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SELLING EDUCATION

– Business Strategy for the Export of Education



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SELLING EDUCATION – BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR THE EXPORT OF EDUCATION

The purpose of this thesis is to produce a business strategy for export of waste management education. The thesis was ordered by the Export of Waste Management Education project in the Turku University of Applied Sciences. The results of this research are being used for the purpose of beginning the export of waste management education in the Faculty of Technology, Environment and Business in Turku University of Applied Sciences.

The need for Finland to find new industries and opportunities for new businesses is great in the economic situation of today. The traditional Finnish industries are in turmoil and officials are worried about how to cope with the unemployment and increasing national debt. This drives companies and public organisations to innovate new ways of doing business. Export of education is seen as one possibility in reviving the exports. Finland has a long history of having high standards for education and is often seen as a model country for education. Exporting this expertise and knowledge is a sensible and natural progression.

The focus of this thesis is on marketing and selling education abroad. The general theory of a business strategy, sales strategy, marketing strategy and the theory concerning productization of service are presented. The finances, pricing and the company image analysis are excluded from this research and are possible topics for new researches. In the applied part of this thesis the research is done based on analyzing the questionnaire done previously by the project personnel for the education service pilot group. The background material was also gathered from internet and literal sources. A research done by Tekes on waste management business opportunities was also used as an important background material. From these materials the needs and specialties of the target markets could be interpreted and the marketing and sales strategies were developed.

The main problems in Russia, Latvia and Estonia were related to the waste utilization and to collecting of the waste in scattered settlement areas. Sales and marketing strategies for WastED are based on the nature of the service. Due to the nature of the target markets and the number of potential clients, the need for personal selling is more important than undirected marketing. It was concluded that the best approach for selling the service WastED offers, is to combine different sales approaches; consultative selling, selling based on problem solving and needs based selling. From these approaches a model for the sales meeting was created, which enables the salesperson to address the needs and problems of the customer and to offer the education service as a solution with which the customer can reach their goals.

KEYWORDS:

Sales, professional selling, business strategy, export of education, marketing strategy, sales strategy, productionizing

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KOULUTUSTA MYYMÄSSÄ – LIIKETOIMINTASTRATEGIA KOULUTUSVIENTIIN

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on tuottaa liiketoimintastrategia jätehuoltoalan koulutusvientiin erikoistuvalla, alkavalla liiketoiminnalla. Opinnäytetyön toimeksiantajana toimii Turun ammattikorkeakoulun Jätehuollon koulutusvienti –hanke. Opinnäytetyön tuloksia käytetään jätehuoltoalan koulutusviennin käynnistämiseen Turun ammattikorkeakoulun Tekniikka, ympäristö ja talous tulosalueella.

Tämän hetkessä taloustilanteessa kiinnostus uusia liiketoimintamahdollisuuksia kohtaan on suurta. Koulutusvienti nähdään yhtenä mahdollisuutena korjata perinteisten teollisuuden alojen alamäen aiheuttamaa tulojen vähentymistä. Suomalainen osaaminen sekä koulutuksessa että jätehuollossa on korkeatasoista, joten osaamisen vienti markkina-alueille, joilla jätehuolto ei vastaa kansainvälisiä määräyksiä, on mahdollisuus WastEDin kaltaiselle liiketoiminnalle. WastEDia on tarkoitus viedä Viroon, Latviaan ja Venäjälle. Opinnäytetyön kirjoittamisen aikaan koulutusvienti on vasta suunnittelu- ja pilotointiasteella, joten tarve strategialle on olemassa.

Opinnäytetyön teoriaosuudessa käsitellään myynti- ja markkinointistrategioita palveluliiketoiminnan näkökulmasta, asiakas- ja markkinatiedon hankinnan tärkeyttä sekä palvelun tuotteistamista. Tutkimusosuus tässä opinnäytetyössä on tehty perustuen taustamateriaalina käytettyyn koulutuspaketin pilotointiryhmän haastatteluun sekä internetlähteistä ja kirjallisuuslähteistä hankittuun markkinatietoon. Koulutusvientihankkeessa aiemmin tehty pilotointiryhmän haastattelu antoi tärkeää tietoa siitä, millaisia koulutustarpeita jätehuoltoalan ammattilaiset näkevät. Taustamateriaalina käytettiin myös Tekesin tilaamaa laajaa raporttia jätehuoltoalan liiketoimintamahdollisuuksista. Taustamateriaalin ja teoriaosuuden perusteella WastEDille kehitettiin markkinointi- ja myyntistrategia sekä kartoitettiin tavoitemarkkinoiden yhteistyökumppaneita ja markkina-alueiden erityisominaisuuksia ja tarpeita.

Tutkimuksen pohjalta todettiin, että suurimmat koulutustarpeet Venäjällä, Virossa ja Latviassa liittyvät jätteiden hyödyntämistason parantamiseen sekä haja-asutusalueiden jätteiden keräämisen tehostamiseen. Palvelun myynti ja markkinointi tulee tehdä hyvin kohdistetusti ja henkilökohtaisen myyntityön merkitys palvelusta tietoisuuden lisäämiseksi on markkinointia suurempaa. Palvelun markkinointi tapahtuu messuilla sekä kohdistetulla sähköpostimainonnalla potentiaalisille asiakkaille sekä yhteistyökumppaneiden asiakkaille. Myyntistrategiassa yhdistetään ongelmaratkaisumyyntiä, konsultoivaa ja tarpeisiin pohjautuvaa myyntiä. Yhdistämällä erilaisia myyntistrategioita pyritään luomaan palvelu, joka vastaa asiakkaan tarpeita.

ASIASANAT:

Myyntityö, liiketoimintastrategia, koulutusvienti, markkinointistrategia, myyntistrategia, tuotteistaminen

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDA	Mental states of buying process (attention, interest, desire and action)
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
EF EPI	EF English Proficiency
LASUA	Latvian Association of Waste Management Companies
MSW	Municipal solid waste
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SWOT	Organisational strategy analysis tool
TUAS	Turku University of Applied Sciences

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to discuss the export of education in Turku University of Applied Sciences or for short TUAS. The applied part of this thesis is on a business strategy created for the needs of WastED project. WastED is an export of education project funded by The European Union and done in cooperation between TUAS, HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences and SYKLI Environmental School.

Creating new business opportunities is a topic that has been discussed a great deal recently. The need for Finland to find new industries and opportunities for new businesses is great in the economic situation of today. The traditional Finnish industries are in turmoil and officials are worried about how to cope with the unemployment and increasing national debt. This drives companies and public organisations to innovate new ways of doing business.

Export of education is seen as one possibility in reviving the exports. Finland has a long history of having high standards for education and is often seen as a model country for education. Exporting this expertise and knowledge is a sensible and natural progression.

Export of education in TUAS is a rather new concept and developing the models and strategies is still underway. Being the largest applied sciences university in Finland gives TUAS a great quality and quantity of competence. TUAS has an environmental engineering study program and has had other environmental programs in the past. The target markets for WastED have poor waste management or the waste management is in need of development. TUAS is able to offer its expertise in education and waste management through WastED.

The export of education has not been studied much in Finland before, but selected articles and studies are used as references in this thesis. Marketing and sales have been studied broadly and these studies are also used as a base for creating this business strategy. Productization has also been studied widely and the theories are visited in this thesis and applied for the WastED.

Since the topic of business strategy is broad, the focus of this thesis is on marketing and selling education abroad. The general theory of a business strategy, sales strategy, marketing strategy and the theory concerning productization of service are presented. The finances, pricing and the company image analysis are excluded from this research and are possible topics for new researches.

The theories are applied to the business strategy created for WastED and to the productization of the service WastED offers. Market information is acquired through the research of possible cooperation partners and from researches done by third parties. Cooperation partners and personnel at the Turku University of Applied Sciences were also interviewed for research purposes.

2 BUSINESS STRATEGY

A good business strategy is the base for starting a business. Businesses include many functions such as finance, sales, marketing and day to day operations. For these different functions to work seamlessly together a business strategy is needed. All businesses are created in order to reach a certain objective, which can vary from financial gain to raising money for charity.

A strategic planning process consists of different parts and functions. Firstly and before anything else, the business must analyse the current situation in the organisation. Analysis is for the internal and external environments. The focus is on firm's resources, strengths, and capabilities, competitive, customer and environmental issues. After understanding this analysis, the business must identify its goals, mission and objectives. The last step of the strategic planning process is to divide these objectives and goals into different business units, such as marketing, production and financial goals. (Ferrel & Hartline 2011, 31-32.)

The business strategy identifies the vision and mission of the business; what is the purpose of the business, where the business owners see the business in future and what makes the business different from other businesses. In the business strategy, the objectives for a successful business can be expressed by the mnemonic S.M.A.R.T. These letters stand for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. If the objective is unique and carefully focused then it fulfils the definition for specific. To be measurable there has to be means to measuring the processes to reach the objectives. If the objective is achievable, the objective is possible to reach in the given business restrictions. The objective has to be supportive of the chosen business strategy in order to be relevant. Lastly the business owner has to outline if there is a timeframe for reaching the objectives. (Levens 2012, 27-29.)

After identifying and dividing and fitting the objectives, the company plans the strategy based on these objectives and the overall mission and goals for the business-unit. The implementation of the strategy and the evaluation and con-

trol of the strategy and how the objectives are reached are the final steps of the strategic planning process. Implementation means the execution of the strategy, the actual operational measures taken based on the strategy. The evaluation and control base can also be seen as an ending of the process and as the beginning of a new process. The process is either good as it is or more likely it needs adjustment and updating. The strategy planning process is continuing the process that evolves and shifts with the company's life span. (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 37-40.)

2.1 Service

Services are one category of "things" marketing understands as products. They are intangible; you cannot pick a service from a supermarket shelf. Services are products that consist of actions or conducts directed to people or to organisations. Today's market is service driven rather than tangible goods driven. (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 12.)

Since services are intangible, the ownership of the product does not change when the sales have been made. Services are usually produced at the same time as they are being used and the customer often is part of the producing process. This leads to every finalized product being different. These characteristics of a service create a problem that is also called promise logic (Viitala & Jylhä 2006, 130). Promise logic is the conflict between the marketing and creating mental images for the service and then actually producing the service. Marketing the service is selling of the mental images, expectations and promises. The problem when business is selling a service is that the key elements of that service are not clear enough for all of the personnel. (Viitala & Jylhä 2006, 130.)

The customers evaluate services based on the quality of the service. Different aspects of the quality of a service are reliability, expertise, reachability, politeness, credibility, safety and the willingness and readiness to solve problems. With services, the customers also evaluate based strongly on their own subjective values, beliefs and previous experiences. (Viitala & Jylhä 2006, 133.)

2.2 Customers and market information

The need for understanding who the customer is and how the market works is essential in planning the business strategy. To understand the specifications of the market and customers, the marketer has to identify and select one or more target markets and divide the market into segments. Segmentation means dividing the total market into smaller, homogenous groups. The important thing is to find groups that share similar characteristics and have similar needs and wants. (Ferrel & Hartline 2011, 19.) The problem for companies on specific targeting is that the companies are unwilling to eliminate anyone from the potential targets. All of the customers are seen somewhat potential and the target market tends to become too wide. This leads to the situation where the marketing is too general. (Schultz & Doerr 2009, 283-284.)

Situation analysis helps the company to understand the market situation. Analysis for the customer environment and markets should answer these questions; who are the potential customers and what do the customers do with the products, and where, why, when or why not do customers purchase the products. Also business should research the current competition, the economic growth and stability of the market, political and legal issues, technological advancements, and sociocultural trends. After composing the situational analysis, the important part is to plan the strategy according to the analysis. The analysis should be an on-going effort and the strategy should be updated accordingly. Company cannot rely on the markets being static and they should try to track the changes and evolving in the internal, customer and external environments. Internal environments include the objectives, performance, strategy, resources and the organisational culture. (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 89-91.)

The analysis for the customer environment gives information on current and potential customers, needs of the current and potential customers, how the service meets the needs of the customers and are there any changes in those needs. The customer analysis should be performed from both the competitors and the company's own point of view. If a company wants to be customer ori-

ented, they should know the customers well enough to answer the questions or they need to conduct more market research to answer these questions. External market analysis gives less detailed information on the market than customer based analysis. The legal and political issues shaping the market can have big effects on forming new business opportunities or closing old ones. (Ferrel & Hartline 2011, 95.)

2.3 Sales strategy

Personal selling is constantly evolving and the sales person to be more a listener than a talker. The aim is in developing and maintaining long-term customer relationships. The emphasis is also on improving sales productivity and specialization of knowledge for making purchasing decisions. The benefits of the modern technology, for example customer relationship management software and the internet, are used in order to understand the customer's needs and to reach the profitability margins. (Ingram et al. 2006, 23.)

Forming a sales strategy is a vital part of business strategy. Without sales strategy the efficiency, the quality, and monitoring of sales can be difficult. Successful sales strategy gives the opportunity of right target group at a right time. In this case, the objective is to sell services, which are intangible and thus harder to sell to the customer. A strong sales strategy gives a better understanding for the salesperson to sell the product and helps the customer to understand what he is buying.

Different sales approaches give the salesperson an opportunity to choose the best one to interact with the customer. Different approaches vary from simple to very complicated and the salesperson should always concentrate on the current situation when choosing the approach. Traditionally there are five different sales approaches; the stimulus response, mental states, needs satisfaction, problem solving and consultative selling. (Ingram et al. 2006, 25.)

The stimulus response has a simple approach to selling. It is based on the idea, that different stimuli will cause predictable responses. An example of this ap-

proach is the sales tactic where the sales person tries to get the client to say yes time after time and then eventually he/she will say yes to the sale. Mental states selling has the core idea, that the buying process is identical to different buyers and the salesperson is able to guide the buyer through different mental states. AIDA is an acronym for attention, interest, desire and action, each of these representing a mental state of a buyer. Both of these approaches rely heavily on a structured sales presentation. (Ingram et al. 2006, 26-27.)

Need satisfaction selling is based on the customer buying to satisfy a need or needs. The salesperson is responsible for identifying the need and the focus is more on the customer than on the salesperson. This method gives the customer the feel that the salesperson is willing to find the best resolution for the customer instead of finding a solution that is the most profitable for the seller. Problem-solving selling is need satisfaction selling taken a step further. At the core of this approach is defining a problem the customer has and the developing solution to solving the problem. (Ingram et al. 2006, 28-29.)

Consultative selling is the newest approach of the five traditional approaches. This approach is the most beneficial to the customer because in this approach the salesperson's goal is to help the customer to reach their organizational objectives and goals with the service/product the salesperson is selling. The salesperson has three different roles in consultative selling. As a strategic orchestrator the seller helps the customer to understand and arrange the resources the company has in order to reach the goals. The business consultant role the seller becomes an expert on the customer's business and become a teacher for the customer. The salesperson is a long-term ally for the customer when the salesperson helps the customer even without sales prospective. (Ingram et al. 2006, 30.)

2.3.1 The buying process

For defining the sales strategy, the understanding how businesses buy is vital. In this case, the sales strategy is more personal selling and contacting the cus-

customer, but from the first contact to the closing of the deal, the customer goes through a process. A sales person has the opportunity to take the customer from one stage to the other by understanding the process.

When businesses are buying, they follow a certain process. The businesses often have routine buying situations, where the process is not visible and where the businesses use prequalified or single-source suppliers, but all of the purchases go through the same process. According to Ferrell and Hartline (2011, 165-166) the process follows these steps; problem recognition, product specification development, identification and qualification of the vendor, solicitation of proposals and bids, vendor selection, order processing, and vendor performance review. The salesperson has many opportunities influencing the sales process, but also environmental conditions, the human resources and organisational factors, and personal factors have an influence on the process (Viitala & Jylhä 2006, 89).

Some differences between the business buying process and the customer buying process are that in business buying process there are many different people influencing the process and usually the financier is not the same person as the end user. The buying process with businesses is more complicated than with consumers. The business buyer can have different roles; the initiative maker, user, influencer, decision maker, acceptor, buyer, and the gatekeeper. These various roles put pressure on the sales person to identify the role the buyer has. (Viitala & Jylhä 2006, 89.)

2.4 Marketing plan

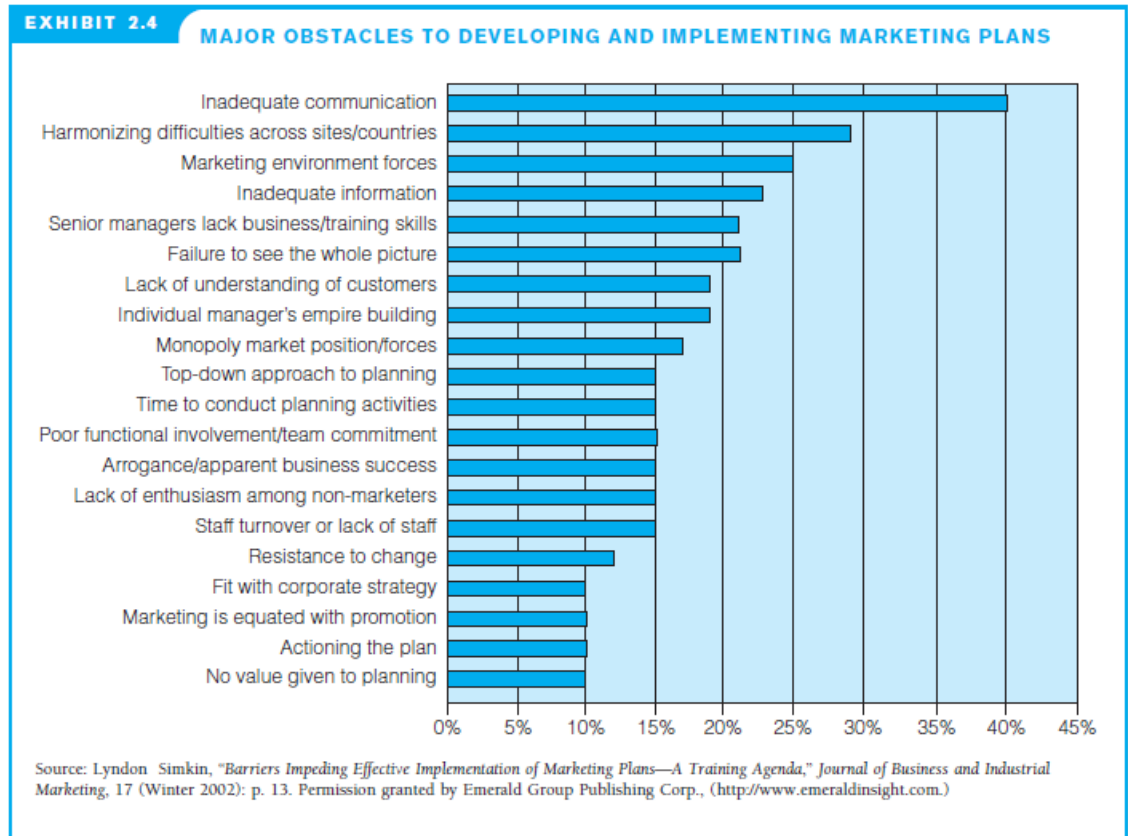
The marketing plan is based on people and their behaviour. All organisations' interest groups are affected by the marketing. To understand all these interest groups, the marketers must draw information and inspiration from psychology, sociology, and economics. This way they can better understand the needs and wants of these interest groups. Marketing is always evolving and the strategies

of the company should be closely monitored and updated. (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, xiv.)

Marketing planning means determining all the activities made to reach the marketing goals. The planning consists of four major components; marketing objectives, marketing audit, marketing strategies and monitoring the results. (Levens 2012, 32-33.) Ferrell and Hartline (2011, 57.) give a typical outline for what elements the marketing plan should include; executive, summary, situation analysis, SWOT-analysis, marketing goals and objectives, marketing strategies, marketing implementation and evaluation control. The Ferrell and Hartline structure gives a wider view on the same things than the outline Levens suggests.

After forming and approving the marketing strategy, it might face different obstacles before the strategy works and is profitable. In the picture 1. 20 different obstacles are listed. The biggest obstacles according to this table are that there is inadequate communication and difficulties in harmonizing across countries. The difficulties in harmonizing across countries refers to the cultural differences and to the cross-cultural misunderstandings. When marketing in a different country, the marketer must take into consideration the “marketing climate” of the target country. The communication inadequacies usually come from the communication problems between the management level and operational level workers. This happens, when the strategy is not comprehensive enough or the management has difficulties in explaining the strategy to the people who put the strategy into action.

The research on which the picture is based is done in the United States and not all of the obstacles translate directly to a Finnish marketing plan, but it gives some insight into different problems the marketer may be facing.



Picture 1. Major obstacles to developing and implementing marketing plans (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 50.)

The main guideline is that a good marketing strategy is comprehensive, consistent, logical and flexible. It should also fulfill the purpose of explaining the current situation of the company and where the company is going, what resources the company has to take action to reach the goals and objectives defined and how the monitoring and controlling of these actions is planned to be organized. The strategy also serves as an information channel between the management and the employees. A good marketing plan requires effort to work. (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 50.)

2.4.1 SWOT-analysis

Vital part of the market planning is to analyse the company by doing a SWOT-analysis. SWOT-analysis is an approach to determine the strategic position of

the organisation. SWOT is an acronym for ‘strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats’. (Hill & Westbrook 1997, 1.) Strengths and weaknesses are seen as internal factors and opportunities and threats are seen as external factors. These factors should be analysed in relation to the market needs and competition (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 44).

This tool is a straight-forward method for organisation to understand what is good and what needs to be developed in its business model. The SWOT-analysis tool is also good when doing the situational analysis for the company before planning the entire business strategy. SWOT is a widely used and widely accepted tool for its understandable nature to developing the market plan and evaluating the strategic position (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 44).

According to Ferrell and Hartline (2011, 44) the common mistake in making the SWOT analysis is confusing the external and internal factors; whereas the internal factors are dependent and unique to the company, the external factors are independent and not dependent on the company in question. Ferrell and Hartline also argue that misunderstanding the alternative strategies of the organisation as opportunities is common.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	Well-known brand name Committed employees Alliances with other firms Marketing skills Lower costs	Limited financial resources Very narrow product line Limited distribution Poor marketing skills Weak market image
	Opportunities	Threats
External	Rapid market growth New product discoveries Economic boom Opening of foreign markets Changing distribution methods	Introduction of new substitute products Changing customer needs New technology Demographic shifts Poor performance of ally firm

Table 1 Example of a SWOT-analysis (Ferrell & Hartline 2011, 129.)

2.5 Productization

The productization of the product or service is essential to reach the right customers in the broad potential market. According to Parantainen (Parantainen, 2013) the key is to differentiate the service from possible competitors. Without differentiation, the customer does not have any reason to choose the seller's product. Productization is what makes the customer choose one product or service over the others.

Productization as a concept is wide and it has many meanings. Where Parantainen stresses on differentiation, Sipilä (Sipilä 1999) discusses that productization of a service is a process that has different levels. Productization is defining, planning, developing, describing and producing the service. The goals for productization are to maximize quality and efficiency and increase the utilization rate, develop the understanding about the service and developing processes. A service that has a price, content defined in a customer friendly manner, a specific target group and someone in charge of the service can be considered productized. (Sipilä 1999, 12-19.)

Parantainen sees the different levels of productization from a company perspective. A company has four levels from which to determine the level of how thoroughly the service is productionized:

1. Forced to take care -model
2. After Sales –model
3. Throw in -model
4. Operative model.

The first model is the simplest and most basic. In this model, the extra services added to the original service are seen as forced extra costs and not as an added value to the product. The after sales model the company sees extra services as a profitable business, most of the Finnish companies are at this stage of productionizing. In the throw in stage the extra services are becoming the main sales argument. This is where the line between the original service and the ex-

tra added services is becoming more blurred. The last level of productionizing is the operative model. In this model the buyer takes responsibility of the customer's profits and losses. This level of productionizing is still too far for away many companies to reach. If the operational model is taken to the furthest, the example of it is franchising. In franchising the business model someone productionizes the entire business concept. The concept can be copied and used for the cost of the licensing fee. (Parantainen 2013.)

3 WASTED

Despite the fast development of the field and the uniform standards for waste management and waste utilization, there is a little education concerning waste management in the European Union. Only Finland and Great-Britain offer the official system of degrees and curricula in waste management. A private organization in France offers waste management education outside of the official system of degrees and curricula. Other education offered in waste management and waste utilization in Europe is more or less unofficial and not highly institutionalized. (WastED ESR Project Application, 2012.) The environmental issues, the increasing internationalization, the continuing privatization of municipal services and the problems of procurement in the public sector are some factors that are shaping the waste management sector (Walqing 2012).

WastED exports and develops the waste management expertise and educational packages into other countries. The primary target groups are the personnel of waste management organizations as well as the management of waste management organizations. WastED will increase their expertise and competitiveness in the labor market. The long-term objective of WastED is to increase the level of know-how in waste management in the target countries and thereby to develop waste management comprehensively. In order to ensure continuity, education in waste management will be embedded as a part of the educational system in the target countries. (WastED ESR Project Application, 2012.)

The goal of this thesis was to understand the target markets and develop a business model for the export of education. The WastED as an ESR funded project ends in June 2014 and the idea is that the work of the project continues through the export of education.

Based on the ESR project and the market situation the business objectives for the WastED are:

- To provide educational services in waste management
- To give the customers a competitive edge in the labor market
- To develop and enhance the waste management in target countries
- To get a financial gain from providing the service.

3.1 Education package

Finland is well known for its quality of education and the success in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). In the recent years there has been discussion if Finland should export education services. There is a need to find a new export industry to cover the decrease in the more traditional exports of Finland, such as ICT or maritime industries. The demand for Finnish expertise is constant but there has not been enough effort in fulfilling this demand. Export of the Finnish expertise has high potential. (The Finnish Export of Education Strategy, 2010.)

The service WastED sells is an educational package that is offered to organizations and private individuals who either work in the field of waste management or are planning to specialize in waste management. The educational package is formed in cooperation between The Turku University of Applied Sciences, the HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences and the SYKLI Environmental School of Finland. The content of the educational package is based on an existing model from SYKLI and is modified to the needs of WastED project by the project workers.

The contents of the package include eight modules:

- Introduction to waste management
- Operators and their responsibilities
- Workplace safety
- Organisation's waste management

- Collection and transportation
- Waste treatment
- Hazardous waste
- Communication.

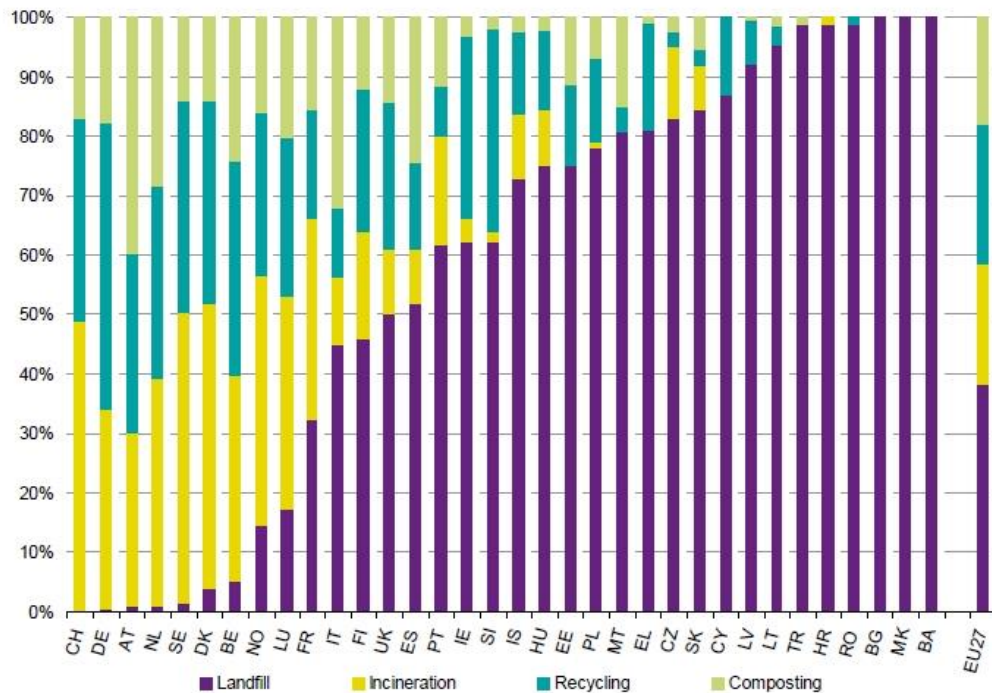
WastED aims to train professionals abroad whom independently train customers in their country of origin. Professionals from the target countries come to Finland to be trained to teach the education package and in special cases WastED offers a package where the trainers go to the target country to provide the training. The pricing model of the service is based on the needs of the customer.

3.2 Customers and target markets in Russia and the Baltics

There is a variety of possible customers for the export of education. Possible customers include Finnish organizations that operate internationally, private and public organizations in East and South European countries and in Russia. Also cooperation partners that TUAS, the Haaga-Helia and SYKLI have acquired in the past are possible customers for the education export. Public organizations include organizations that either offer or are interested in offering education in waste management.

The project workers for the WastED project performed a questionnaire (appendix 3.) for the education package pilot group. The pilot group consisted of Latvian and Estonian environmental and waste management experts and representatives of Latvian and Estonian environmental organisations. The information acquired from the questionnaire was analysed and it suggests the need for waste management education in Latvia and Estonia. The common needs in were short, intensive courses for the waste management employees and companies and longer courses for the managers of the companies. The questionnaire answers also provided with the information that the waste management employees should have more concrete learning.

There are one million employees in the waste sector in EU; 200 000 employees in public, 200 000 employees in multinational corporations and 600 000 in national private operators. This does not include the institutions providing training in waste management. (Hall & Nguyen 2012, 3-9.) The potential of this sector is significant and the need for training and education is high especially in countries trying to match the EU environmental directives. In the picture 1 the amounts of waste generated can be seen sorted by the type of waste. The countries that have over 80% of waste disposed to landfills are in need of redefining their environmental policies. A target country of WastED, Latvia has a landfill disposal level of over 90%.



Picture 2 Municipal waste treated in 2009 by country and treatment category, sorted by percentage of landfilling (% of municipal waste treated) (Eurostat 2011)

Different waste related activities include municipal waste and street cleaning, industrial waste, household waste. In this business strategy, the customers were firstly segmented by the country and under each country there are different sub-segments.

Different segments of waste management consist of recycling, hazardous waste, waste collection, waste treatment (landfill, incineration, compost) and recovery. Customers are also segmented under the target countries. Under these, the customers are also segmented in private, public and educational organisations. The target groups are also divided into employees and management in the waste companies.

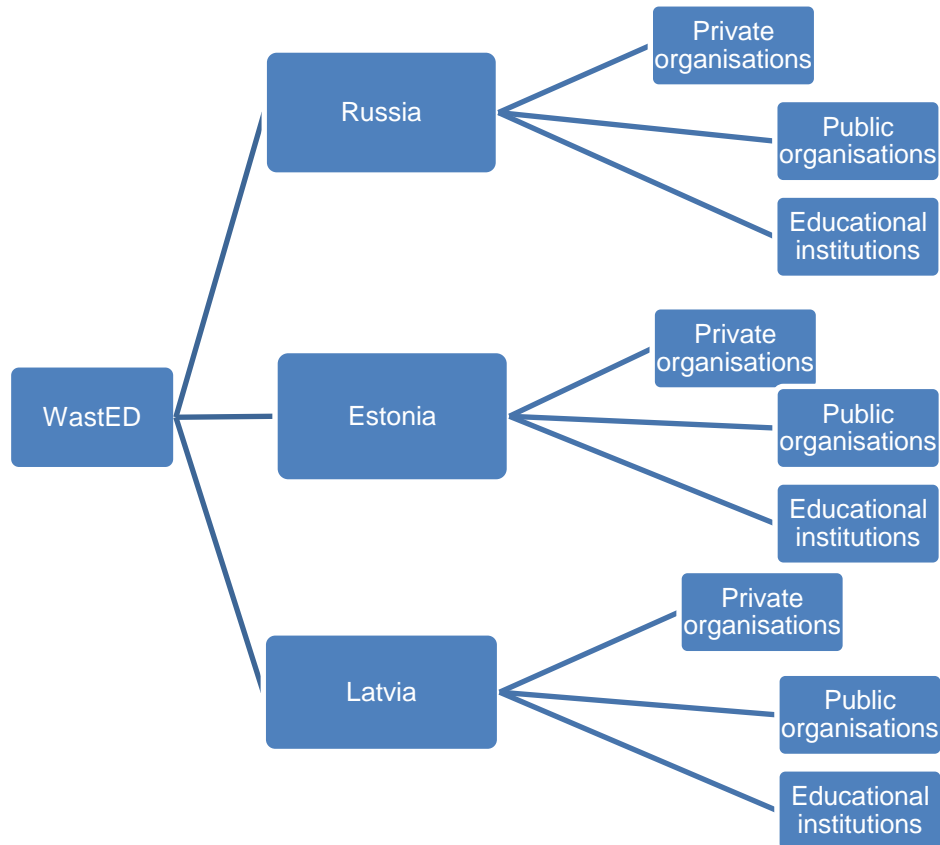


Figure 1 Target group segmentation

3.2.1 Estonia

In Estonia, the waste management market is mostly operated by private companies. In public organizations there are fewer than 500 employees and the majority of the waste management workers are working for private companies and organizations, such as Veolia and Ragn-Sells.

Veolia and Ragn-Sells are the biggest operators in the field and overall number of private waste management companies in Estonia is around 90-95%. For example, all incineration plants are owned by the private sector. This makes it difficult for new businesses to enter the market, because the prices are controlled by these companies who own the incineration plants. The big companies also try to buy the small companies in order to gain the majority of the market. (Margit Rüütelmann 2013.)

Based on the questionnaire analysis it appears that companies in Estonia are interested in advisory and training in waste management. Officials are generally interested in their own fields of business and in the handling of the waste. They are also interested in the final placement of the waste. From the questionnaire answers it became clear that the people are interested in waste prevention and reduction. The municipal waste handling centers are in need for the Finnish expertise. Especially with the waste management in the scattered settlement areas is needed.

Between 2004 and 2007, Estonia witnessed many changes in its waste management system due to the need for meeting the criteria The European Union demands from its member states. There are opportunities due to these changes to export the education and knowledge that Finland holds in waste management. Even though there are different operators providing information and environmental courses in Estonia, there are not any operators focusing entirely on waste management training. This offers an opportunity for WastED to find co-operators to work with in offering an educational package or providing these packages directly to the customers.

Estonia is the leader in Europe in producing waste per citizen, but this is mainly due to oil shale industry. In 2010 dominating waste sources in Estonia were oil shale mining, oil shale chemistry and power production. Municipal waste forms about 3-4% of the total amount of waste. (Estonian Waste Management Association 2013). These are the areas in which Wasted can provide education. The understanding of the problems in Estonian waste management gives WastED an edge to sell the education service. For example when the salesperson is

specifying the customer's needs, these problems can be used as a "wake up call" for the customer to understand what the benefits of waste management training are.

The possibility with the Estonian market is that it is near Finland and easily reachable. The cost of making the sales call to Estonia is not too high and there is not a need for specific documentation to do business in other European Union member state. The main target customers for WastED should be the waste associations and biggest private organisations.

Organisations offering education or information on waste management in Estonia

There are some organisations in Estonia who provide training in waste management. These organisations are possible customers for WastED.

Estonian Waste Management Association gives information to its members on legislation and environmental policies on regional and on national level. They also develop the cooperation with neighbouring countries. (Estonian Waste Management Association 2013.)

There are organisations that operate under the Ministry of Environment of Estonia. Training is based on national curriculum. For example the Estonian Museum of Natural History offers environmental training and they have a Russian-speaking expert. Other smaller operators offer a variety of courses and information on environment including waste management. (Ministry of Environment of Estonia 2013.)

Tartu Environmental Education Centre (TEEC) had a project (ended in March, 2013) with a goal to offer web-based training modules on environmental effects and handling of hazardous waste. In this project there were Finnish cooperators SYKLI, AkkuSer Oy and Recser Oy. (TEEC 2013.)

3.2.2 Latvia

There are a few organisations in Latvia who offer training or information concerning environmental issues or waste management. The need for such services is significant. Landfilling is especially a problem in Latvia; approximately 90% of municipal solid waste generated is landfilled. Mainly driven by the material recycling, the recycling of municipal solid waste has increased since 2002, but the total rate of recycling municipal solid waste is low. Because of the trends in recycling in the past ten years, it is possible that the efforts to fulfil the EU recycling target of 50% by 2020 are going to be futile. There is one mechanical biological treatment facility and nine planned facilities but there is no infrastructure for waste incineration in Latvia. Municipalities are responsible for municipal solid waste management in their administrative territories, so they might be interested in the services provided by WastED. (Aleksic 2013, 4-7.)

Currently there are around 5000 people in Latvia working in the waste management sector. Approximately 50% of the employees work in the private sector and the other 50% work within the private sector. According to the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, there were 245 enterprises in 2011 in Latvia in the waste management sector (remediation activities and other waste management services, waste collection, treatment, disposal activities and sewerage). Most of the companies (178) were operating in waste collection, treatment and disposal activities (appendix 1.).

According to the questionnaire analysis Latvia is in need of education and training in the field of waste management technologies and planning the waste management strategies. In a similar way to Estonia, Latvians have problem with the scattered settlement waste management. The Finnish expertise on handling these problematic areas is of great interest. The financial and economical thinking in waste management is something that Latvians see as important and interesting as a part of the educational package.

Organisations offering education or information on waste management in Latvia

ZAAO is an organisation that trains, informs and participates in improving the quality of the environment. Mainly, the material aimed for elementary school children can be found online. (ZAAO 2013.) The Waste Management Association of Latvia organises conferences, exhibitions, seminars and training for municipal experts, government institutions, companies and for private individuals (Waste Management Association of Latvia 2013). Waste Management association of Latvia has large potential for WastED to be either a partner or a customer due to their connections and the knowledge of the Latvian waste management field.

Latvian Association of Waste Management Companies (LASUA) offers environmental training to children and to companies. They also arrange seminars, conferences, information campaigns and offer material packages for schools. (LASUA 2013.) Cooperation with LASUA might be very profitable because of their connections to local companies and to different organizations concerned with environmental issues and waste management.

3.2.3 Russia

Russia is one of the biggest waste producers in the world due to its size. The market size for industrial waste recycling and disposal services was \$23.27 billion in 2011 with CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 10.2 from 2011 to 2017. Even though the amount of the waste produced is high, the recovery of waste is low. The Russian market is in demand for know-how and experience of companies who would develop and improve the waste management in Russia. (Frost and Sullivan 2012.) Developing educational packages for the big Russian markets might be interesting for example to the Finnish companies operating in Russia such as Lassila & Tikanoja.

One of the biggest obstacles in exporting the education to Russia is the number of English-speaking citizens. In 2012, Russia got an overall EF English Proficiency Score (EF EPI) of 52.78. This score means that overall proficiency in English in Russia is low. The proficiency is high near Moscow, St. Petersburg and Novosibirsk and moderately high near Vladivostok. The other areas of Russia have low proficiency in English. These EF EPI scores are based on two different EF English tests that are open for any internet user for free and on one English test that is an online placement test used by the organisation during the enrolment of its students. (EF 2012.) The experts WastED is going to train in Russia in order to be the teachers and trainers need to be fluent in English. This limits the number of people WastED can train to educate. The other option is to buy translation and interpreter services. The cost-profit rate of these services needs to be calculated if such decisions are made.

Russia has a steady growth rate in municipal solid waste, per capita over 400 kilograms of MSW is generated. In the next 12 years, the amount of MSW generated will reach 450-500 kilograms per capita. From all of this municipal solid waste that is generated in Russia, only 7-8 % is recycled. 92-93 % of all MSW is disposed to landfills. While many of the European Union member states recover up to 60% of MSW, in Russia this recovery rate is close to zero. At this rate Russia needs to double its disposal capacity in next the 15 years. (Kivelä 2013.)

Around 40% of the waste management market is operated by private companies, mainly in collection, transportation and disposal. City municipalities have a central role in the future of waste management in Russia and how the problem is solved. Russia needs to invest 30-40 billion euro in waste management in order to control the issue in future. (Kivelä 2013.) This is a good opportunity for WastED to market their educational services as these decisions are being made. WastED has to target these decision makers as soon as possible. Contacting them and offering education as a solution to the problem is the core service of WastED.

Measures	Scenarios	
	Disposal-focused	Recovery-focused
Upgrade of collection and disposal infrastructure (€ billion)	18,5	
Construction of new recovery facilities (€ billion)	0*	12
Construction of new disposal facilities (€ billion)	15	10
TOTAL (bn EUR)	33,5	40,5
Recovery rate by 2025	5-7 %	40-45 %
Breakeven cost per capita (€/metric ton per year)	30-35	

Picture 3 Waste management scenarios for Russia (International Finance Corporation 2013).

3.2.4 Productization of the service for target markets

Productization of the service is the biggest obstacle of WastED in the beginning. The problem is that the piloting of the education has not yet started and the service and the service model are still forming. With the existing elements it is possible to form basic factors for the productized service. The core idea of the service is to solve the customer's educational problems in the waste management field. Each of eight modules is available for the customer to choose and the salesperson is helping the customer to understand what kind of set of modules would profit customer's business the most.

All of the modules are designed in a way that the basic core is adjustable to different target groups. The ways the modules can be produced into service are customized according to each customer's needs. A basic module includes the contents, the teaching materials and the different ways of learning and from these the final service is tailored to the customer. The productionized service is going to be an adjustable educational package. All of the modules have a standard price and the total price for the service is the combined total from the chosen modules. The actual pricing of the modules is not yet decided and therefore cannot be included in this research.

3.3 Sales strategy

When planning the sales and marketing strategies, one must take into consideration if the business is marketing or sales orientated. The markets WastED is targeting have a very limited number of customers, the market is basically business to business and the buying frequency is low or the service is purchased only once. Because of these criteria, the business seems to be sales oriented (The Association of Finnish Technical Traders 2013).

Selling the service has to be based on the needs of the customer. The salesperson has to identify what the customer, be it a company or a public service provider, really needs or wants. When addressing the needs of the customer, the salesperson highlights the problems. Through these problems, the salesperson makes the customer understand why they should buy this service. Without making the customer understand the salesperson does not have sufficient leverage to make the customer close the deal. Also when the customer understands why he/she needs the service, they become the salesperson for the product themselves within their own organization.

After identifying the needs and problems in the customer's business, the salesperson can offer a solution based on these requirements. With WastED education package the solution sold to the customer consists of one to eight modules. Each of these modules has different content and the salesperson needs go through the content of each one with the customer in order to find "the perfect solution".

The aim for the WastED salesperson is to combine the need satisfaction, problem solving and consultative selling approaches in order to help the customer to reach the objectives they have in their business. The salesperson can follow the sales model in figure 2. in the meeting with the customer.

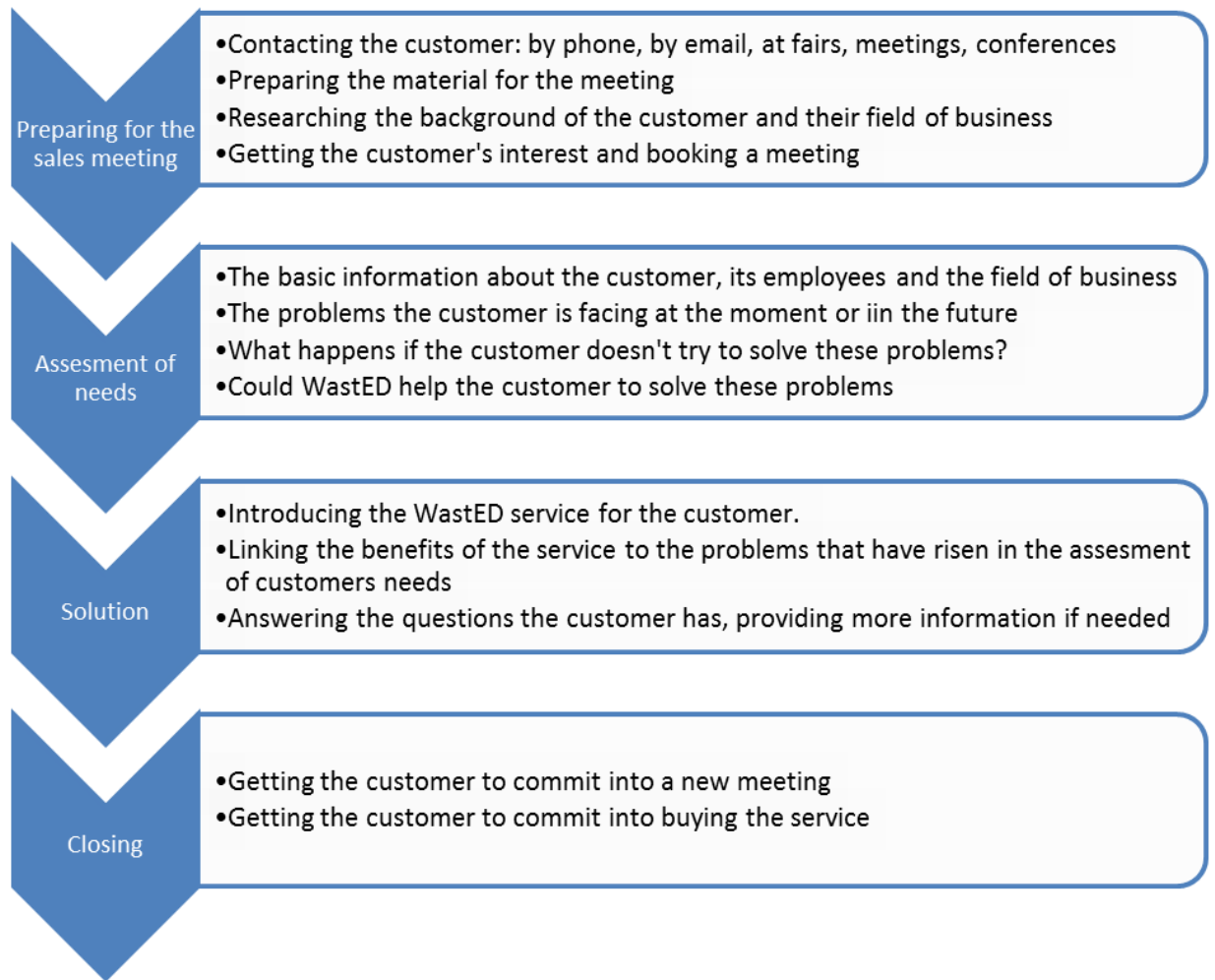


Figure 2. Sales strategy for sales meeting

Preparing for the meeting is important in order to understand the situation and the business environment of the customer. The salesperson can prepare the questions for the assessment of needs part. There should be questions on the basic information of the customer and about how the customer sees their business environment. Example questions for the sales meeting can be found in the table 2.

Example questions for the assessment of needs	
Basic questions	How many employees/managers do you have in your organization? How are the decisions made in your organization / What is the process for decision making?
Situational questions	How do you see the business environment? Do you see chances for growth in your business environment? How do you see the business environment evolving in the future? Does the economic situation affect your business? How much do you spend on training your personnel? Do you measure how the training is affecting the expertise of your personnel?
Problem questions	What are the main issues or problems your business is facing? How are you prepared for these issues? Are the people you employ educated enough on the waste management issues? How do you think education could help your organization to face these problems? Are there some fields of waste management your employees do not have expertise in?
What happens if... questions	If you do not educate your employees, do you have enough expertise to compete in the field? What happens if your competition educates their employees and you don't? How are you able to develop your your business if you don't develop your employees? If you train your employees with the WastED training package, what kind of benefits would you get?

Table 2 Example questions for sales meeting.

When the salesperson presents the solution to the customer, the customer should understand how it solves the problems that have risen

Since WastED sales education package is the first of its kind in the Turku University of Applied Sciences, it is important to get references for future customers. The pilot group should be used in the beginning as a reference but after getting the first official customers, the pilot group reference can be dropped. After the pilot stage there probably is going to be adjustments and fine tuning of all the matters related to the education package and the pilot group being a reference is not practical after that.

3.4 Marketing planning

For WastED, a different marketing plan is needed for each of the countries targeted. These marketing plans may consist of the same basic factors but for the needs of differentiation and focused marketing, the knowledge of the different needs of these different target countries is vital. If each country is considered as a target group, there are also sub-target groups under each country. These sub-target groups are institutions providing educations, public and private organizations and consumers. WastED is focusing on institutions, public and private organizations and not so much on directly marketing to consumers.

WastED is marketed as a service of education that provides its customers with the tools for educating their customers onsite. The business is more sales oriented than marketing oriented, which means that the market is more reachable through personal selling than using marketing material. This does not eliminate the need for marketing. Marketing for WastED is planned to be done in education fairs and to be targeted precisely to potential customers. The marketing material consists of WastED website and brochures. Because the potential customer base is quite small the method for marketing could be niche marketing (targeted marketing). This method serves best the well-defined customer segments (Levens 2012, 136).

The nature of a service being intangible and the customer does not have anything concrete to base the decision on, the customer has to rely on the image and the past references of the service. For this reason the marketing material that the customer gets has to be precise and well-structured. The customer evaluates everything concrete when making the decision, from how the salesperson presents himself and how the internet homepage is to the profiles of the previous customers. When marketing is done based on niche marketing, the WastED needs to consider what kind of message to give to each customer. For example it is not sensible to use schools or universities as a reference when marketing to private companies. The references should come from the same target group as the potential customer is.

An example of a marketing brochure was made for the WastED. This brochure was used when the project manager for the WastED project, Henna Knuutila, visited a fair in St. Peterborough in order to present the educational package. The brochure was sent to potential clients and to potential cooperation partners. The specifics for creating the brochure were that it needed to have the contact information and the picture to help the customers to Knuutila at the fair. Also the brochure needed to have information on the modules in the service packages and small informational text based on the previous WastED brochures. This brochure can be found in appendix 2.

3.5 SWOT-analysis for the WastED

Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expertise in waste management education - Three different organisations - Pilot group - Expertise in education - Finnish quality of waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge of possible partners for cooperation - Three different organizations - How to adjust the content of the education package for different target groups with different backgrounds - How to fit the content of the education in limited time frame - Experience in exporting education
External	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New contacts in other countries - Advantages of waste management - Planning and developing the education packages with partners in cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not getting the interest of the countries with poor waste management plans - Willingness of organisations to spend money on education - Language barrier

Table 3. SWOT analysis

The different segments in SWOT-analysis demand attention. In the strengths segment WastED has to make sure, that these characteristics stay at the strengths segment. The 'three different organizations' comment can be found in both weaknesses and in strengths. By this are meant the problems and benefits of having three separate educational institutes. The benefits are that all organizations have their own strengths, which are an asset to WastED. At the same time three different organizations means three different ways to operate. This is a weakness that WastED needs to put effort for, in a way that it can be removed from the weaknesses. Effective communication, standardizing operational methods and delegating responsibilities evenly are important when combining three organizations.

The 'knowledge of cooperation partners' weakness is be manageable if the cooperation partners WastED already has are committed to help WastED by providing more specific information on the target market. The weaknesses considering the educational package are manageable by adjusting the packages after the service is tested by the target group.

The two first external threats can be overcome by putting the right effort into the sales and developing the sales strategies based on the negative responses. In the opportunities there are future aspects and possibilities that can be used after WastED stabilizes its business operations.

The SWOT-analysis should be redone biannually. The easiness of the SWOT makes it a quick and effective tool for the management of WastED to assess the development and possible step-backs of the business. SWOT-analysis can also be a powerful tool in the future when assessing if the business should be entering new markets.

4 CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis was to develop marketing and sales strategies for export of waste management education business WastED. Suitable theories were presented in the theory part and these theories were applied to reach the strategies for WastED.

Estonian, Latvian and Russian market in the field of waste management were researched through analysing a questionnaire answered by the WastED-project pilot groups previously and by interviewing experts in Estonia and in TUAS. Research was also conducted by gathering market information from different studies, through internet and from statistics provided by the statistical bureaus. The analysis of these questionnaires prepared for the pilot group confirmed the need in Latvia and Estonia for the service WastED offers.

Marketing approaches for this service were based on the research of the market. The target markets were the Estonian, Latvian and Russian waste management companies, organisations and educational institutes. The number of potential customers in these markets is rather low and the private and public waste management organizations and educational institutes were selected to be the targets. The marketing for these markets needs to be very specific and specialized marketing material should be prepared for different target groups. Marketing is the most effective in this case through fairs and contacting the potential customers directly. A marketing brochure was also created for the purposes of WastED and it was used as marketing material for potential Russian customers.

The market research answered questions on the market WastED is planning to target. The potential co-operators and customers were identified in Latvia, Estonia, and Russia and the potential difficulties in these markets were acknowledged. Solutions for solving these problems were not created in this research and solving these problems could be a potential topic for continuous research. The market research also highlighted the waste management issues the target

countries are having. The main problems in Russia, Latvia and Estonia were related to the waste utilization and to collecting of the waste in scattered settlement areas. Solving these issues can be used as sales arguments.

Sales strategy for WastED is based on the nature of the service. In the theory part of this thesis different sales approaches were presented and suitable approaches were chosen for the purposes of the business. In the theory part also the buying process model was introduced and this model was applied to the sales meeting model created for WastED. It was concluded that the best approach for selling the service WastED offers, is to combine different sales approaches; consultative selling, selling based on problem solving and needs based selling. From these approaches a model for the sales meeting was created, which enables the salesperson to address the needs and problems of the customer and to offer the education service as a solution with which the customer can reach their goals.

The research possibilities in the future with the WastED business might be evaluating the success of the strategies suggested in this thesis and evaluating the successfulness of the educational package. Also research on how the service has benefitted the customers could be interesting and beneficial.

The successfulness of this research is good. The market research and the analysis of the target markets gave information on the needs of these markets and if there is demand for service such as WastED. The results of this research are used for starting up the business. The limitations to the size of the thesis forced the research to be narrow. This restriction forced to limit the researched topics to only market and sales strategies. For complete business strategy a wider research is needed. The results of this research can be mainly used for the business purposes for WastED. The sales strategy and the sales approach can be embedded to different sales of education projects at TUAS.

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Appendix 1. Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia: Entrepreneurship Indicators in Industry

RUG01. UZNĒMĒJDARBĪBAS RĀDĪTĀJI RŪPNIECĪBĀ (NACE 2.red.) by Industrial sector (NACE Rev.2), Year and Indicator										
	2011									
	Number of enterprises	Turnover (thsd LVL)	Production value (thsd LVL)	Value added at factor cost (thsd LVL)	Total purchase of goods and services (thsd LVL)	Personnel costs (thsd LVL)	Gross investment in tangible goods (thsd LVL)	Number of persons employed		
(E37) Sewerage	56	24264	28050	18841	11296	8256	12310	1458		
(E38) Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery	178	143743	146857	39373	105886	20610	17588	3609		
(E381) Waste collection	92	58025	59357	24000	35022	14751	10122	2662		
(E381.1) Collection of non-hazardous waste	83	50031	51127	22668	28194	14239	9762	2564		
(E381.2) Collection of hazardous waste	9	7994	8230	1332	6828	512	360	98		
(E382) Waste treatment and disposal	22	13978	14932	7477	6151	2957	6014	312		
(E382.1) Treatment and disposal of non-hazardous waste	19	.	.	.	.	.	.	300		
(E382.2) Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	12		
(E383) Materials recovery	64	71740	72568	7896	64713	2902	1451	635		
(E383.1) Dismantling of wrecks	13	2200	2047	216	1966	83	43	48		
(E383.2) Recovery of sorted materials	51	69540	70521	7680	62747	2819	1408	587		
(E39) Remediation activities and other waste management services	11	1225	1238	499	735	270	12	70		
Total	245	169232	176145	58713	117917	29136	29910	5137		
Source:	Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia									
Contact:	Enterprise finance and structural statistics section									
Copyright	.									
Units:	.									
Internal reference code:	RUG0010									

Appendix 2. Brochure for the WastED

WASTE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Turku University of Applied Sciences offers waste management training fitted to the needs of different target groups.

Through the waste management training, the knowledge and expertise of the personnel grows and the competitiveness in the work market is strengthened.





Introduction to waste management

Operators and their responsibilities

Workplace safety

Organisation's waste management

Collection and transportation

Waste treatment

Hazardous waste

Communication



TURUN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
TURKU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



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Appendix 3. Questions for the pilot group

Pre-tasks for the study trip

Partners in cooperation have two tasks to do for the study trip:

1. Have you attended to some kind of waste management training before? If yes, who organized it and what did you learn?
2. What kind of waste management education are you interested in?
 - a) waste management in general
 - b) actors of WM and their responsibilities
 - c) collection and transportation of waste
 - d) waste treatment
 - e) advice on waste matters
 - f) WM planning
 - g) something else, what?
3. Would you prefer studying on short & intensive courses or on a longer one (in the evenings aside the work)?
4. What kind of learning methods are you interested in?
 - a) practical work
 - b) group learning
 - c) e-learning package (video lectures, e-discussion forums, e-tests etc.)
 - d) virtual learning environment (Moodle, its Learning etc.)
 - e) lessons in a classroom
 - f) combination of these methods
 - g) something else, what?

To investigate the themes explored in the study trip, write down freely how is the situation in Estonia/Latvia.

1. **WM field in Estonia/Latvia: the public and private actors and their responsibilities on the municipality level**
2. **Recycling centers and other factors in 3rd sector in Estonia/Latvia**

- 3. Advice on waste matters and waste preventing programs, campaigns etc. in Estonia/Latvia**
- 4. WM in rural areas in Estonia/Latvia**
- 5. Waste treatment in Estonia/Latvia (gasification, incineration etc.)**
- 6. New learning methods in Estonia/Latvia**
- 7. The roles of WM associations on the state level**
- 8. Similar examples of following companies & inventions in Estonia/Latvia: Enevo, ZenRobotics, pipeline-based waste collection system**