

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

FINAL THESIS

IMPROVING MARKETING FOR A LOCKSMITH COMPANY, CASE: G4S LUKKOASEMA OY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis was made for G4S Lukkoasema Oy. The main goal of the research was to find out ways for improving Lukkoasemas marketing. As an addition the meaning was to clarify the reality of making business in the locking industry for the G4S corporate executives limitedly familiar with the business at hand. Research was done by sending a questionnaire for Lukkoasema executives and by conducting interviews. Development suggestions were conducted based on the research done.

Theoretical part of the work covers the operational forms of marketing: external, relationship and internal marketing. The purpose for the theory presented was to bring out the possibilities that effective marketing provides.

Currently marketing is being rather limited among Lukkosemas. It basically concentrating on relationship marketing and external marketing is being neglected totally. Present situation in the company and description of the research process are explained in own section in the thesis. Problems arising on the basis of the research are analyzed, risks are mapped and goals for marketing are defined in this section as well.

In the solutions chapter can be found suggestions for solving the problems presented. Suggestions deal with the possibilities of centralizing marketing efforts in order to utilize more effective external marketing.

Key Words: Marketing, external marketing, relationship marketing, corporate image, marketing

strategy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

For the past ten years the locksmith and security industry has been changing tremendously. The raise in competition, by the increased number of companies, has driven profit margins down. In a nearly oligolistic market companies have reacted to the increase in competition by plainly competing for the place of cheapest offerer. In order to close deals, offers are drafted as low as humanly possible even totally relying on profit generating by extra billings. The amount of extra billing has been maximized by many companies by offering insufficient amounts of products and services, utilizing the lack of expertise by the client in question.

The companies making business in the locksmith industry have fallen into routines. Where companies in other similar fields of industry have been trying to influence customers by utilizing various marketing strategies, the companies in the locksmith industry have neglected marketing as a whole. The companies have recognized the situation where competition created by a limited number of companies does not demand increase of familiarity of the company among the potential customers. At the same time they haven't taken in consideration the other benefits achievable by marketing efforts. Company image has been totally left for the customers to be formed by their own experiences. When all the companies are perceived as similar grey matter the switch of business partner has been made simple for the customers. Even just one mistake or a slightly higher offer may have caused the loss of a customer. In order to regain the lost customer, the next offer will be drafted as low on price as possible. This way of

competing customers will eventually become very expensive for the whole field of industry.

I have been working in the industry since 1997. First in a family owned company called Tampereen Lukko Oy. Then, after acquisition of the company by Falck Security services, I have worked for them. Group 4 Falck underwent and merger with British security giant Securicor in 2004. The result of this merger was Group 4 Securicor and lead into forming of G4S Lukkoasema Oy in 2007. G4S Lukkoasema Oy has also commissioned this work. After working in the industry for 10 years I know it is important to know the role of Abloy in order to understand some of the realities incorporated with locksmith industry. The next chapter will discuss the important role of Abloy.

1.1.1 The Role of Abloy

Abloy authorization requirements predate to the 1970's. The authorization gives a locksmith the possibility to fully sell and install Abloy products. Because of Abloy's market dominance, the function of non authorized companies has been made almost impossible by patents and guarantee limitations posted on Abloy products when not installed by an authorized company.

While Abloy holds total control over the authorizations, the generation of excess competition has been obstructed. The Locksmith companies have over the years become used to the situation where demand always exceeds supply and therefore all companies have plenty of business to go around. This has lead, from a marketing perspective, to a situation where marketing has been left completely in the hands of customer relations.

Therefore, customers form an image of the company totally based on their own experiences. This may easily lead to alienation of the customers.

Satisfying the amount of work at hand, caused by the lack of competition, has driven many companies into a situation where acquisition of new customers have been ignored and customers have left on their own when searching for partners. The companies are not marketed properly and the customers are expected to come to the companies with their business opportunities. A company that has retained a certain level of recognition is simply getting all inquiries in its region of operation automatically. This has also increased the illusion of the pointlessness of marketing. Most of the locksmiths also being rather small and regional businesses their marketing resources have been very limited as well.

Abloy on the other hand has been utilizing the locksmiths to take care of its marketing. Abloy is taking part of the marketing expenses of the locksmith companies involving its products. So the case at hand is that the manufacturer is transferring its marketing responsibility to the distributors which have throughout history been very phlegmatic in their marketing efforts. It is understandable, that in this business where the standards of different manufacturers are in complete control of their respected markets, the manufacturers don't see the need for marketing their brands. Abloy does not need to tell consumers in Finland about its superiority over some foreign competitor. The products of foreign companies are simply not available on the Finnish market.

Abloy authorizations are also regional and this has in the past prevented the forming of national locksmith company chains. In order to retain several branches, the only option has been a purchase of an existing locksmith store. This was exactly what Falck Security was doing when they acquired several locksmith companies around Finland in the beginning of the millennium. Now at the beginning of 2007 G4S formed a single multi branch company out of the five locksmith companies it had in its control. This came to be called G4S Lukkoasema. Out of this followed one of the few locksmith companies operating in several regions of Finland. In the past only LukkoExpert and Lukkorengas have formed similar multi branch locksmith companies.

The biggest clients, especially construction companies, being nationwide, this has been done in order to achieve nationwide partnerships. This has been possible in the cases of clients where decisions are made centrally instead of local decision making.

The evolution of the Abloy authorized companies into comprehensive security product providers' beginning in the middle of 1980's. At this time Abloy was driving for inspiring locksmith companies to expand their business from traditional locksmith operations to more comprehensive service providers including contractor business. The contractor business of serial locking systems was quickly taken over by the locksmith companies instead of being straight sold to the construction companies. This way Abloy made sure its products were installed by professionals and was sincere in its aim to convert all operation having to do with its product to the authorized locksmith companies. This was needed in order for Abloy to have better control over its secret or classified locksmith data.

The advancement of products of the locksmith industry (electronic locks, systems and door automatics) forced Abloy and the locksmith companies to invest in the education of their staff. The quick market entry of the electronic locking systems sped up the transfer of products installation to the locksmith companies. Around the same time Abloy also started to

publish ranking lists of the purchases of its different product families done by the locksmith companies. The rankings were usually published at Abloys annual locksmith conference. The impact of this policy was that many of the locksmith companies wanted to get on those rankings and that itself increased competition and lowered the prices once again. Competition in itself is a good thing, but the fact is, in order for a company to evolve as a provider and an employer every business needs to generate reasonable profit.

The locksmith industry is an extraordinary business in a way that every country of the world usually has its own dominating product provider (Sweden – ASSA, Norway – Trioving, Denmark – Ruko etc.). Therefore it is natural that locks are manufactured for a certain culture and for specifications defined by its local authorities. This way all the classified locksmith data stay in the home country.

It also needs to be stated that Abloy as the dominant manufacturer in Finland is part of ASSA-Abloy group which is a world leading manufacturer in the respected industry with the most comprehensive product selection. This is the main reason for the group to be able to control distributors, designers and constructors the way it can.

For a locksmith company in Finland it is needed to be able to adapt the prevailing circumstances and find efficiency in its own procedures. The industry itself is a traditional entrepreneur business where the entrepreneurs and possibly their family's work input and long hours are in a key role when making profit. This is possibly the reason that has kept central stores out of this particular business. Central ownership is not common because their demand for profit is usually too high.

1.2 Thesis Objectives

The aim of this work is to point out other ways of competing in exchange for price competition for a nearly completely homogeneous market. The extreme price awareness of some customer segments should, in my opinion, increase the willingness of locating the less price aware segments of customers. By concentrating marketing resources on these customer segments, better profits could be generated.

The purpose of this work is also to map the current marketing situation of the G4S Lukkoasemas, identify problems and suggest solutions for those problems. The goal is to determine the views towards marketing as a means of competition by Lukkoasemas, define its possibilities and locate means for utilizing a reasonable marketing plan.

Additionally, we would like to clarify the reality of making business in the locksmith industry for corporate executives who may be limitedly familiar with the business at hand. The business which does not compare with regular contracting businesses that well. Why certain aspects of this business cannot be tracked with regular business indicators and what kind of problems may occur when leading an "eyes strictly on cash flow" corporation versus a traditional family owned local businesses.

1.3 Research Method

Because of the specific nature of the field of business at hand, this work mainly relies on the personal experiences of the author. The author has been working in the industry since 1997. Work has included large variation of jobs from installing products till project management, which is the current occupation of the author. With this paper I want to bring out my opinions and views of the current situation of the locksmith industry in

a marketing student's point of view. I also would like to point out some of the major problems that the companies have in dealing with marketing, and some aspects of marketing that could successfully be utilized in this specific business environment in order to further develop the company in a way that would be beneficial for all of the parties in question.

For this research, several individuals possessing views and expertise in different aspects of this work, including experts from the locksmith industry as well as people representing the views of G4S, have been interviewed.

A questionnaire was drafted to find out the views of local executives of the four branches of G4S Lukkoasema, toward marketing in general, asking questions like: What has been done in the past? What hasn't been done and why is that? These were used as part of the basis for this work.

In order to find out the current situation and plans of G4S as a group, a marketing representative of the group was interviewed. With a series of questions, the goal was to define the marketing plan for the year 2007 and possible attitudes behind these decisions. These answers have been used to help define possibilities for marketing the Lukkoasemas.

2. THE COMPANY OVERVIEW

Group 4 Securicor is a world leading security solutions provider. Its core businesses include providing security guards to large variety of customer types, installing and maintaining security equipment, cash transportation and security consultation. G4S has operations in over 100 countries and some 500,000 employees. Nevertheless Finland is the only country in the world where G4S is providing locksmith services.

G4S was formed after merger of Danish Group 4 Falck A/S's security businesses and British Securicor plc in 2004. It is now listed in the London stock exchange and head quarters also reside in London. The merger also lead into forming of G4S Lukkoasema Oy in 2007. G4S Lukkoasema Oy consists of 6 locksmith companies around Finland.

G4S Lukkoasema Oy is a branch of G4S in Finland, working in the field of security technology. There are five Lukkoasemas in Finland. The main functions of them are selling and installing of mechanical and electromechanical locks, security and camera systems, door automation etc. The clientèle basis consists of building companies, apartment buildings, public sector, and private people. G4S Lukkoasema Oy Tampere was formed in 2002 after Group 4 Falck acquired two local locksmith stores Tampereen Lukko Oy and Lukko ja Avain Valtatie Oy. Its turnover is about 3,4 million euros and it employs 19 people.

3. FORMS OF MARKETING IN THE LOCKSMITH INDUSTRY

3.1 What is Marketing?

On a general level marketing can be defined as an activity whose purpose is to secure the satisfaction of people buying products and services. (Lahtinen 2001, p.12) Marketing strives for matching demand with supply. Marketing works as a mediator between these two. In addition marketing can be used to affect demand. Nowadays people are sold a lot of unnecessary things with using just mental images. With utilization of successful marketing a person can be assured of the supremacy of a product over competing products.

The objectives of systematic marketing are:

- to bring a product and a company to the attention of the public
- to create a positive image
- to generate sales
- to achieve profitability
- to satisfy the customer
- to establish and develop profitable customer relationship. (Lahtinen 1994, p. 7)

The importance of marketing has increased tremendously during the past decades. Today it is seen that no product can compete without successful marketing. Even the most superior product won't sell itself. It has also been understood that profitability demands creation and development of continuous customer relationships.

3.2 Operational Forms of Marketing

As drafting plans for marketing, a company must first define its customer base and goals. This will make it easier to define company's competitive weapons or marketing mix and prevent business from meandering. Concentrating of company's strengths ensures maximal effectiveness.

Marketing can be divided into three operational forms:

- 1. External marketing
- 2. Relationship marketing
- 3. Internal marketing

3.2.1 External Marketing

External marketing is mass marketing aimed for large groups of potential customers. External marketing is utilized in the creations phase of a customer relation. It strives for rising interest, of potential customers, towards company's products or services. By increasing company's or its products familiarity, it is tried to make it easier for customers to transfer from competing company of product to your own. Corporate image can also be affected by using external marketing.

Probably the most famous model for defining company's marketing mix is the 4Ps model created by Philip Kotlers. This states that marketing mix can be defined by referring to four P's as in Product, Price, Place and Promotion. (Kotler 2001, p.67-68) The benefits of external marketing are:

- To facilitate sales
- To create positive images
- To increase familiarization of a company or work as a reminder
- To educate consumers
- To create need for a product

3.2.2 Relationship Marketing

Relationship marketing is applied to customer at the point of purchase. This can be defined as all factors affecting customers purchase decision, such as interaction between seller and the customer. The importance of customer service is emphasized nowadays and some estimates state that even two thirds of all customer loss is caused by bad customer service. The importance of customer service in creation and maintenance of long-term customer relations cannot be underlined too much. In many competitive situations, customer service is the only competitive weapon in addition to price. Proficiency and customer based service of a seller can, in some cases, have even more value than price itself. When maintaining long-term business relationships, mutual satisfaction is the key in enabling the most profitable collaboration affairs.

Relationship marketing is the creation and development of long-term, profitable and interactive relationships with both existing and potential customers, suppliers, various interest groups, product referees, as well as with potential and present personnel (internal customers) so that commitment to these relationships is mutual and fruitful from the point of view of both parties. (Lahtinen 1994, p.12) These six interest groups are called the six markets of relationship marketing. (Figure 1)

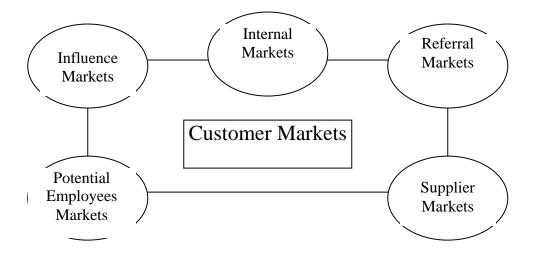


Figure 1: The six markets of relationship marketing (Lahtinen 1994, p. 13)

Along with increase in competition, product range and improvement in means of communication, all fields of business have transferred from a sellers market to a buyers market. Because of this, all business actions have to be customer-based. In order to increase profitability, the relations toward customers and all interest groups have gained a more substantial meaning. Interest groups are factions which have mutual dependency with the company in question. "Interest groups follow the principles of giving and keeping promises amongst themselves." (Lahtinen 1994, s. 12) Neglecting these interest groups can result in loss of a customer relationship. Satisfaction of different interest group need to be monitored periodically in order to take actions in time, in case where unsatisfactory is occurring. "Creating and developing a relationship network is one of the most important tasks of the company's management." (Lahtinen 1994, p. 12)

Competitive weapons of relationship marketing are:

• Customer service

- Utilization of interest groups
- Interaction between people

Customer relationship marketing is aimed at controlling and maintaining current customer relationships, to create new ones and prevent loss of customers. Customer relationship marketing strives from the fact that the most profitable customers for a company are the long-term ones. This is based on a study stating that acquiring a new customer is 10 times more expensive than maintaining an old one. The same study defines that reacquiring of a lost customer is even 27 times more expensive than maintaining the customer. (1-10-27 rule) The function of a customer-based company is described as: "Here is a group of individual consumers. With what kind of products and services could we satisfy their needs?" (Lahtinen 1994, p. 18)

The utilization of relationship marketing demands for effort of every employee. Every employee, as addition to their normal work tasks, works as a marketer and customer relation handlers. Every employee of a company has an opportunity to affect customers positively or negatively. Because of this identification of the weak links of the service chain is crucial. Staff should also be trained in customer relations handling.

3.2.3 Internal Marketing

Internal marketing is directed towards company's own employees. A company should motivate its employees to stand behind corporate views. In order to accomplish this, the company needs to take care of efficient training, motivation and communication. If the corporate views and goals are unclear to the employees, it will in the end reflect on company's

profitability. Because of this internal marketing also has a crucial part when creating a corporate image.

"Nowadays, it is not enough for part-time marketers to be experts in their own field but they must have marketing skills as well. Service quality consists of a long chain where each link is as strong as the next. When marketing is seen as an integrated process, it is clear that marketing is no more a special function but rather a part of every employee's daily work." (Lahtinen 1994, p. 15)

3.3 Corporate Image

Kaarina Iltanen states that the corporate image is extremely important for:

- Companies that have high product selection or variety of products.
- Service companies that are lacking of a concrete product, for example insurance companies.
- Production commodity companies where purchases are usually big and risks high, for example construction supply manufacturers.
- Businesses which have similar products and competition is high, for example breweries.
- Businesses where consumer is rarely on the market, for example household appliances.
- Companies that already have high corporate image. (Iltanen 1998,
 p. 16)

Locksmith industry can be seen to fall into more than one of these categories, for example because of its similarity of products among competing companies.

Perception of corporate image as a tool for gaining competitive advantage has increased by time. More well known company has an advantage in marketing and selling its products in comparison to a less known operator. People are more open to receive messages marketed by well known companies. This also makes it easier to promote and sell new products.

So called inner corporate image, the way a company's employees perceive and understand the company's views and means of doing business, it is also critical when creating positive corporate image. Satisfied and motivated workforce is in key role in this matter. Every employee along the service chain is in charge of creating positive corporate image through communication with the clients and providing adequate service.

3.4 Marketing Strategy and Means of Marketing

With well planned marketing strategy a company can focus its limited resources the best way possible in order to improve sales and to strengthen its position in the market. Marketing strategy works the best when it is designed in corporation with company's general business plan.

As a basis for the creation of marketing strategy, should be held study of company's structure and operations. Company's operations should be adjusted to match demand, needs and competition. Swot-analysis can be used to evaluate company's current situation. It is used to help define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Marketing strategy consists of single marketing efforts which in much shorter term aim to reach desired results. Marketing can for example be used in a case of product introduction by utilizing different means of external marketing. Kotlers 4 P's model can be used to define the most suitable means of external marketing. It can be stated that the usage of Kotlers model is most suitable in consumer goods markets.

4. PRESENT SITUATION IN THE COMPANY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

4.1 Research Process

A questionnaire was drafted to find out the views, of local executives of the four branches of G4S Lukkoasema, toward marketing in general. What has been done in the past? What hasn't been done and why is that? These will work as part of the basis for this work. The questionnaires were sent via email in January of 2007. This questionnaire can be found in the Appendix section as Appendix I.

For this research several individuals, possessing views and expertise of different aspects this work is covering, were interviewed. Experts of locksmith industry as well as people representing the views of G4S have been heard.

In order to find out the current situation and plans of G4S, a marketing representative of the group was interviewed. With a series of questions the goal was to define the marketing plan for the year 2007 and possible attitudes behind these decisions.

4.2 Present Situation on the Group Level

Following definition for the group level marketing plans for year 2007 are based on interviews held with G4S marketing planner Antti Tolonen in August of 2007.

As a basis for G4S's marketing strategy as the group can be held supporting sales, recruiting, increase the corporations' recognition, building the corporate image, and increasing the number of visitors on the corporations' web pages.

As asking for the marketing plans for the year 2007, it can be noticed they posses a great deal of external marketing. Following means where mentioned considering the plans:

- Newspaper advertising (e.g. recruiting adverts, supplement of Kauppalehti, Kotiturva adverts etc.)
- Radio advertising (Radio Rock recruiting adverts)
- Billboard advertising (sporting arenas)
- Electronic media
 - Web pages
 - o Banners
 - o Google adverts
 - o Search engine optimizing
 - o Opasmedia marketing pages of Lukkoasema
 - o Phone number search engines (Fonecta Finder, inoa.fi etc.)
- Catalogues
 - o Phonebooks
 - o FinnSecurity
- Events
 - o Exhibitions
 - o Seminars
 - o Sport and concert venues (usually small groups)
- Advert tapings
 - o Kotirurva campaign on cars
- Printed matter

- o Brochures
- o Flyers
- Posters
- o Stands (Kotiturva)

• Giveaways

Graphical guidelines are defined by London head office and they are to be followed strictly.

According to Mr. Tolonen target groups for marketing were defined as commerce, banking, service, construction, real estate, industrial businesses, public communities, and consumers. Depending on product or service in question, on individual person level, the marketing is to be aimed at people involved or in charge of decision making.

Services provided varies greatly from comprehensive security solutions aimed for large corporations till simpler solutions for consumer households. Unifying characteristic in all of these is the ability to customize the comprehensive solution in order to satisfy the needs of the customer in question.

4.3 Answers for the Lukkoasema Questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix I) was sent to the local executives of four regional Lukkoasemas. The respectable cities were Helsinki (Hki), Jyväskylä (Jkl), Oulu (Oul) and Tampere (Tre). Next you can find the questions made and answers given by the different regions.

1. Marketing budget (percents from turnover)

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Answer	NA*	1,0 %	NA*	0,5 %

^{*} Not available but won't differ much from the ones given

2. "What does you marketing budget consist of?"

Helsinki

- Different publications

Jyväskylä

- Television adverts
- General advertising
- Exhibitions
- Advertising in professional publications
- Variation of publications

Oulu

- NA

Tampere

- General print media
- Various publications
- Sports sponsoring (budgeted separately from other marketing)

3. "What would you keep as the most important aspect of marketing, for a locksmith company, in your region?"

Helsinki

"Professional publications, direct marketing and security expos"

Jyväskylä

"Face to face marketing at the place of business or at the client"

Oulu

"Local medias like newspapers and radio"

Tampere

"Visibility of work vehicles and the shop"

4. "How would you rate the importance of external marketing in locksmith industry?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Very important				
Important		X		X
Can't say				
Relatively	X		X	
irrelevant	21		71	
Totally				
irrelevant				

5. "In what way have you marketed the Key4Security software to potential clients?"

Helsinki

"Face to face when possibility has occurred"

Jyväskylä

"Informing clients of the excision of the software"

Oulu

"Direct customer contacts and randomly handed out marketing material"

Tampere

"Single newspaper advert in the fall of 2006"

6. "How would you rate the importance of external marketing with the Key4Security software?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Very important	X	X		X
Important				
Can't say				
Relatively			X	
irrelevant			1	
Totally				
irrelevant				

[&]quot;Putting up brochures in the store"

[&]quot;Direct contact to the potential clients"

7. "Have you utilized Abloys marketing support when executing your marketing efforts?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Yes	X	X	X	X
No				
Can't say				

8. "How would you see customers rating following aspects of business when choosing partners?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Price	1	1	6	2
Delivery	2	4	3	1
capability	2	,	3	1
Customer	5	5	4	3
service	3	3	7	3
Previous	4	2	1	4
experiences	7	2	1	7
Corporate	6	6	5	6
image	0	0	3	J
Quality of work	3	3	2	5

In addition Tampere mentioned customers in their region to appreciate sufficient consultation capabilities and precisely drafted estimative offers.

In Helsinki's opinion professionalism is the most important aspect.

9. "What would you feel to be the importance of price in relation to service level among different market segments?"

Respondents were asked to rate service levels meaning in relation to price level with a scale of 1-5, where 5 stands for low price orientation and 1 high price orientation.

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Construction	3	NA	4	2
companies		1471	-	~
Superintendents	4	NA	3	5
Maintenance	3	NA	2	5
companies		1471	_	5
Corporate clients	5	NA	4	3
Public sector	3	NA	2	1
Consumer clients	4	NA	2	3

10. "How would you rate the importance of your workers (locksmiths) in having relations with your clients?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Very important		X		X
Important	X		X	
Can't say				
Relatively				
irrelevant				
Totally				
irrelevant				

11. "Have you given extra attention to some aspects of customer service in order to improve your service level?"

Helsinki

"Cars and maintaining set timetables"

Jyväskylä

"Swift handling of key and series change orders"

"Upkeep of inventory according to the clientèle needs."

Oulu

"Delivery capability"

Tampere

"Underlining workforces initiative interaction with clients at the building sites"

12. "Are you convinced that your staff is conscious about the company's views and customer service goals?"

	Hki	Jkl	Oul	Tre
Yes, without a				
doubt				
Yes, most of	X	X	X	
the time				
Can't say				
Not in every				X
circumstance				1
Not at all				

13. "How have you taken care of workforces training, motivating and briefing in internal affairs in order to guarantee the function of corporate views and goals?"

Helsinki

"Staff meetings, gettogethers and trainings"

Jyväskylä

"Meetings, everyday dialogue, product manufacturers trainings and groups staff publication"

Oulu

"Consistent training by the partners and weekly staff meetings"

Tampere

"Consistent training and weekly staff meetings"

4.4 Analysis of the Answers for the Questionnaire

When analyzing the answers for the questionnaire it can be seen that regional differences are remarkable. Out of contradictory of some of the answers, it can be seen how little different regions have put effort in mapping different marketing tools available and on the other hand utilizing them effectively.

Marketing budget, asked in the question one, is pretty much the same in all regions. About one percent of turnover is distinctively low for companies that have just undergone name change and have rather broad customer base. On the other hand it can be stated that one percent is rather typical for companies in this industry.

When asking the executives their views of the importance of marketing in general, the answers varied considerably. Helsinki and Oulu consider external marketing to be rather meaningless for their operations, when on the other hand Jyväskylä and Tampere see external marketing as an important tool for them. Nevertheless Jyväskylä's or Tampere's marketing budgets don't vary a lot from the ones of Oulu and Helsinki.

As a conclusion, it could be said that generally prevalent attitudes in this industry towards external marketing exist also among G4S Lukkoasemas. I could argue that in the cases where external marketing is seen meaningless, it has also not been seen important to research the possibilities it possesses. The possibilities are not recognized or at least they are not seen as seductive enough. On the other hand, in the cases where marketing is given some value but no extra effort is put into it, I would see as a case where there is a genuine will to increase the visibility of the company but means for achieving the desired goal are not found.

Every region stated having been using different fields of printed media. It would seem that newspapers and selection of publications were used as the custom channel for advertising. Marketing has been implemented in the scope of Abloys marketing support in order to cut marketing spending in half. No centralized marketing or joint ventures are utilized and all marketing has been locally orchestrated. Cooperation with the G4S's other fields of business has not been happening either.

It is not either helpful for the attitudes towards marketing that the meaning of corporate image is seen totally meaningless among all responders. It is probably true that, in an industry where none of the competition is utilizing external marketing as a tool for improving their corporate image, neglecting corporate image has little of negative effect. Nevertheless this doesn't prove that improved corporate image would not affect business positively.

Customers' previous experiences are given higher value than the corporate image. It could be argued that previous experiences and image work in a similar way among different customer segments. Long-standing customers are kept loyal with good customer service and leaving good experiences. In pursue for new customers previous experiences don't have much value, and then corporate image can be the defining factor for the consumers' choice of business partner.

As what comes to new Key4Security software, startling difference is detected among the answers. Helsinki, Jyväskylä and Tampere see it very important to address marketing resources for this particular product. Oulu on the other hand sees it relatively irrelevant. In the fall of 2006 the software was launched in former Falck Security's stand at the security exhibition in Tampere. Software generated significant amount of attention among potential customer segments. Till this day, only a fragment of those potential clientèle have been exploited. When asking what the regions have done in order to promote the software, Tampere is the only one reporting to have been utilizing external marketing in this particular case. Although it has only covered one newspaper advertisement.

When taking relationship marketing is consideration, all the regions see the importance of workers (locksmiths) to be significant. The workers workmanship, perception of corporate views and the goals of customer service are in key role when interacting with the clients. In order to maintain and improve the level of workers skills, every region has been utilizing training provided by product suppliers. When communicating the corporate view and goals, weekly staff meetings have been scheduled in every region.

Even though the interaction between the workers and the clients is perceived as an important aspect, none of the regions can state that their workers are without a doubt conscience of the corporate views and goals. This can be stated to be a result of failure in some aspects of internal marketing.

When comparing the answers of Lukkoasemas and the views of the Group some conclusions can be drawn. As in general, marketing is a lot more planned and broad in base by the group rather than the Lukkoasemas. Even only looking at the attitudes towards corporate image, significant differences can be detected. On the group level image is given much more important role when implementing marketing. On Lukkoasema level image is seen relatively marginal as a mean for improving sales.

Though most of the marketing has been aimed for promoting sales of specific products or services, the marketing efforts of the Lukkoasemas have been relatively universal and so corporate image has been influenced more or less subconsciously.

In the end relationship marketing, through interaction with the clients, is seen as the only right way of influencing customer relations.

Disregarding the somewhat negative attitudes towards external marketing, in my opinion, it can be stated that the number one reason for neglecting external marketing arises from the fact that people, in charge of marketing regionally, are over worked as it is and they are lacking expertise. Probably none of the regional executives, answering these questions, don't

deny the possibilities to be gained by well organized external marketing. When managing their timetables the marketing aspects just don't receive the attention needed. This is probably caused by the fact that, in order to achieve their current market shares, no attention towards marketing has been needed in the past.

A question arises:"why the groups marketing resources are not used for executing the marketing of Lukkoasemas?" The answer for this question is greatly affected by the attitudes of Lukkoasemas, wanting to take care of all their actions without the groups' involvement. Also a distinct reluctancy of assigning resources for the benefit of Lukkoasemas is showing through from the groups' attitudes.

4.5 Problems Arising from the Research Results

4.5.1 Shortcomings in Marketing Efforts

As stated earlier, Lukkoasemas are heavily relying on relationship marketing as their main marketing tool. For the lack of competition in the past, the image of direct interaction with clients and prospects being the only possible way of affecting them has arisen.

The usability and need for external marketing has been, in many situations, recognized. Especially, what it comes to consumer customers. Still no work has ever been done for creation of comprehensive marketing plan. Separate advertisements won't bring the benefits of a well thought out marketing mix. Whether this is a cause of wants, attitudes, lack of skills or time probably varies among the different regions.

An aspect that would help dealing with these problems has been non-existent in the past. This aspect is being cooperation between different regions and fields of business. Cooperation or centralization in the planning process of marketing would lower expenses and work load. It could also, by marketing the synergy benefits of different fields of business, bring cross over customers from other fields of business and create totally new ones.

As studying the groups marketing plans, one cannot avoid of noticing certain conservatism and carefulness in their plans. Considering that the group has broadened its fields of expertise and undergone a name change, in just past two years. The groups' involvement in Lukkoasemas marketing has been limited to producing some marketing material, when requested by the Lukkoasemas.

As an exception can be mentioned Kotiturva concepts marketing, in which the group has put a lot more effort in. Of course somewhat lack of centralized control has been missing from this too. External marketing materials producing to different medias has been left for the Lukkoasemas to produce in their own regions, as of this has been totally missing outside Helsinki region.

It can also be stated that, the groups' ownership of locksmith industry being totally unique for Finland, certain stiffness and lack of guidelines has been occurring in relation to this field of business. London's head office creates precise marketing guidelines for the whole organization solely keeping in mind its core business of providing guarding services. Certain unsuitable guidelines for contracting business are not identified by the London head office. This creates a model where locksmith business is

tried to market among the same guidelines with other branches of business. This will not most of the time provide the result wanted.

Next have been listed the main problems which are hindering the Lukkoasemas benefiting from external marketing.

List of problems:

- 1. Lack of external marketing on the Lukkoasema level
- 2. Lack of expertise in the field of marketing
- 3. Excessive and unnecessary work load of people currently in charge of marketing regionally
- 4. Prejudice towards and unrecognized benefits of marketing
- 5. Cooperation between Lukkoasemas is slim
- 6. The groups support considering external marketing is inadequate
- 7. The lack of clear and comprehensive marketing plan or strategy

4.5.2 Risks of Neglecting External Marketing

Weakening of corporate image caused by the lack of marketing leaves a certain vacuum in the decision making especially among consumer customers. The products of competitors being the same only means left for affecting customers decision making are price and service. In many of the cases these being also quite equal, well constructed corporate image could tip the scale just enough. Badly maintained image on the other hand might steer potential customers elsewhere even before inquiries are taking place.

Taken in to consideration almost total immunity of certain customer segments towards external marketing, it also needs to be said that relationship marketing will always act a very important role in the locksmith industry. Belonging to these segments, can be defined especially

construction companies. Decision makers in these companies can of course also be affected by creating positive corporate image through external marketing but the main channel for reaching these people is for sure relationship marketing.

Needless to say but it is obvious that well planned and effective marketing strategy is very hard to implement with the available regional resources. Regional executives which are in charge of marketing don't have time or they are not qualified to handle it in the scale needed. Marketing plans implemented, according to the realities, will consist of random newspaper adverts or radio spots. Worldwide marketing resources possessing group should be able to, when wanted, support and help the regional operators by coordinating, designing and producing different marketing material.

Many reasons for the lack of this cooperation can be found. Lukkoasemas want to operate independently and don't want the group to "mess things up". Every Lukkoasema formerly being an independent company the people of these companies have gotten used to taking care of business in their own personal ways. Because of this resistance towards change can be sometimes hard. Roles between Lukkoasemas and the group considering external marketing are not defined clearly. For this part, Lukkoasemas should probably admit that the benefits of centralized marketing overweight the weaknesses. The group should on the other hand be more willing to join Lukkoasemas under its centralized marketing efforts.

When in pursue for the role of leading locksmith chain or even leading security service provider position in Finland, the role of external marketing cannot be stressed too much. In order for Lukkoasemas, being relatively new name in the business, which is crowded by old family owned companies with roots in the local communities, to compete against

old customs utilization of comprehensive marketing strategy is needed. Many customers are used to buy locks from the same old place they have bought them for the past 30 years. A large locksmith chain has a possibility to mold these attitudes and become the leading locksmith store. If this possibility is not capitalized the threat is that some other large and constantly growing locksmith chain, will accomplish this.

G4S truly is the only operative in the field of security services in Finland which have all the fields of business under the same name. This advantage should be exploited much more effectively.

4.6 Goals of Marketing

The goals of external marketing should be set primarily at improving:

- corporate image
- familiarity
- sales
- profitability

By improving corporate image peoples mind should be set to imagine G4S as the world's only security services company that can provide solutions for every security need possible. G4S should be imaged as a company that can provide the best possible product and service entity available, all under the same roof.

Company's familiarity in the eyes of potential customers should be on the level where no one can bypass G4S when making decisions about procuring security products and services.

In order to boost sales heavy marketing efforts should be applied on product and service entities which are already on the doorstep of gaining significant market share of their own market segments. Of these to be mentioned, Kotiturva concept and Key4Security software which markets will posses huge potential in the near future. The significant sales volume to be gained by utilizing external marketing will improve the efficiency and profitability of these two tremendously.

5. PLANS TO IMPROVE MARKETING IN G4S LUKKOASEMAS

In this chapter, there are suggested solutions for solving the marketing problems, affecting Lukkoasemas, described in chapter 4.5.

When conducting this research the most peculiar finding probably was that the Lukkoasemas don't really recognize the opportunities that being a part of large group provides. Some level of frustration occurred towards the group in the past, has lead in to a situation where Lukkoasemas don't want to admit the possibilities available.

At the end the fact still is that, even if the group might be a necessary evil in some aspects of the business, in the marketing point of view the group creates possibilities not available for most of the competitors in the locksmith industry. The resources of a single localized locksmith company are just not sufficient for planning and executing a comprehensive marketing strategy. In these cases external marketing is usually dismissed totally. Lukkoasema, being the largest locksmith company chain in Finland and G4S being the biggest security service company in the world, resources should be more than satisfactory.

The marketing of Lukkoasema as a whole should be centralized and given in the hands of someone with true marketing experience and skills. This someone should obviously be found in the central administration of the group. This someone should, in cooperation with the local executives of all Lukkoasemas, draft an annual marketing plan. This plan needs to be aligned with the general marketing strategy of the group. Of course Lukkoasema should be taken better in consideration when designing this strategy in the future.

The annual marketing plan should cover at least following points:

- Where the marketing focus needs to be set at?
 - o Some particular fields of products or services
 - o Some particular customer segment
- What is the overall message of marketing that is wanted to be communicated?
 - o G4S everything under the same roof?
- What specific product or service concepts are focused in the marketing plan?
 - o Kotiturva
 - o Key4Security
- What are the medias that should be used?
 - o Radio
 - o Newspapers
 - o Publications etc.
- Which are the main customer segments to be focused on?
 - o Consumers
 - o Superintendents
 - o Companies etc.
- How are these segments reached most optimally?
 - o Professional publications
 - Direct marketing
- What are the possibilities for selecting medias that can be used by all regions?
 - o Almamedia
 - o Sanoma WSOY
 - o SBS Action media

- How the groups other fields of business can be incorporated into the marketing efforts?
 - o Alarm systems / guarding services
 - o Security systems / fire security systems

Everybody have time to recognize the fact that possibilities are vast, if all company's synergy benefits can be harnessed to serve a common purpose. Lukkoasemas should also accept the fact that marketing is in a key role of developing the business at the moment, and if it cannot be taken care of individually, it should be centralized.

The groups marketing department has the skills and resources for implementing this marketing plan. Regional executives of the Lukkoasemas can provide input and communicate the needs of the field to them. With this sort of centralized marketing would help in achieving at least these important aspects:

- Cost-effectiveness
- Limit the work load of the regional executives
- Improve effectiveness of the message communicated

The cost-effectiveness is achieved by using mutual service providers, advertisements and campaigns. It doesn't matter whether radio or newspapers are the preferred media. There are large service providers in these fields which have local channels and newspapers in all wanted regions of Finland. There is no sense for every region producing their own marketing material and buying the service by themselves when all this can be done centrally. With centralization the prices can be set lower and it leaves resources to concentrate on quality and quantity.

Centralized marketing would ease the workload of those regional executives who are now taking care of marketing while managing all other functions as well.

The centralization by itself won't do much good. The message marketed need to be unified and it need to be pursued hard. In my opinion the first aspect of the message marketed should be the general improvement of G4S status and familiarity among consumers. The shaping of corporate image should be incorporated into every marketing effort. The people working for G4S know that it is the best and most comprehensive service provider available in the field of security services. Why is this kept as a secret? Shouldn't this be the main message this corporation wants to communicate to the consumers?

Improvement of general company name recognition is vital when seeking new customers. This will as well help recruiting and work as an important part of internal marketing. The recognition of employer will create positive pride towards the company among employees. Who wants to work in a company who no one has ever heard of?

Name of the company shouldn't be marketed by itself when it can easily be incorporated into every marketing mean used. Incorporation with the name there can be marketed fields of business, specific products or services, and for example recruitment efforts. Possibilities are endless. As long as, every time something is marketed through different medias, the importance of message "G4S best and only" is never forgotten.

Locksmith companies stress the importance of relationship marketing. How this is the only way for achieving long-term clients! This is true but how can you form a long lasting customer relation with someone, if you never get to sell them anything? The improved corporate image will attract new customers, who then should be moulded into longterm customers by relationship marketing. No one can despise the importance of relationship marketing but no one can either deny that superior corporate image will also bind customers to the company.

Lukkoasema should be able to rise above local competition by achieving superior corporate image and by marketing its status as the most comprehensive service provider available. In my opinion a company with overwhelming marketing resources cannot be on the same line with the competition. This fact needs to be utilized and the potential there need to be gained and this is not going to happen as long as regions are taking care of their own marketing. It will not either happen before Lukkoasema is incorporated under the groups overall marketing strategy in a meaningful way. The multiplicity of the fields of business can be set under the same strategy in a way that everyone will benefit and cost-efficiency will occur.

Synergy benefits of different fields of business need to be recognized and marketed to the potential customers more efficiently. Resources are wasted marketing all fields separately when it can be done centrally. This way G4S will also put out much more convincing image of itself as a comprehensive business partner that can take care of every security need imaginable.

Next to this overall strategy, in my opinion, two specific service concepts should be concentrated on when designing marketing for Lukkoasema. Kotiturva concept and Key4Security software are both potential market leaders in their own respected segments. They are both superior in price and quality. This will not be true for very long. Demand for these services is increasing rapidly in the near future. It won't take long for the

competition to pickup and enter these markets with their own products. When this happens G4S has neglected its possibility as a pioneer to cash in and create dominant market position for these services.

Key4Security should be invested heavily just because the nature of the product which will create other business. So optimally the money invested into this will create sales throughout the whole group. For example a superintendent buying this service will almost automatically purchase all locksmith services from Lukkoasema as well. Guarding services will also be able to strengthen their customer relation through this service. If a customer is using this software, it is difficult to change your guarding services provider when the competition cannot offer equivalent service.

Superintendents in my opinion would be the core customer segment for this service. They want to get rid of the responsibility and inconvenience that handling their customers keys inflicts. This segment should be mainly approached through direct marketing and professional publications. I would argue that a single campaign would pay itself back in increased sales in a relatively short period of time.

Kotiturva on the other hand is mainly aimed for consumer customers. In order to reach them usage of radio and newspapers would be the most cost-efficient channel. For example joint radio campaign in several regions would bring the sales wanted and would once again work towards the main goal of improving corporate image.

6. CONCLUSIONS

G4S Lukkoasema Oy is the largest locking and security systems provider in Finland. Lukkoasema is a part of the world biggest security service provider G4S Security Services. The main functions of Lukkosema are selling and installing of mechanical and electromechanical locks, security and camera systems, door automation etc. The cliental basis consists of building companies, apartment buildings, public sector, and private people.

The focus on this thesis was to define ways for Lukkoasema to improve its marketing. The authors' personal experiences of the locking industry worked as an inspiration for the work. A questionnaire, directed to regional Lukkoasema executives, was drafted as a basis for the research. Also interviews with the groups marketing personnel and Lukkoasema personel were held. Currently marketing is being rather limited among Lukkosemas. It basicly concentrating on relationship marketing and external marketing is being neglected totally.

Theoretical part of the work covers the operational forms of marketing: external, relationship and internal marketing. While doing the research it became clear at some point that this work should concentrate especially on external marketing.

At the moment Lukkoasema is not utilizing marketing with its full potential. A company possessing superior marketing resources cannot afford to neglect external marketing just because competition does it aswell. The possibility for superior corporate image and name recognition are every companys, working in every field of business, biggest dream. By recognizing certain aspects and applying changes G4S Lukkoasema has a

true possibility to achieve this. The groups support is in vital role when pursuing this goal.

Primary aspects of developing the marketing of Lukkoasema as a part of G4S group, as described in chapter 5, can be summarized as follows:

- Increasing G4S name recognition
- Communicating the multiplicity of the fields of service
- Achieving cost-efficiency by setting up centralized marketing
- Creation of joint annual marketing plan among Lukkoasemas
- Choosing right and most functional medias
- Diligent promotion of "hot" products and services

By taking care of these aspects it can be assumed that G4S will be on the right tracks for achieving market leadership.

The biggest threat for the future, if these means are neglected, will be slowing down of the progress and increase in the number of lost opportunities. When competitions still being relatively mild in some areas of business it is crusial to try to get as big slice of the pie as possible before others arrive in the markets.

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G4S Security Services kotisivut www.G4S.fi
Abloy Oy:n kotisivut www.abloy.com
Interview: Antti Tolonen, G4S Security Services Oy, 15.8.2007

APPENDIX

Appendix I: Research Questionnaire for Lukkoasemas in Finnish

LUKKOASEMA MARKKINOINTIKYSELY

	Vastaajan tiedot
JESSE KALEVO	Nimi:
SAMMONKATU 44	Toimipaikka:
33540 TAMPERE	

Pyydän näkemystänne seuraaviin markkinointiaiheisiin kysymyksiin. Vastauksenne ovat tärkeä osa Tampereen Ammattikorkeakoululle tekemääni markkinointiaiheista opinnäytetyötä. Työn tarkoituksena on kartoittaa Lukkoasemien markkinoinnillinen nykytila, selvittää mahdolliset ongelmat, pohtia ratkaisuja niihin sekä löytää uusia mahdollisuuksia kehittää Lukkoasemien markkinointia.

Asiakkaille teetetään kysely Lukkoasemien asiakaspalvelukyvystä. Näiden kyselyiden vastauksien pohjalta pohditaan mahdollisuuksia parantaa Lukkoasemien ja asiakkaiden välistä yhteistyötä.

Näen työn tarpeellisena lukitusalan viimevuosien kilpailun kasvamisen ja muihin aikaisemmin erillisiin markkina-aloihin integroitumisen myötä. Lukkoasemat pystyvät tällä hetkellä tarjoamaan muita kilpailijoita kokonaisvaltaisemman tuoteja palvelukonseptin, jota mielestäni ei vielä hyödynnetä sen koko potentiaalissaan.

Kyselyssä esiintyviä tietoja ei tulla sellaisenaan julkaisemaan opinnäytetyön julkisessa versiossa.

ULKOINEN MARKKINOINTI

Ulkoinen markkinointi vaikuttaa yrityksen näkyvyyteen halutun kohderyhmän osalta. Ulkoisella markkinoinnilla pyritään saamaan potentiaaliset asiakkaat kiinnostumaan yrityksestä ja sen tarjoamista tuotteista. Ulkoisella markkinoinnilla on myös positiivinen vaikutus yritysimagoon.

Mikä on vuotuinen markkinointibudjettinne (prosenttia liikevaihdosta)?						
□ Ei budjetoitu □ %						
Mistä markkinointibudjettinne koostu	u?					
☐ Televisiomainonta	□ Messut					
☐ Yleinen lehtimainonta	□ Mainonta alan lehdissä					
□ Radiomainonta □ Muuta, mitä?tms.)	□ Erilaiset julkaisut (kausijulkaisut, kalenterit					
Mikä on mielestänne, näkyvyyden kal lukkoliikkeelle paikkakunnallanne?	nnalta, tärkein markkinoinnin osa-alue					
Kuinka arvioisitte ulkoisen markkinoi	nnin tärkeyttä lukitusalalla?					
□ Erittäin tärkeää						
□ Tärkeää						
□ En osaa sanoa						
□ Jokseenkin merkityksetöntä						
□ Täysin merkityksetöntä						

Millä tavoin olette markkinoineet Key4Security ohjelmistoa potentiaalisille asiakkaille?
Kuinka tärkeänä näette ulkoisen markkinoinnin Key4Security ohjelmistoa myytäessä?
□ Erittäin tärkeää □ Tärkeää □ En osaa sanoa □ Jokseenkin merkityksetöntä □ Täysin merkityksetöntä
Oletteko hyödyntäneet Abloy Oy:n markkinointitukea ulkoista markkinointia toteuttaessanne?
□ Kyllä □ Ei □ En osaa sanoa
SUHDEMARKKINOINTI
Suhdemarkkinoinniksi voidaan laskea kaikki ostohetkellä asiakkaan ostopäätökseen vaikuttavat tekijät, kuten asiakkaan ja myyjän vuorovaikutus. Myös muu vuorovaikutus asiakkaan kanssa, eri yhteistyön vaiheissa, lasketaan suhdemarkkinointiin, kuten asentajien suorittama asiakaspalvelu.
Kuinka tärkeänä näette asiakkaidenne pitävän seuraavia asioita yhteistyökumppania valittaessa? (Aseta seuraavat kohdat tärkeysjärjestykseen numeroiden ne 1-6.)
Hinta
Toimituskyky
Asiakaspalvelu
Aikaisemmat kokemukset
Yrityksen yleinen imago

Työn laatu Muu, mikä?						
Miten koette palvelu asiakasryhmien kohdall suuressa merkityksessä valitkaa		aa seuraav	alla asteiko			eri llessa
Rakennusliikkeet Isännöitsijät Huoltoliikkeet Yritysasiakkaat Julkishallinnollinen sektori Yksityisasiakkaat	5 4	3 2				
Miten tärkeänä osana, as näette asentajien merkity □ Erittäin tärkeää □ Tärkeää □ En osaa sanoa □ Jokseenkin merkityksetö □ Täysin merkityksetöntä	yksen?	en kanssa	käytäväs	sä vuoro	vaikutukse	essa,
Oletteko kiinnittäneet e alueisiin pyrkiessänne p				n asiakas	spalvelun	osa-

SISÄINEN MARKKINOINTI

Sisäinen markkinointi kohdistuu yrityksen omaan henkilökuntaan. Yrityksen tulisi motivoida henkilökunta yhteisten näkemysten taakse. Tämän saavuttaakseen yrityksen tulee pitää huolta henkilökunnan kouluttamisesta, motivoimisesta sekä yrityksen sisäisen tiedottamisen tehokkuudesta. Jos yrityksen päämäärät ja tavoitteet ovat epäselviä henkilökunnalle, se auttamatta heijastuu liiketoiminnan tulokseen.

Onko henkilökuntanne mielestänne tietoisia yrityksen näkemyksistä ja asiakaspalvelun tavoitteista?
 □ Kyllä, poikkeuksetta □ Kyllä, pääsääntöisesti □ En osaa sanoa □ Eivät kaikissa tapauksissa □ Eivät ollenkaan
Millä tavoin olette pitäneet huolta henkilökunnan kouluttamisesta, motivoimisesta sekä yrityksen sisäisen tiedottamisen tehokkuudesta, varmistaaksenne yhteisten näkemysten mukaisen toiminnan?
MUUT HUOMIOT AIHEESEEN LIITTYEN

Kiitokset vaivannäöstänne! Täytetyt kaavakkeet pyydetään lähettämään faxilla numeroon 03 3126 3366. Pyydän lähettämään vastauksenne 31.2.2007 mennessä.