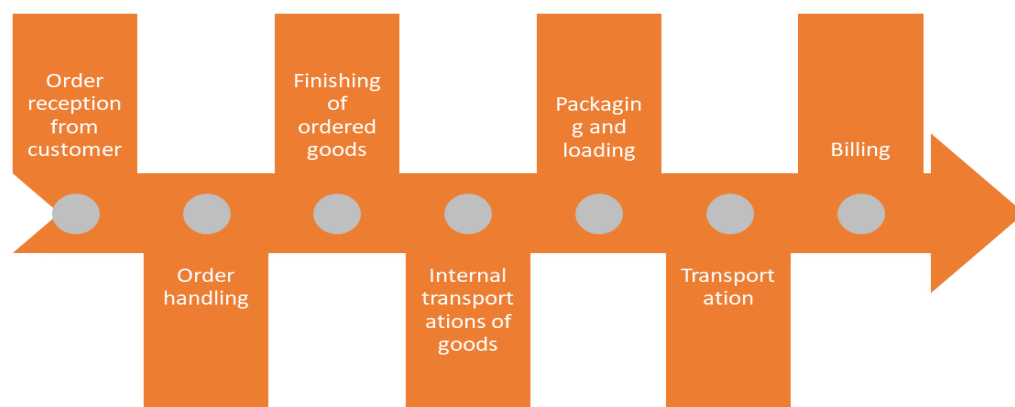
Figure 5 Order-to-Delivery Process Key Steps (Jonsson, Mattsson & Forslund 2008)

Based on Figure 5, the process starts when a customer places an order and ends with the customer receiving a finished goods or services. In between, there are certain stages that need to be fulfilled. The starting processes can be tracked back to the recognition of a need at the customer. This recognition will lead to an order placement with the supplier, i.e. the manufacturer. After the order is placed, the supplier performs the necessary actions to fulfil the order and provide the finished goods. Here the transportation process takes place, when the finished goods is picked up at the supplier until it is delivered at the customer or other delivery address. The last set of sub-processes consists of making the goods available to use after delivery to customer. (Sundström & Tollmar 2018.)

2.2.2 Lead Time

Lead time by the definition is the amount of time that passes between the commencement and the end of a process (Kenton 2018). Lead time is known as one of the essential topics in process of order-to-delivery. Therefore, it determines the actual delivery time. As mentioned in the definition, lead time refers to the time amount after a customer places an order to receive that customer product. (Harrison & Hoek 2014.) The process follows the steps as:

- Order entry time

- Order Planning time

- Order sourcing time

- Order assembly time

- Delivery time

Lead time is not only important to satisfy the customer. It is a competitive advantage for businesses. If they have a short lead time yet depend on the product, lead time also can be changed. Here are few key benefits that business gets from having a short lead time in their order-delivery process (Gunasekaran, Patel & Tirtiroglu 2001, 71-87).

- Reduced tided up capital

- Reduces the response time in supply chain

- Create reliability and consistency in the process

- Ability to earn trust of the customer

2.2.3 Delivery Reliability

In the process of order-to-delivery, the delivery reliability/ delivery accuracy can be defined as the ability to deliver the product to the customer on right time and right place. Delivery reliability is an element that has an immense effect on order-delivery process as well. It can be used as one the key measuring parameters to evaluate to order-to-delivery process. Delivery reliability can be scaled such delivery to request date or delivery to commit date depending on companies and their policies. (Kenton 2018.)

When it comes to delivery reliability, it can be divided to more specific sections as:

- Delivery at right time

- Delivery at right place

- Deliver the right content

- Deliver the right documentation

If a production company is able to fulfill above mentioned factors in their order-to-delivery process, the company is able to gain large benefits down the line. To achieve such advantages, location of the production, delivery channels, scheduling are important factors to consider. (Stewart 1995, 38-44.)

2.3   Process Management

Process management means, planning and administering the activities – design, control, and improvement in order to able to achieve a high level of outcome. Generally, a certain process, either its core or support, managed by a responsible person or team where this person/team is mainly responsible for the outcome of that certain process. As a collection of these types of persons and teams, they set up objectives and define units of measurements and target values for the process to achieve the objectives. (McClay 2017.)

Applying process management to organizations has huge impact on running operations optimally. It has been proven over the years and that is why organizations more and more focus on finding new tactics to manage their processes. To manage any kind of process is not an easy task. Organizations use various features to manage their processes such as, ERP systems, SSO, role-based access control, report and analytical tools are good example. (KISSFLOW 2019.)

Managing a process is a risk for any business. Therefore, process management should be conducted in a way at least the business able to recognize the risk and minimize it at its first place. To minimize the risk and to achieve greater outcome, process management also has multiple steps to it. The sequence follows as:

- Designing – plan the process to match with reality

- Modeling – create the process so it can be operated in different scenarios

- Implementing – standardize the process automation

- Monitoring – follow up the process in a way that, one able to achieve the outcome without faults

- Optimizing – notify the factors that need to be improve at end of the process and take actions

As the last section per this chapter, it is important to point out the value of the process management. Throughout this sub-chapter, we discussed what process management and the importance of applying it for a business which is the goal of process management. It allows the organization to optimize end-to-end business process/s thereby, not focus or improve individual tasks but to focus and impact on outcome of the organization. Well managed processes have ability to reduce waste, cut down errors, save time and increase productivity. Process management is not only financial oriented factor. It oversees the total process and proceeds thereby reaching the targets of the organization at minimum costs. (Rouse 2018.)

Second chapter was the first theoretical part of this thesis and it is the chapter where author has put effort to describe the order-to-delivery process, step of order-to-delivery process, lead time, delivery reliability and lastly process management. The key ambition of this chapter was to provide knowledge to the reader about order-to-delivery process and other essential parts which are connected to it.

3 PREAMBLE TO SALES

As the second theoretical part of the thesis, chapter three provides the key concepts within sales process. Sales is a term that is often used in business environment. A simple definition is – the activity that involve, exchange commodity or service for money. (BusinessDictionary 2019.)

3.1 Sales Process

In the last few decades sales systems around the world have undergone revolutionary changes. Yet, the basics of sales haven't changed much. What was really happened down the line was that few major elements such as – technology, communication and transportation have developed in a way that it aided the sales process to overcome through barriers on a significant manner. (Maksheeva 2016.) With the combination of past and current elements, sales process follows steps as listed below.

1. Prospecting

2. Pre-approach

3. Approach

4. Presentation

5. Overcoming objections

6. Closing

7. Follow-up

This sequence is well known and used in many different areas in businesses as a reference. Starting as the first step – prospecting is essential to whole process of sales. In other words, seeking potential customers. The risk of losing customers is typical factor in sales. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

Once the prospecting is fulfilled by the sales party, then comes the pre-approach step. This means that companies as the sales party, tend to dig details about customers. Depending on the company's capacity, they conduct surveys, send e-mails to potential individuals or groups. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

When pre-approached has given the necessary clearance to reach to the potential customers, next step is to approach them. This step is the very first point where both sales party and buying party engage directly. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

Following step – the presentation. Depending on how well sales party presents their sale presentation or engage with customer, one has chance to win the customer at first place. It is also important to oversee what should be included in the presentation. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

After sales party has given the presentation or pitch, customers often have concerns and questions. They express their views, opinions on the presentation to sales party. This step is in the process of sales named as the overcoming objections. In a way it gives decent amount of pressure to the sales party yet, if sales party is able to conquer the certain issues by providing reasonable answers and solutions to their customers, it not last but least sums up the whole process. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

Closing the deal comes as the second last step in the sales process. In this case, both parties put effort to agree on terms and different regulations, policies that they have discussed previously and conclude the deal by knowing both parties have reached their goals. Once they close the deal, it allows them to proceed further. But, business nature is that something always comes up. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

That is why follow up stands as the last step in sales process. Most companies neglect the fact that even though the sales deal is fully closed, customers are still measuring the sales party's value. Therefore, sales party is still fully responsible for their product or service. When customers have any concerns or issues regards to their purchased product/ service or in immediate situations, sales party must act on right manner and that is why they should follow up the process. Having virtuous follow up process in the company could bring out excellent advantages, especially for the sales party such expanding the trust, sales renewing. (Moncrief & Marshall 2005.)

3.2   Sales Functions

Sales support refers to a variety of functions that help to close the deals in organizations. In organizational level these functions can be mainly divided into two elements as sales personnel and sales tools. In these two functions, personnel play the larger role because tools also operate by the personnel. These personnel and tools can differ from company to company depending on company size, operations etc. Simply put, main task of a sales personnel or sales team in an organization is to fulfill their customer requirements on a timely manner. (Sincavage 2019.)

Therefore, sales support needs to have set of skills following as:

- Product training – Have the proper knowledge on the product that you offer to the customer

- Customer service – Ability to deals with any customer at the same time representing your brand name

- Marketing communication – Capability to sell the product by using different tactics

Apart from mentioned key skills, sales support also should be aware of factors such as new trends in the market, cyclical changes, seasonal fluctuations, competitors and government actions. Having a fair update on all these factors will benefit the organizations in facing the sudden movements regards to market or customers during the sales process. (Nikhila 2019.)

3.3   Critical Points of Sales Support

Sales support in general known as a function that has a connection to every department in an organization. In most cases, sales support is a mandatory element that required to proceed the process chain towards in the organization. Therefore, other departments must combine with sales support. Sales support can be identified as a function that supports for the core business process in organizations. It helps to lead the core processes in more efficient way, by contributing their support, using different strategies. As many other processes in an organization, sale support also has some barriers to overcome. Below figure elaborates on the sales support challenges that they faced with their customers related to different time lines. (Sincavage 2019.)

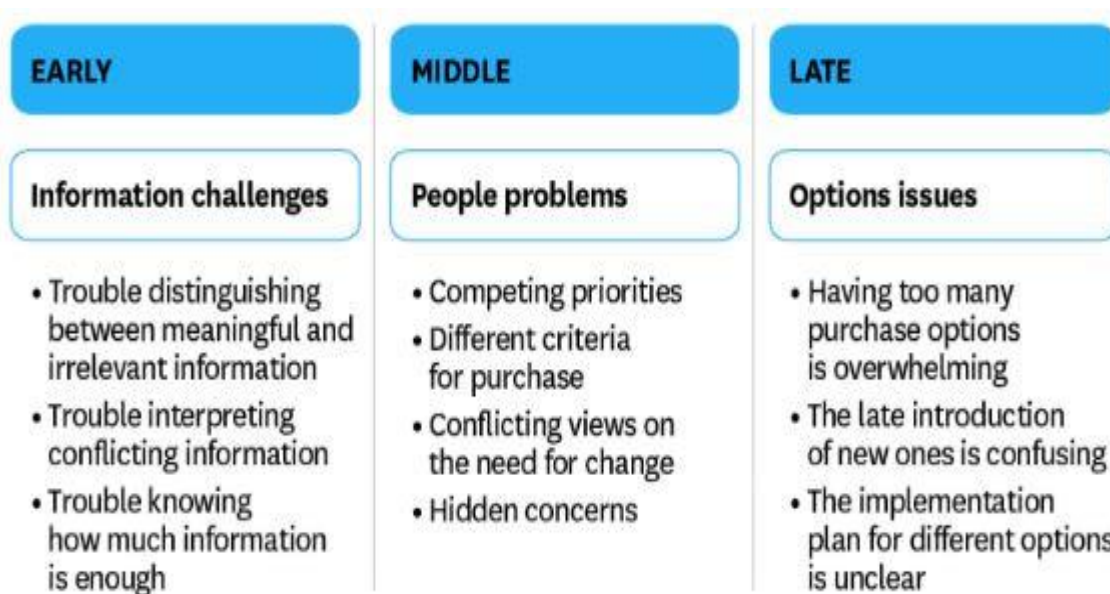| EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE
Information challenges	**People problems**	**Options issues**
• Trouble distinguishing between meaningful and irrelevant information • Trouble interpreting conflicting information • Trouble knowing how much information is enough	• Competing priorities • Different criteria for purchase • Conflicting views on the need for change • Hidden concerns	• Having too many purchase options is overwhelming • The late introduction of new ones is confusing • The implementation plan for different options is unclear

Figure 6 Sales Support Critical Points Regards to Customers (Toman, Adamson & Gomez 2017)

At glance, Figure 6 illustrates the issues that sales support must take into consideration when they deal with customers. Upper section of the figure describes the timelines of the sales support as early, middle and late. Second section deepens to the specific disputes that sales support deals with such information challenges in early stage, people problems in middle stage and options issues at last stage.

In the early stage, sales support team or department faces the difficulty of dealing with the information which means, the exact information at exact time. As we can notify in the figure, too much information makes the useless confusion for the sales support first and continues to the customers. As a well performing sales support team must have the ability to recognized, what are the information that they should have, once they set to deal with their customers. (Toman et al.)

Middle stage in the figure concerns the people which means the personnel. Sales support is simply a group of people that provides the needed help for sell a product or service to customers. Therefore, sales personnel should perform their tasks in a way that, organization/s name shouldn't be harmed. Without any distortions, they should able to priorities their tasks, notify different standards in tasks and most importantly, bring out the concerns to the table without hesitations at the right time. (Toman et al.)

Late stage of the exhibit narrows down to issues of options. This means, which option sales support should consider, when they are making the final decision. Mainly this part discusses three areas that related to the matter. First the purchase which categorize the choices and try to select best option out of it. At the same time, alternatives should be ready in the list. On a deeper level, selecting which purchase options is a part where sales support focus extremely because, it determines the outcome. Secondly, the late introduction to new elements. In here, sales support tries to adapt the new elements, rules and tools in early. Lastly the implementation of planning for different options. This to extend, for each option that sales support makes, there should be a way of implementing it practically. (Toman et al.)

This sub-chapter intention was to describe the key issues of sales support regards to its customers. As a conclusion for this chapter, if sales support as a frontier of any organization can identify discussed factors with prior time, before anything effects on a larger scale to the process, it reduces the risk of losing customers, losing trust and one able to run the process smoothly.

4   CASE COMPANY INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the Company X and continues with explaining order-to-delivery process, role of the sales support and distributors at Company X.

4.1   Company X

Company X headquarters is situated in Lahti region and it consists of several subsidiaries and distributors around the world. The company's turnover is 100M€ and it has several hundred employees around the world. Company mainly acts on three major areas: equipment, services and soft-ware which are related to their industry and most of the company revenue is generated by their unique products. (Company X, 2019.)

Rest of the chapter four goes on journey to help the reader to notify the cardinals of Company X. Starting from order-to-delivery process and followed by sales support gives the insights of how operations are running at Company X. Chapter four finishes with the distributors which is one of the substantial topics to the thesis by elaborating on the connection to the sales support.

4.2   Order-to-Delivery Process at Company X

The order-to-delivery process is the principal means by which buyers or customers communicate with sellers, the final sale transaction is made, and cash is generated for the seller. ODP, also known as the OCP (order-to-cash process), is an extremely important core business process in a manufacturing enterprise. It is a customer-facing process and is key to operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Companies should strive to create an order-to-delivery process that is world class and that results in customer delight. (Viswanadham 2000.)

This sub-chapter reviews the order-to-delivery process at Company X and the procedure that company takes from placing an order-to-deliver their product/s to customer. Order-to-delivery process at Company x is considered as one of the core processes because it transforms the number of combined sub-processes input to an output with added value to a customer. It is the transformation of people, money, materials or information that is the value-added work of the organization. (Interviewee 1, 2019.) Below figure educates the reader to order-to-delivery process at the Company X.

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┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐
│ Request for │     │             │     │             │
│ ordering/   │ ──> │  Customer   │ ──> │ Data Process│
│ quotation   │     │    Order    │     │             │
└─────────────┘     └─────────────┘     └─────────────┘
       │
       v
┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐
│    Order    │     │             │     │             │
│ Confirmation│ ──> │ Production  │ ──> │  Delivery   │
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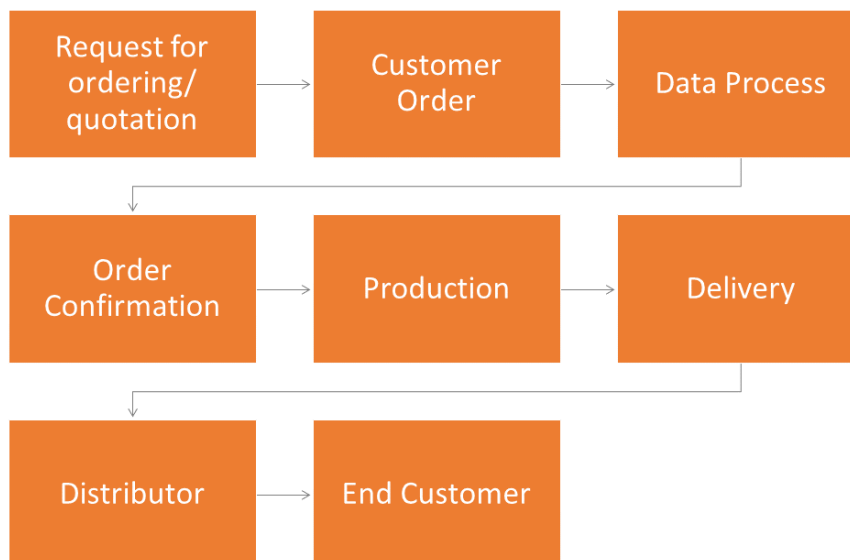
Figure 7 Order-to-Delivery Process at Company X (Company X 2019)

Main idea behind presenting Figure 7 is to provide a clear image and direct the reader to realize the process of order-to-delivery at Company X. It shows the key stages that company deals with when it comes to the delivering a certain product to their customers.

The process starts when a customer places an order via company web ordering tool or via e-mail. Once an order arrives to Company X, it shows up in the EPR system. Data process stage can be described as when sales & logistics coordinator checks the availability of the ordered item and sends a confirmation to the customer. (Interviewees 2 & 3, 2019.)

The process continues when an order entry triggers the demand to production department to manufacture the product/s. Depending on the order (amount, product variety) production department handles the production process. Production consists of different lines of collecting, assembly, testing and packing. Once the product/s is completed to deliver by the warehouse, forwarders pick the shipment. Through all these stages, sales support is monitoring the process. They must be fully aware of which stage the process currently is in, so they can inform the customers if there are any delays, etc. As the next stage of order-to-delivery, sales & logistics coordinators send relevant documents to the counterparties, forwarders and customers. Mainly the delivery terms are done following the international commercial terms. (Interviewees 2 & 3, 2018.)

Once a specific customer receives their product/s, it is not the end of order-to-delivery process. There is one more step to it, which is the claims process. Claims process also takes an important role of the whole order-to-delivery because, when customers want to return

product/s or has some concern about the delivery, they should follow the claims process. Related to Company X order-to-delivery process, there are number of rationales for customers returning their product/s. Receiving incorrect, damaged product/s or delayed delivery can be pointed out as the main reasons. (Interviewees 2 & 3, 2018.)

All these steps are equally vital to order-to-delivery because, they work as a chain of command. The connectivity between different departments, specially sales support and logistics is needed on time to deliver product/s to the customers.

4.3   Role of Sales Support at Company X

As stated earlier, core ambition of the thesis is to enhance order-to-delivery at Company X by adding value to sales support. In this sub-chapter author aims to give detail on sales support at Company X – role of the sales support and key responsibilities of it. Sales support department at Company X main responsibility is to provide necessary help to sell company's product to its customers. In the process of selling a product/s to a customer, sales support spreads their service through various counterparties both externally and internally. In the process of order-to-delivery, sales support is a process that plays a role of cross/support process to the order-to-delivery process also to other core processes at Company X. Therefore, they provide their service to the company to achieve the higher-level target and goals. To get a clear understanding about sales support key counterparties, the figure is a good example. (Interviewee 5, 2019.)

Figure 8 Counterparties of Sales Support (Company X 2019)

There are two purposes of presenting Figure 8. First is to identify the different counterparties that deals with sales support on daily operations. Second is to recognize the importance of sales support department. To starts with counterparties, from their very own sales managers to single customer, sales support has a unique connection in the process of providing their service. Compare to any other department at Company X, most difficult part of sales support facing is that, they must deal with all counterparties. It also important to understand every single action of sales support is going to affect the company outcome. To simplify, if we talk about the actions of production department, they are at a very low level of engaging with counterparties while sales support section is putting additional effort beyond the general line to provide their service to variety of counterparties. Bottom line is that, if we look at Company X on a global scope, sales support team at the front line of the battle. (Interviewee 5, 2019.)

Second part is to discuss the role of sales support. Here, author has reviewed the variety of responsibilities sales support department takes into count on their performance. All following factors are related directly or indirectly to order-to-delivery process at Company X. By going through listed factors, reader able to realize what sort of role sales support plays in the company.

Sales Support Key Responsibilities in the Company X (Interviewee 5, 2019)

- Responses to inquiries internally and externally

- Offers to orders

- New customer set-up

- Order handling

- Invoicing

- Reclamation & return shipment handling

- Contact customers, logistics, couriers and forwarders

- Export documentation and other relevant documents to counterparties

- Payment follow up & dunning process

It is evident now the role of sales support at Company X. Regards to the thesis, author's intention is to identify the possible developments for the order-to-delivery process at Company X. Therefore, it is certain, thesis is looking for improvement in the sales support department so, it will provide potentials to order-to-delivery process become more efficient to

distributors. One other thing that we should take into count is that there are no intermediates during order-to-delivery process between Company X and distributors. That is why sales support even as a cross/support process in company has a major role and could have impact on larger scale to this whole story.

4.4   Distributors

Distributors at Company X is a significant factor to the thesis. To realize the importance of distributor, this sub-chapter discloses the three main areas that relate to the distributors. First, by giving a sense of distributors, secondly explaining how they operate with Company X and thirdly, how much of impact distributors have for the company's outcome.

As a globally operating company, Company X has three sales channels to reach their customers following as direct customers, distributors and subsidiaries. In terms of turnover, 10% comes from the direct customers, 30%-distributors and 60% is bring out by the subsidiaries. According to the discussion between author of the thesis and Company X personnel, the decision of choosing distributors as the target group for the thesis is based on the distributor's actions throughout the years with company. Having around 70 distributors around the world, Company X has the potentials to gain more profit out of them. Unlike direct customers, distributors entirely depend on the company. Therefore, company has the fully capacity to involve with them and to seek possible developments for both parties. As a result, Company X sales support quality can be developed, and distributors sales can be expanded. When it's come to operating with Company X, distributors play a huge role being an intermediate between the company and end customers. Their duty is to represent the company x and try to connect end customer with the company. Distributors operate their business with Company X when a local customer orders product/s, distributor places the order to company and from that point on usual order-to-delivery process is continuing until end customer receives his/her product/s. (Interviewee 4, 2019.)

There are few critical points during the process that Company X faces with distributors. The distance, language barriers (in some cases), communication issues could recognize as the key points. If Company X as the parent company could overcome these challenges in near future, the possibility of distributor's sales can be expanded vastly. Author has selected five specific distributors out of total amount to measure the performance and find possible developments for the sales support. As going through historical and present figures of selected distributors, author and sales support department have noticed, these distributors are still in a developing stage. That also one of the reasons, why author is trying to tackle down these specific distributor's opinions/ suggestions about Company X sales support related to order-to-delivery process so, examining the feedback, author has

ability to figure out the missing points and submit them to sales support department. As a result, sales department could bring out an advanced level of support regarding to these distributors so as a result, distributors will have an immense touch to company's closing figures and order-to-delivery process at company could functions at a greater degree. (Interviewee 6, 2019.)

5   EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYZATION

This chapter initiates the reader to the empirical research that was carried out the thesis. Final aim of this chapter is to provide the answer to the main research question: How to improve the order-delivery process by adding value to sales support? Therefore, the sub-chapters are taking the responsibility of answering how data was collected, how data was analyzed and, in the end, revealing the findings of the research.

5.1   Data Collection

The author has chosen the Gantt chart to show the data collection process of this thesis, concerning its timeframe.

TABLE 1 Gantt Chart of the Data Collection Process

Activity	December 2018	January 2019	February 2019	March 2019
Desk Research	■			
Interviews	■	■		
Survey via Webropol			■	
Data analysis			■	■
Results & suggestions				■

The process of data collection started in December 2018 with the desk research. It was mandatory to do the desk research examine before step into the actual scene. Desk research was helped immensely to recognized, what kind of methods should be chosen to find answers for the research questions. Apart from that, it supplied the fundaments to create the whole structure of the research.

Once the desk research was done, author conducted eight interviews at Company X during end of December in 2018 and weeks of 2 and 3 in 2019 regarding to the research. All these interviews were carried internally, and all interviewees were from Company X

personnel from different professional backgrounds with connection to the research key areas. Through the interview process, author had a chance to dig deeper and get to the unseen sides of the research. Also, the outcome of these interviews helped in a wider manner to create the survey questionnaire as well. After deciding to whom the survey questionnaire would be sent to, Company X gave the permission to send the survey questionnaire which took place in fifth week of 2019. One of the key points of this whole data collection process was to create the survey questions because author knew that answers of the survey questionnaires are the central component to find the answers to the research questions. The survey was accessible for two weeks (week 6 and 7) in 2019. Therefore, distributors had fair time to provide answers.

In mid of February 2019, author received the answers for the survey questionnaires and the data analyzing process began from week 8 and continued for week 9 and 10. After going through the outcome of data analyzation, results and suggestions were stated in week 12.

5.1.1 Survey Questionnaire via Webropol

Due to the distance and the variety of selected distributors, the decision of sending a survey to collect data came as idea of both sales support department head and author. Therefore, survey-questionnaire was formed by mutual understanding of both parties. The survey consisted of multiple choices and open-ended questions. The reason for creating both types of questions concerns the order-to-delivery process. During the process of order-to-delivery, there are number of steps involved, and these steps differ from one another. To find the proper answers to each, one type of questions was not enough. Therefore, both types of questions were created. Forming multiple choice questions purpose was to get direct answers while open-ended were to get rich data. All together 18 questions were sent, and all were mandatory besides the question number nine. Once all the questions were formed, it was sent through the Webropol link for each distributor.

5.1.2 Interviews

Collecting data from interviews was mandatory since the data that are needed from the Company X were internal and only source that could provide the specific data was the personnel at Company X. Since this research was a case study, there were no other options available for getting internal data other than conducting one-to-one interviews with Company X personnel. Prior to the interview process author of the thesis signed a non-disclosure agreement with sales support department head. Furthermore, throughout the interviews, author has explained the purpose for collecting data to interviewees.

Numerically, eight interviews were carried out with five persons at Company X starting from December 2018 to January 2019. Main idea of conducting interviews were to find, three major factors that related to the research following as sales support functioning, distributors and order-to-delivery process at Company X. Following as, four interviews related to sales support functions and order-to-delivery process, two interviews related to distributors and two interviews related to logistics process were carried out.

5.2 Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to reveal the tactics that author has taken to reach the findings. As stated in the first chapter, author used the qualitative methods and took deductive approach to collect and analyze the data. By converting collected data to analyzed data, it is easier to apprise the findings for the research. Related to the research, data analysis is entirely based on the survey questionnaires. Therefore, analysis entirely based on the transcripts that the researcher typed during the sorted answers from the survey.

5.3 Survey Data Analysis
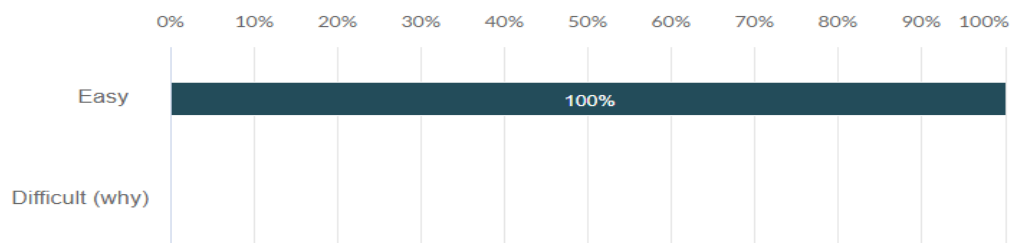
5.3.1 Usage of Web Ordering

Figure 9 Usage of Web Ordering Process

According to Figure 9, distributors were asked to give their opinion on how they found the overall web ordering process in general. As the first step of the order-to-delivery process, it was necessary to check at glance what they thought on web ordering process. As the result shows, all of them responded that they find the overall process easy.

As the second question of web ordering part, distributors were asked to provide possible development ideas of how they like to serve in the future regards to the web ordering process. They acknowledge that, if they can have the access to see the real stock situation at company so, it would help to inform their clients on exact delivery date. Apart from that, current process was found to be run smoothly and there were no further suggestions.
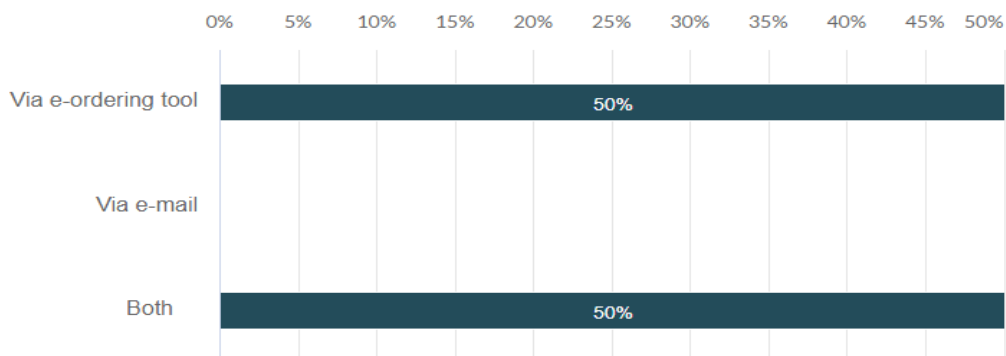
3. How do you send/ place your orders?

Figure 10 Channels for Placing Orders

Regards to order confirmation part, four questions were asked. First one was, how they place an order/s and three options were given as the answers following as, via web ordering tool, e-mail or Both. While 50% chooses via web ordering, other 50% selected both options. It is clear now, 50% of the selected distributors still using the e-mails to place an order to Company X. One of the main issues that Company X also concerns is that, seeking possibilities to reduce e-mails on placing orders. Due to the reason, 50% of the selected distributors are still using e-mails for placing orders can be considered as an indication to find a development area.

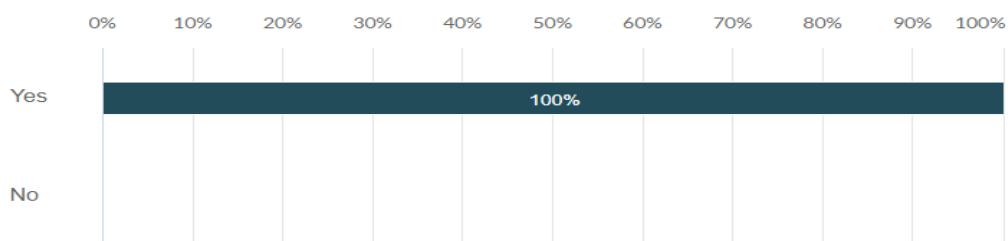## 4. Do you use e-Ordering to check the item availability?

Figure 11 Using Web Ordering to Check Item Availability

Second question was to find out the use web ordering to check item availability and all re-sponded by saying they use it on daily basis. Able to disclose this point was quite im-portant and its benefits for both parties. From company's perspective, it reduces the amount of inquiries and distributors have direct access to see the items that available at that point of time.

5. Do you get enough communication regards to the delivery date changes (either via e-mail/ e-Ordering tool)?
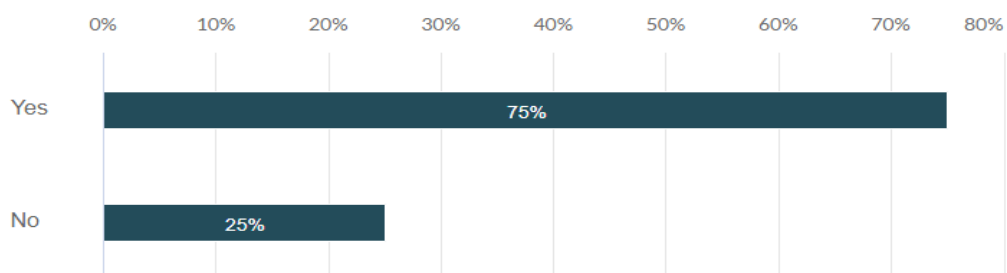

Figure 12 Communication Regards to Delivery Date Changes

Third question was directed to reveal the communication support that sales & logistics co-ordinators give regards to changed delivery dates. Outcome shows 75% stated that they get enough communication support when 25% replied by saying delivery date information should be exact and improved.

As the last question of order confirmation, it was asked, do you have possible sugges-tions/ideas to order confirmation process and number of distributors were answered. 25%

stated that, ability to see the weight of the ordered item would be helped calculate the transportation cost to destination of delivery. Also, same percentage stated by saying, Company X should provide the technical information of each product that they order. Possibility to receive an automatic note to web ordering system on order confirmation also mentioned among these suggestions as well.

5.3.2 Response Time and Communication Support

7. Do you get enough information on timely manner from sales & logistics coordinators regarding to your requests?
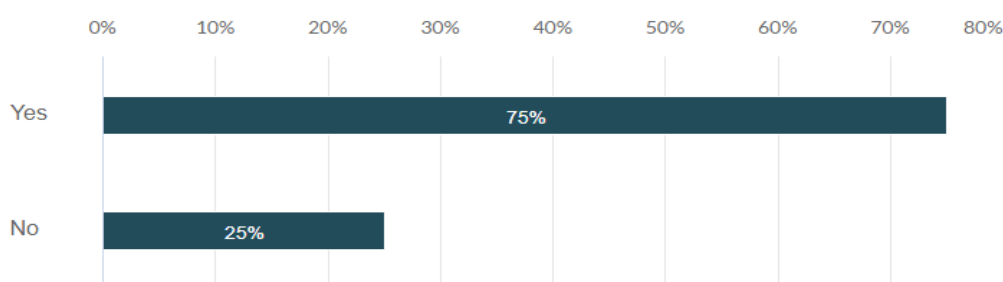

Figure 13 Responses Regards to Requests from Sales Support

Since, sales support is in the center of coordinating with all distributors concerning any matter, question number seven was asked to see, if the sales support responded to distributor's requests on timely manner and 75% out of selected distributors said that sales support functioning on timely manner when other 25% didn't agree.

Survey question number eight also meant to find out about sales & logistics coordinators support. Therefore, distributors required to express their opinion/s on how they find overall communication support from sales & logistics coordinators. Since this was an open-ended question, majority replied, sales support is quick, flexible regards to their requests. 25% notion that, sales support personnel try to give redundant advice when they need help on issues such, diminution of terms of delivery, technical support and product information. After all, there weren't any suggestions or development ideas for question number nine, since it was an optional question.

5.3.3 Accuracy of Delivery Information

Pertinent to the delivery information precision, four questions were formed in the survey. Question number ten was asked to disclose, how distributors usually informed about their deliveries. Following as 75% said they receives an e-mail while other 25% stated that they receive a confirmation from freight carriers/ forwarders on upcoming products. The main idea behind this question is to clarify, in what ways distributors are informed about their deliveries and try to mitigate variety of channels and stick to one specifics channel so, everyone can be informed thru it.

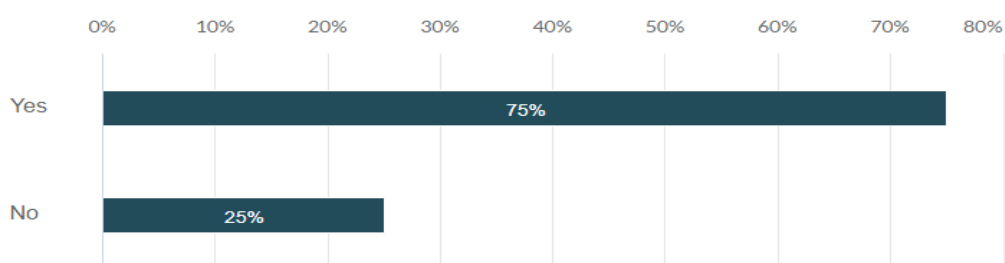## 11. Do you think the information is detail enough?

Figure 14 Information Sufficiency

As the eleventh question of the survey, it was requested to convey the opinion of infor-mation details. As we can see in Figure 14, 75% marked by saying fair amount of infor-mation are provided by sales support related to the deliveries. 25% in the stage that they believe, related to some products, sales support should provide more information and didn't provide exact examples of what kind of additional information they would needed concerning the matter.

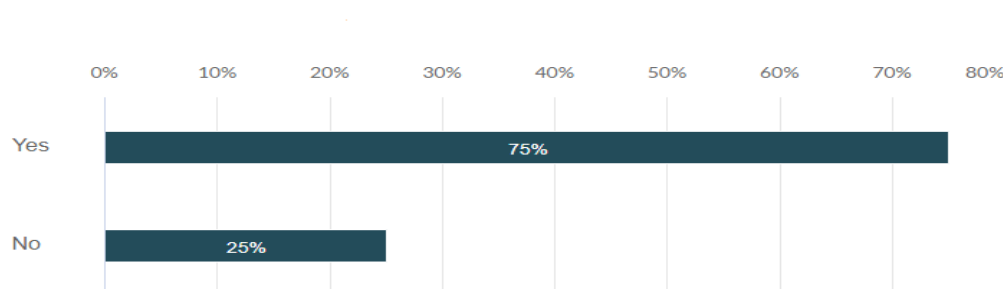## 12. Do you get the information of your delivery on time?

Figure 15 Delivery Time

On time delivery is a critical thing in order-to-delivery process. Every distributor expects to get information on their delivery early enough so, they can make further arrangements (deliver to end customer, informing authorities). As figure 15 shows us, 25% says that they do not get information on timely manner regards to their deliveries. In this situation 25% is the number that we must focus on because as mentioned earlier, sending the information beforehand is helpful for any customer in any case to proceed their operation towards. Once it is clear on 25% still not pleased with the receiving information on timely manner, question number thirteen was posed as a follow up to clarify, how would they (25%) like to be informed in the future about their deliveries. In result, two suggestions were made which are establishing the previous web ordering portal and sending the information via e-mail. Sending information via-emails was justified as direct contact between persons.

5.3.4 Claims and Complaint

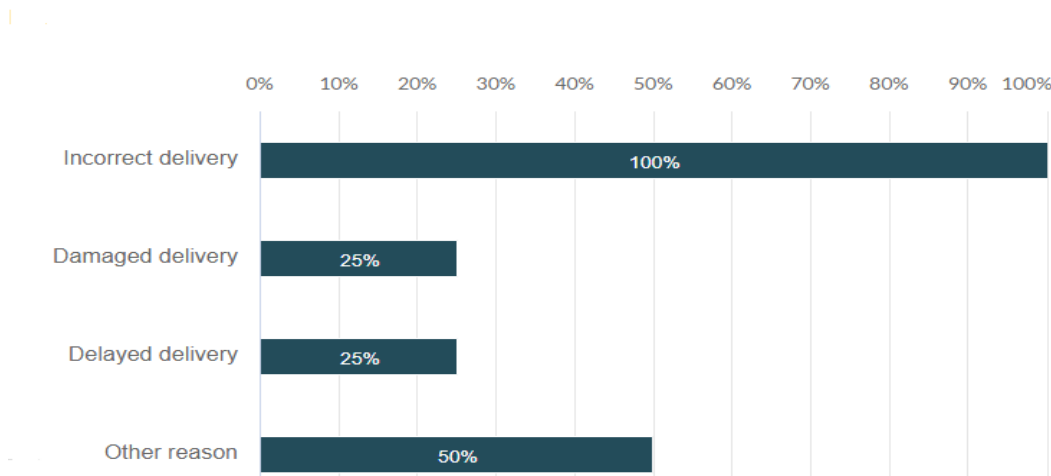## 15. Please clarify the reason/s for your claims/ complaints

Figure 16 Reasons for Claims

As the final stage of the order-to-delivery process as well as the survey, claims and com-plaint section are where author intend to see, how many claims were submitted during year 2018. Question number fourteen was required get a numerical answer for how many claims that were placed by distributors. As an average it was around 10-20 claims and the most important question was – question number fifteen to clarify the reasons for the claims. Figure 16 has presented the different reasons on why the selected distributors have claimed the product/s. Everyone stated that as the main reason for claim is improper delivery and as a follow up it was required to specify the incorrect delivery. Therefore, 25% stated damaged delivery, 25% delayed delivery and other 50% other reason. As per other reason, split delivery was also mentioned.

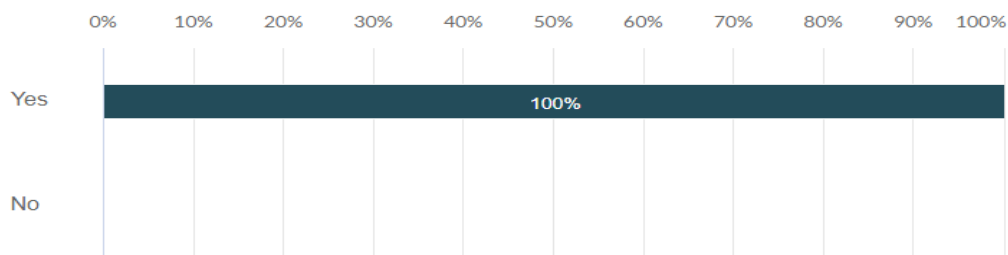## 16. Are you getting responses to your claims/ complaints on time?

Figure 17 Responses to Claims and Complaints

Regarding question sixteen, responses to claims on timely manner was a success factor from company's perspective because all distributors stated they get responses on timely manner. Once going through the claims and its rationales, Question 17 as open-ended question was asked to provide any development ideas or suggestion on how Company X claim and complaint process could be improved. As per answers, improve the availability of some items, make returning product process faster and create a portal to accept claims via online were mentioned. To see whether there are any concerns regards to the order-to-delivery process in general, last question number eighteen was required to place feed-backs. Since distributors have uttered their opinions and suggestions thru survey, no feed-back was made.

6 CASE COMPANY SWOT-ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the results of the research and uses SWOT-analysis tool to identify how the result can be interpreted by the Company X. SWOT-analysis is one of the commonly used analyzing tools for described overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a company. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 78).
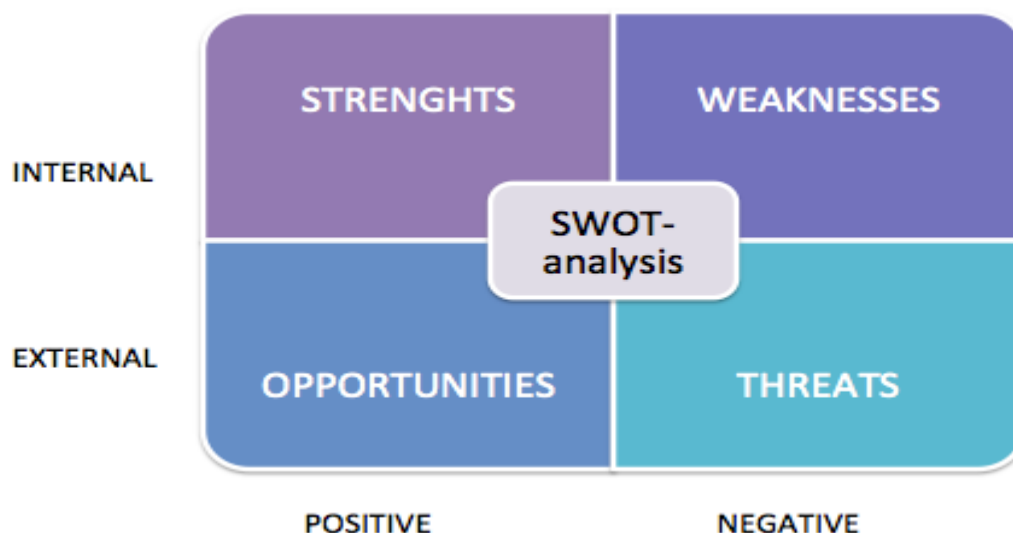

Figure 18 SWOT-analysis

In SWOT-analysis, company's strengths and weaknesses can be defined as internal factors while opportunities and treats are considered as external factors. Internal factors are coming inside from the company therefore, company able to control them. As per external factors, they are coming from outside of the company and these are the factors that beyond the company's control. Internal factors fully depend on the company's actions so, depending on the company capability to deals with particular factors, it can be managed. Company cannot take direct actions to fully control external factors yet, they can take the advantages out of those. (Kotler & Armstrong 2014, 78).

6.1 Strengths

Having strong brand name and loyal customer base both locally and globally, Company X has the potential to fortes their sales support regards to distributors in numerous ways. In relations to survey results, this section in SWOT-analysis focus on disclosing the strengths of sales support. As the first factor, it has stated, all distributors find the usage of web ordering is easy also using web ordering tool to check item availability which are phenomenal for sales support because, it helps to reduce the extra work load by reducing the

e-mail inquiries. Apart from that 75% which is the majority have complied that they receive enough communication regards to delivery date changes, information regards to requests on timely manner concerning any matter, emphasizing support from sales & logistics coordinators flexibility and by uttering sales support provide enough detail and responding to claims and complaints fast also immense elements that could be pointed out as strengths of sales support. In addition, operating via different languages besides Finnish, also help both distributors and sales support to conduct their work smoothly. Also having different department to handle different processes also itself reduce the confusion in case, distributors have concerns on various matters. By having such departments, distributors know which department help or guidance they need.

6.2   Weaknesses

The challenges that sales support faces during order-to-delivery process has been revealed thru the survey. These specific factors can be defined as the weaknesses of the sales support according to SWOT-analysis also factors that can be managed using different tactics within the company. If we considered the weaknesses from survey results, 25% still feels that sales support is lacking to give information on delivery dates changes. One of the key challenges that sales support currently faced is not having a single portal to place the orders. It was mentioned that still 50% places their orders via e-mails while the other 50% use web ordering tool. If somehow sales support able to cutdown the e-mails by moving into web ordering, it gives rope to make the order-to-delivery process more efficient. Reasons for the claims of products, 25% said that delivery was damaged and another 25% said they received the delivery delayed. If these two continues in the long run, it could be affected to order-to-delivery process in larger scale. Whereas, since weaknesses is a factor that can be mitigated internally, sales support has the open space to examine mentioned challenges and appropriate actions.

6.3   Opportunities

After exploring the survey, it is fair to say, sales support has variety of opportunities in front of them since opportunities are defined as an external factor in SWOT- analysis, there is no direct involvement that sales support can take to control the particulars. Instead of controlling it, sales support can adjust their position regards to each factor, as a result their service could be improved. All these opportunities came from distributor's suggestions and reasonably well they fit into the category. Regards to requesting access to see the stock situation in Company X, requesting weight of the products, informing technical information on each product separately and making returning product process faster,

singled as the key opportunities that sales support has from distributor's perspective. Apart from that, if sales support could set up automatic communication system (portal) to confirm orders also could be a great opportunity for the sales support has and can take necessary actions without putting much effort.

6.4   Threats

In the process of order-to-delivery distributors have raised number of issues which can be considered as treats to sales support. According to SWOT-analysis threats also a factor that cannot be handle internally. Starting from 25% stating, lack of information regards to delivery date changes, information regards to final delivery on time and communication support from sales & logistics coordinators to requests can identify as the essential menaces to sales support. Even majority (75%) has given the positive answers to each mentioned area, the percentage of majority can be declined in upcoming time, if sales support not take the 25% concerns seriously. Since the research not keening on discussing or analyzing the threats from company's perspective, but as the sales support point of view, above referred issues can be presented as the threats.

7   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the obtained data from survey and analyzing it thru SWOT, chapter seven presents the key recommendations for the Company X. Therefore, what are the key actions that sales support department should take or improve regards to their distributors, with result that the order-to-delivery process can be enhanced.

1. Having single portal for placing orders and to inform order confirmation/ using web ordering tool instead of e-mails.

2. Make the claim/ return process faster.

3. Provide the weight for each product separately via web ordering tool.

4. Provide more technical information for each product via web ordering tool.

5. Have stock visibility via web ordering tool.

8   CONCLUSION

Chapter eight concludes the research and its findings for the thesis. First sub-chapter states the answers for the research questions. Validity and reliability of the research are discussed in the second sub-chapter and the chapter finishes with further suggestions to the research.

8.1   Answers to Research Questions

The sub-questions:

What are the critical requirements of the distributors regards to sales support?

Lack of information regards to delivery date changes, information on final delivery date and information regards to requests can be indicated as the severe requirements of the selected distributors.

How sales support functions could be changed?

Informing the order confirmation, the delivery, providing more technical information on products, having visibility on stock situation at Company X to all selected distributors via web ordering tool along with getting selected distributors to use web ordering tool more often by giving them certain training programs on using the web ordering tool, sales support could be functioned at a greater degree.

The main research question:

How to improve the order-to-delivery process by adding value to sales support?

By fulfilling the requirements of selected distributors in sub-question one and implementing sales support functions changes in sub-question two, order-to-delivery can be enhanced for the selected distributors.

8.2   Validity and Reliability

The quality or trustworthiness is the backbone of any research. Quality of information, how they are collected, how they are analyzed are quite important factors for a research, because at the end, these are the main criteria's that add value for the research. When discussing an academic research and its credibility, there are two aspects that need to be consider: validity and reliability. Validity refers to the degree which the findings of the research are measured correctly, and reliability also known as dependability refers to if measures are done in right way.

For this research, author has used both primary and secondary sources of data. Secondary sources were collected from published books and articles and primary data which refers to the data that collected for certain purpose by author has collected thru survey and interviews. Survey was the core element for this research and interview data also helped to build the body of research as well. In the survey, questions were directed to distributors both multiple choice and open-ended manner. Main goal of sending both type (multiple choice & open-ended) questions is to get deeper understanding about order-to-delivery process. As a result, distributors answered the questions according to their knowledge and experiences. For the data that collected thru interviews, were conducted internally and as independently. There are zero effect from Company X personnel other than they answered the questions and discussed specifics. Therefore, considering both survey and interviews data collection and analyzation, the research can be considered as valid.

Reliability of a research can be proven when same research tested in different scenarios yet yield to the same results. This research took the first step with Company X to find answers to research questions and author believes goal is fulfilled thru the process. The generalized findings of this research have high reliability level when distributors as independent group has given their opinions on required questions. This also means, in different research, same group can be answered to the questions not being biased. Interviews that conducted internally in Company X also took the same root thus, personnel directly provided answers to questions without any involvement to distort the research therefore, research has full transparency so, research is reliable.

8.3   Suggestion on Further Research

This research proposed and aimed to measure the sales support operations in regard to the selected distributors at Company X so in the long run, order-to-delivery process between the Company X and the selected distributors can be improved.

Research was carried out and analyzed by only considering the selected distributors opinions and suggestions for the sales support. Therefore, findings of the research only stand for the chosen distributors group. Due to the limited participants in the survey, author of the thesis encourages the Company X to conduct further research for explore more potential outcome.

9   SUMMARY

The objective of this thesis is to measure the sales support performance regards to the selected distributors at Company X and establish initial recommendations on how sales support could be improved at advance degree, as the ultimate result, order-to-delivery process between Company X and selected distributors can be enhanced.

The thesis activated deductive approach. The theory section of the thesis includes the chapter two and three. Chapter two began by explaining the definition of the process in an organization, further detailing order-to-delivery process, lead time and delivery reliability. Following chapter three discusses the sales process, sales functions and ends with giving exposure to critical points of sales support.

Chapter four introduced the Company X by giving brief history and continues with describing, how order-delivery process and sales support function further marking the distributors of Company X.

Chapter five defines the empirical section of the thesis. Therefore, it explains the data collection process and analysis of the results. To collect data, author has organized a survey via Webropol, and conducted eight interviews internally at the Company X. Chapter six interprets the findings by using SWOT-analysis from sales support point of view.

Chapter seven is where author has table his recommendations for the research. All sub-questions and main research question were answered in chapter eight. Same chapter expresses the validity and reliability of the research also makes suggestions to consider on further research. The thesis reaches all the objectives that were set and being accountable for the validity and reliability.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How do you find web ordering process at Company X?

◉

Easy

○

Difficult (why)

[   ]

2. Do you have any possible development suggestions/ ideas to web ordering? (how it would serve you in advanced way)

[text area]

3. How do you send/ place your orders?

○
Via web ordering tool

○

Via e-mail

○

Both

4. Do you use web ordering to check the item availability?

○

Yes

○

No

5. Do you get enough communication regards to the delivery date changes (either via e-mail/ web ordering tool)?

○
Yes

○
No

[ ]

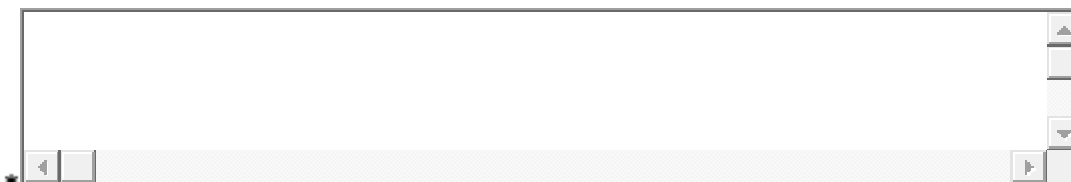6. Do you have possible development suggestions/ ideas to order confirmation process?

[ ]

7. Do you get enough information on timely manner from sales & logistics coordinators regarding to your requests?

8. How do you find the overall communication/ support from sales & logistics coordinators (pros & cons)?

[ ]

9. Do you have any possible suggestions/ ideas to improve the communication?

[ ]

10. How are you usually informed about your deliveries?

[text area]

11. Do you think the information is detail enough?

○
Yes

○
No

[text box]

12. Do you get the information of your delivery on time?

○
Yes

○
No

[text box]

13. If you could choose, how would you like to be informed about your deliveries in the future?

[text area]

14. How many claims/ complaints you have had during the year 2018? (numerically)

[text area]

15. Please clarify the reason/s for your claims/ complaints

☐
Incorrect delivery

☐

Damaged delivery

☐

Delayed delivery

☐

Other reason

[   ]

16. Are you getting responses to your claims/ complaints on time?

* ○

Yes

○

No

[   ]

17. Which would be the main development ideas for the case company claims/ complaints process from your point of view?

[   ]

18. Here is the place that you could give your feedback