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**ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES TOWARDS OUTSOURCING  
MARKETING SUPPORT SERVICES,  
CASE TRAINERS' HOUSE CORPORATION**

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors has been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study is to reveal companies' and people working in companies, attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services such as booking meetings, prospecting services, auditing services etc. The study also reveals sticking points that companies have that outsourcing marketing support services can solve. The aim is to offer a solution for companies that are concerning outsourcing marketing support services but at the moment may be doing it in-house. The empirical research is conducted in a quantitative method through an online survey. The survey shows the attitudes and experiences about outsourcing marketing support services, challenges companies are facing at the moment toughing marketing support services, benefits caused by outsourcing marketing support services.

The main results from the research are positive towards outsourcing in this field. Lack of time, prospecting and incapability to focus on the core business turned out to be the main challenges companies are facing. From the survey derived the main benefits outsourcing marketing support services offer; More efficient use of time, positive results in business and saving time. Even if many of these services could be done in-house the research clearly points out that outsourcing marketing support services brings the very same benefits to companies which are usually sought in outsourcing process and they are cutting costs and flexibility in time. In order to make sure that the company is capable to acquire new customers, prospect new lied's and still be able to maximize the number of potential sales meetings, outsourcing these marketing support services are a great option to consider.

Keywords: Outsourcing, marketing support tools, marketing, telemarketing, auditing, prospecting, booking meetings, sales, Trainers' House, Ignis Ltd

## INTRODUCTION

Outsourcing is very common step for many companies and a successful choices and actions in outsourcing can bring companies savings in costs, flexibility and ability to focus on their core business elements. Marketing support services helps companies in the process of contacting customers and enabling a smooth flow of new customer acquisition. Since marketing support services is such a broad topic in this bachelor thesis is used as a case example Trainers' House Corporation. Trainers' House is a Finnish change management company and its affiliated company Ignis Ltd specializes for the marketing support services.

RQ1: How companies feel about outsourcing / attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services?

RQ2: Why companies should outsource marketing support services?

RQ3: What are the biggest challenges companies face that outsourcing marketing support services could solve?

Ignis Ltd offers services to outsource such as booking meetings services, prospecting services, auditing services etc. The main goal of these services is to fasten the phase and maximize the companies time to meet the most potential and desired companies and let companies to focus on the selling and submission of tenders. Ignis Ltd helps with customers that deals with following problems: We are not able to prospect enough, our sales people spend too much time at the office and not meeting potential customers, we are not able to increase the sales fast enough, our sales people books the meetings themselves and this takes time away from taking care of the new and old customers, too much time is spend with the old customers and still there seems to be no time to contacts old customers enough.

This bachelor thesis investigates why companies should outsource their marketing support services and what problems companies can solve by outsourcing these elements. Since it is very likely that many of the respondents have not used outsourcing in this field of business and as a result of this this thesis also investigates the attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services. The

research is done in quantitative approach in order to get an overview of the fields of businesses using and not using outsourcing, most well-known marketing support services and overall knowledge on them.

This thesis is compiled of three main chapters. The theoretical part is divided in two parts, first being outsourcing as a concept and its different elements. Outsourcing process is introduced but for the most is brought up the desired outcomes companies aim to have by outsourcing. The second part of the theory is the introduction of the case company Trainers' House and its affiliated company Ignis Ltd. that provides the marketing support services. Also, the marketing support service possibilities are introduced to ensure a better understanding about the potential use of them.

In the first chapter is introduced the theoretical framework of the topic outsourcing in order to understand why companies decide to outsource and what difficulties companies may have in the process of outsourcing. This information is highly important in order to find out the motives for outsourcing decisions. To be able to ask questions in the theoretical part to find out motives and what outsourcing marketing support services could solve for the company. In the second chapter covers the background company Trainers' House and its affiliated company Ignis Ltd that provides the marketing support services. Marketing support services is a broad topic and the Case example narrows the possible marketing support services to the selection of Ignis Ltd. Still the range of services is comprehensive and wide enough to provide understanding about the possibilities of marketing support services. In the third chapter research methods and tools are introduced. The process of sampling is covered and will demonstrate the formatting of the online survey. The full questionnaire will be presented in the Appendix 1. Results and findings of the survey are gone through. Main findings and answers to the research questions are being answered. Limitations and possible error marginals in the research and advances that could be made in further research.

## **1. THEORY ABOUT OUTSOURCING**

By outsourcing is meant the process in which company transfers its usually non-core business elements to another party. This offers the company the opportunity to focus on their core-business. Usually the company is able to save in costs and increase efficiency of the business. Usually companies that are able to focus their actions to their core business in long term are more likely to succeed in a long run (Laitinen A. & Rautiainen R. 2007). The main focus of outsourcing is to improve the performance of the company. Non-core business operations are an important part of the business and almost every business practices these operations. Noncore operations do not sperate the company from its competition and this is one of the reasons why companies should consider outsourcing parts of the operations if possible (Lumijärvi O. 2007, 199, 219). Practicing noncore business elements can be very time consuming and usually the lack of knowledge in these sectors takes concentration away form the core-business. Outsourcing has got many possible benefits apart from being able to focus on the core business. Cutting costs is one of the most common reasons to make the decision to outsource and this can also be viewed as higher returns on investments. Apart from cutting costs also flexibility is aimed to gain, and this can apply in both time and in costs (Yeo C. & Saboori-Deilami V. 2017).

Originally the term outsourcing came from the USA. in the 1960s and landed to Finland in 1980s. Outsourcing is not by all means a new concept but is has been recently more focused on. The recession has speeded up the process and the companies has realized the efficiency of outsourcing and starting to replace fixed costs to variable costs. The right actions and choices are important in outsourcing since it the best-case scenario it can create a well-functioning partnership (Lumijärvi 2007, 199, 219). Outsourcing happens not only locally but also globally, and global outsourcing is increasing at a great phase (Kabiraj T. & Sinha U. 2017).

In reality outsourcing is buying elements, intermediate products or production processes from another party. Usually the company has practiced these operations themselves before. Outsourcing means specialization and networking since there is a second party involved. Flexibility is also one of the upsides of outsourcing since outsourcing is a contract between companies and the company

who has outsourced does not have to hire employees. This enables the company in case of termination of the business activity to dissolve a contract and not fire employees (Laitinen A. & Rautiainen R. 2007).

Companies can outsource its single operations in whole or partially. The party to whom the outsourcing is assigned is responsible for the performance of the outsourced process and also has responsibility for developing the process as time goes on. The processes that are outsourced are often crucial for the survival of the company but is more efficient if it is done by someone else (Kiiskinen, S. Linkoaho, A. & Santala, R. 2002). The interesting part in outsourcing is the fact that when companies outsource their noncore business elements the parties whose core business is the particular business. So, in every case a party receives assignments that are their core business. At the same time one company may have multiple partners in terms of outsourcing.

The following chapters deals with all the different parties involved in outsourcing since transferring business operations is not a simple action and it affects many parties in the both businesses. In the process is involved more parties than just the two companies making the contract. There are also four different types of outsourcing that can shape the nature of outsourcing and bring even more parties together.

Outsourcing affects multiple parties and one of the main parties is the company deciding to outsource its business process. Usually savings in cost is the main reason for the decision to outsource (Laitinen A. & Rautiainen R. 2007). This is very logical as the company is able to save costs it affects the business positively of course assuming that the outsourcing process goes as planned. As the company can withdraw from performing all the business operations themselves, they have more time to focus on the core business. This is a second big reason for outsourcing. Flexibility and ability to focus on their core business have been discussed already in the previous chapter and at this point the overall pros of outsourcing have been covered.

The other big party involved is of course the company receiving the outsourcing assignment. A new outsourcing assignment in best case is a long-term employer for the company and can supply the company financially. As every company the first step is new customer acquisition and as the company has signed a contract for an outsourcing assignment it can lay back a little from the self-marketing and focus its resources to executing the assignment. In many cases having more than one customer is wise. One customer is a risk since all the source of income relies on this one



company (Pajarinen M. 2001). Usually more customers mean more income, and this makes it possible for the companies to invest in new investments and technology.

The main purpose for the outsourced company is to execute the given assignment, service or product. This of course is not enough because the competition can be high. Competition can be won simply by being more affordable, more flexible, higher quality etc. The contractor needs to make sure that the assigned product or service is competitive and can follow the market's needs. When the company has more customers, it can usually invest in new technologies that allows it to grow its capacity to produce (Pajarinen M. 2001). This of course is very practical when the customer needs for example to increase the volumes rapidly. The contractor should be able to react to the changes in volumes and in needs in order to keep its place as the contractor.

Smaller companies have got the advantage of flexibility, speed. In many cases the need for larger order units can be a problem for a smaller company. Also, there is a risk in investing in new technology since an expensive technology may last longer than the cooperation of the two or more companies which leaves the contractor with no customers needing the technology (Pajarinen M. 2001). A contractor has got a great responsibility and risk in operating if it cannot stay competitive in the market. Cutting costs is the first priority for making the decision to outsource and if this cannot be easily done in terms of volumes, needs it is usually not a good outcome for the contractor.

In this thesis is used as an example the Finnish company Trainers' House. It is clear that when outsourcing happens it is not just independent working between these two companies. In order to form working cooperation the different parties need to communicate. Usually there is one or few people from each company that keep contact to each other's and share information about the current situation and the needs in the future. Communication can be seen as a key factor for successful outsourcing.

There are few main types of outsourcing. In the following chapters is introduced all four. Outsourcing can be done between one or multiple companies and it can also be done within the company by creating a new division to do certain tasks in the company. Outsourcing is usually a contract between companies. In outsourcing there can be transferred assets or funds. 1) Competing in price 2) Quality competitive tendering 3) Partnership 4) Strategic partnership. Outsourcing can also be viewed in terms of equity and ownership and there are also four types of outsourcing in this process 1) Transfer outsourcing 2) Simple outsourcing 3) Joint venture outsourcing and 4) Group outsourcing.

Quality and price competitive tendering typically means, competitive bidding in prices comes from situations where the company can save in costs when it is more affordable to buy it from someone else. Manufacturing a product is expensive and usually it saves money especially if the product is not the main product of the company. The downside with price competing is that it usually revolves around the prices and as a result it can lead the focus away from the quality. Competing in quality can mean that the company simply buys products it cannot manufacture itself. There are usually demands in quality and the companies that can offer the minimum standard in quality with the best price wins (Pajarinen M. 2001). Competitive tendering in price and quality usually leads the companies to buy from where ever they can get it the cheapest and usually there are no long-term relationships formed. Companies can change the service provider very often and usually the companies that can provide the best price gets all the customers.

Partnership and strategic Partnership covers more than just price and quality. A good partnership is typically formed in time and both parties are more involved in the process than just receiving and giving orders. This can be seen as an advantage because there is usually less competition when the relationship is very deep when comparing to price and quality competition where the least expensive usually wins the bidding war. Strategic partnership on the other hand highlight the role of common benefiting. In many cases the companies in strategic partnerships have same direction and they support each other in developing new innovations. Usually these strategic partnerships are long term.

There are four types of outsourcing when thinking of the process 1) Transfer outsourcing 2) Simple outsourcing 3) Joint venture outsourcing and 4) Group outsourcing. The relationship between companies can be based purely on a contract but often outsourcing be based on joint ownership. The first type of outsourcing Transfer outsourcing can be divided into two because in Transfer

outsourcing also assets are being transferred this is the most common type of outsourcing. As an example, a company can sell a business unit to a service provider. Simple outsourcing is the other option, and this means that assets are not being transferred and the company stops for example manufacturing a certain product and starts buying it from an external party (Kiiha J. 2002, 2).

Joint venture outsourcing means that the contract is made to a company where the companies share ownership, and this usually means that the company is willing to hold on to the ownership at least partially with the outsourced party. Group outsourcing on the other hand means that the company forms a subsidiary company within the concern (Kiiha J. 2002, 2). In the case of Trainers' House, Ignis Ltd that operates around the marketing support services is a subsidiary company of Trainers' House and it is group outsourced within the company. This means that Trainers' House owns Ignis Ltd entirely.

### **1.1. The process of outsourcing**

Outsourcing is always an important and significant decision and comprehensive planning plays a key role in the success of the process. In-depth planning helps the process function in real life actions and operations of the company. Outsourcing process can also be divided into different stages and each one of them is important. The process starts of course from searching the right partner but before that the company looking forward to outsourcing should have a common interest to outsource and dissenting opinions can jeopardize the process. Unwillingness to co-operate within the company can be damaging in order to co-operate with a third party (Arpikari P. 2015).

The process of outsourcing can take depending on the starting point and scale of the process usually from half a year to year. The length of the process usually gives reference about the future costs to both parties and usually longer process costs more. Typical process starts from finding the right partner, negotiating the contract and then implementing it and of course monitoring and developing the process (Lumijärvi O. 2007, 211). Every step of the process needs careful planning, decisions, implementing, upkeeping, monitoring and developing.

When the actual outsourcing is ongoing, and the contracts have been made it is important to create concrete ways to further evaluate the process and make sure it functions well. Common rules are important so that both parties have regulations where they can reflect their actions and it is a great

way to avoid conflicts. Common rules can apply to actions, but it is common that some legal acts are considered so that it is easier to follow and implement. In addition to the common rules the companies should agree on systems, processes and tools they implement together to make the information flow as functional as possible.

Digitalization has brought up tools that endorse fast and well working communication. Often the unconsciousness towards building an excellent relationship with the partner is a barrier to success. Operative and strategic functions should work well in order to maintain and above all start a good relationship with a partner that beforehand can be unfamiliar with each other's (Arpikari P. 2015). In many cases misunderstandings in communication or in modes of operations can lead problems and miscommunication can ruin otherwise potential partnership between two companies. Discussing about the needs of both parties in order to be successful is important in order to make sure that both parties have an optimal standpoint to be successful.

## **1.2. Challenges of outsourcing**

Outsourcing brings both challenges and opportunities for the company and poor choices when making decisions about the potential partner or poor execution in making the contract can cause problems in the future and prevent the company from achieving the desired results they initially aimed with outsourcing. Cutting costs is one of the most typical reasons for making the decision to outsource. Also, the company may want to focus on their core business and with this increase flexibility in operations and also costs. Savings in costs are usually the main ground reason to outsource (Ali-Yrkkö J. 2007). Poor outsourcing decisions can lead the company doing just the opposite. Focusing only on cutting costs can lead to blindness in operations and the process itself is not clear and in the process of outsourcing is wise to take hidden costs into account (Lehikoinen R. & Töyrylä I. 2013).

Achieving the set goals, disturbing dependence on the outsourced party and hidden costs are typical in an unsuccessful process of outsourcing. Poor planning is one great factor to causes problems in the process of outsourcing (Kiiskinen S. Linkoaho A. & Santala R. 2002). Usually the lack of experience leads to quick and rushed decisions in the selection of the partner or creating the contract. The lack of experience also causes the company to set goals that are not achievable or leads the company to the wrong direction. Going through the process can also be new to

someone who lacks experience and even if the goal at the end is clear the process in between can lead the company in the wrong direction.

The main task before outsourcing is to recognize the risk it may include and be prepared to deal with them. The process is easier to control when the potential risks are known. After all outsourcing in best case scenario brings positive results, savings in costs which come from the high effectiveness of the outsourced party. Personnel expenses are usually a very major part of the costs in companies and good outsourcing decisions can cut costs from personnel expenses, training the staff and overall maintain own regular staff (Willcocks, Cullen & Craig 2011, 15). The idea of outsourcing some non-core business element to a third party is very profitable if the partnership is well operating. In the case of Trainers' House customers are number one priority and the company's first value people are always the main focus. Good relationship with the outsourced party plays a key role in good partnership.

### **1.3. Attitudes and experiences towards Outsourcing**

Outsourcing is a decision in as any other and attitude phases direct us in certain directions. It is important for the sake of this paper to understand how attitudes and experiences are formed. Attitudes are formed from three different component parts cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Hamidizadeh. M.R. Yazdani N. Tabriz A.A. and Latifi M.M. 2012). In other words, attitudes are each person's own personal aspects that affects behaviour. There are three different definitions for attitudes and the before mentioned cognitive, affective and behavioural form the three-components model. There is also the one-component model and two-component model. According to Thurstone, the one-component model simply studies is the attitude is negative or positive. The intensity can vary, and this is also taken into consideration (Thurstone, 1931, p. 261). According to Allport's theory the two-component model gives attitudes a second meaning one being the mental readiness, that leads to the person evaluating the object (Eagly, A. H. & Chaiken S. 1993). And lastly the three-component model which brings out more the feeling-based forming of attitudes. Many factors can affect on attitudes such as gender, age etc. (MacKenzie S.B. & Lutz R.J. 1989).

Changing an attitude often requires an experience to influence the pre-formed attitude. Attitudes remain quite stable over time if there is no force intervening the attitude. (Gollwitzer M. & Schmitt

M, 2009). Attitudes may be affected by a single negative experience but on the other hand a overall picture of the subject may be a stronger force to form the attitude. The attitudes can be changed by good experiences of others and by this is created a persuasive argument (Busch-Geertsema A. & Lanzendorf M. 2015). The first stage of an attitude changing is related to feelings and the second is more on the cognitive side where the person gathers momentous information in order to change the attitude (Gollwitzer M. & Schmitt M. 2009). Experiences plays a important role in the change behaviour of attitudes and this is why the author decides to study both attitudes and experiences.

Even though focusing on the core-business in order to succeed in the competitive markets and the popularity of outsourcing is increasing there are still various opinions about it. The most criticized aspects of outsourcing over time has been its effects on labour force and the way it formed in companies. This has affected people in both sides of the outsourcing process, first the employees who used to execute the work and secondly the party to whom the work is outsourced. In some cases, these outsourced workers are somewhat displaced from the organization. Outsourcing causes change in various systems in the company for example in the aspect of control. In many cases the decision to outsource is made in order to cut in costs but also low productivity can be a reason behind outsourcing. Usually outsourcing results, the productivity being higher which again result the company deciding to outsource more. This of course decreases the role and participation level furthermore (Elmuti D, Grunewald J. & Abebe D. 2010). Other concerns about outsourcing are the confidentiality. When business operations are being outsourced to a third party it always exposes the company to change of the information being used wrongly. Losing control over the business operations may concern many companies (Oshri I, Kotlarsky J. & Willcocks L. 2015).

## **2. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

Trainers' House Corporation is a Finnish change management company that was found in 1990 and at the time it was called Writers' Studio. The company is a public listed company. The main purpose of Trainers' House is to help its customers to execute desired change in companies. Trainers' House offers its customers services that include; Training, marketing support services, change management tools and digital content to its B2B sector clients. Trainers' House has also foreign customers in addition to wide range of Finnish domestic customers (Ilola H. 2018). A big reason for change management companies existing overall is that change is very hard to implement since many organizations resist change and it is very hard to change the culture of the organization (Skogland M. & Hansen G. 2017).

Trainers' House strongly believes in good management of everyday business. Trainers' House as a company highlights values and their importance when working with people and creating a shared journey with its customers. The employees of the company consist of university students in different fields, usually business. Most of the employees work part-time. Trainers' House is a consulting company and this field of business is very competitive. The marketing support services are done in one unit of Trainers' House the Ignis Ltd (Ilola H. 2018). All the marketeers of the company work in this unit and in addition to the work go thought a training program Trainers' House Growth Academy that lasts for one year. Trainers' House has got few different divisions and Ignis Ltd is one of them. This thesis covers the services Ignis Ltd provides in the field of marketing support services.

Trainers' House provides its customers training services and this can be done in individual level or for the whole organization. There is also the possibility to buy intensive training that can last a long period of time. Training in sales skills, management and performing is one option in the Training. Marketing support services are one section of Trainers' House and this is introduced later in this thesis. In the marketing support services is offered booking meetings, market mapping,

event invitations, auditing and prospecting. Each one of these services are done in Ignis Ltd by marketeers of Trainers' House (Ilola H. 2018).

In the digital side is offered BEAT-application that is a tool to help ensure that the desired change is implemented. It is described in the figure as company's internal social media. This application is used by the customers of Trainers' House but also it is used inside Trainers' House. Other digital services are webinars, online courses and online training. This is fairly new option to use Trainers' House-training services and customers are able to buy licenses to watch the training videos. Over all Trainer's House is a change management company and each one of the four divisions aims to help to implement the change the customer desires to make.

## **2.1. Trainers' House's affiliated company Ignis Ltd**

Ignis Ltd provides sales and marketing services to the customers of Trainers' House. Ignis Ltd is Trainers' Houses group outsourced affiliated company and operates as the practical centre of the desired change. Ignis Ltd provides marketing support services for the clients of Trainers' House to make sure that the desired change is implemented. The biggest part of Ignis Ltd.'s operations is booking meeting for our clients and help them in new customer acquisition. Ignis was founded in 2006. Ignis provides also sales services. In Ignis works all the marketers and senior marketeers. Marketeers are the ones making the phone calls for the companies and senior marketeers are the contact person between the customer and Ignis Ltd and also responsible for the reporting to the operative management (Trainers' House Oyj. Annual report 2014). Together with the customer, marketeers, senior marketeers and the account manager the custom is dealt with and reported to the operative management.

In the begging of the cooperation with a new customer is agreed on the tools used during the cooperation such as email, calendar views etc. Usually the customers provide Ignis a list of customers that they would like to meet or in some cases Ignis offers to prospect for the company and in this case the potential target group is mapped together with the customer. With the customer is agreed on the phase the meetings are arranged for example 4 meetings per week (Trainers' House Oyj 2012). The customer may want to have 2 meetings per week and Ignis marketeers arrange meetings by the preferences of the customer. Usually marketeers send a calendar invitation to the customer with details of the phone call made in order to set the meeting.



The script for the phone call is made together with the customer and it helps the marketeers to internalize the company's operations. Customers usually provide new contacts to Ignis Ltd in order to ensure smooth flow in the booking meetings process. Ignis proved its customer a weekly report where the customer can see a summary of the cooperation and all the set meetings, customers that were not interested of the meeting and contacts that had to be dismissed for different reasons. Quality is in the centre of the process and all the reports, comments etc. are done with high detail in order to present a full view of the cooperation.

## **2.2. Possibilities of marketing support services**

In this bachelor thesis is used a Finnish company Trainers' House as an example of possible digital media services that are available for companies. In Trainers' House the company's affiliated company that provides these marketing support services. There are three main services that Ignis Oy provides 1) Booking meetings for companies 2) Prospecting new contacts of possible customers and 3) Auditing i.e. sales meetings based on the potential customers experiences. The marketing support services of Ignis Ltd provides companies the possibility to focus on the selling process because Ignis Ltd as a third party sets the meetings up with desired customers and fills the calendars of the salesperson at agreed phase.

In many cases the customers of Trainers' House phase the realization that the salesperson cannot set enough meetings and reasons for this may be the lack of time and at some point, the salesperson can only do a certain number of meetings with new potential customers. With the help of Ignis Ltd the customers can focus on their core-business. In many cases the customers avoid making phone calls in order to set new meetings and this of course slows down the whole process and the company may not be able to meet the goals that are set.

In order to make new customer acquisition it is important to make sure that the company actively reaches out to potential customers and books new meetings with potential customers. Contacting potential customers in order to get a meeting that hopefully turns out to be a deal is an important step to make. Telephone is still one of the most used tools to reach out to potential clients. The first call is important and should raise interest towards the deal. It is not as easy to change the perspective of the client and make them consider taking in new ideas and operating models.

Preparing for the phone call should be done as carefully as getting ready for a face to face meeting (Altmann H. 2002). Crucial point in a good phone call is the beginning that should be done clearly and slowly because customers cannot take information in very well during the first seconds of the phone call. The character of the phone call is also important and the person on the other side of the call can make fast assumptions if the caller sounds too lazy, aggressive or simply does not have necessary breaks during the call.

Negative attitude is very noticeable, and a good sales person should not prepare for the call with negative attitude thinking potential failing. In many cases when the customer says no it does not mean that the customer will say no every time and forever. Quality of the phone calls is as important as the facts that the quantity of calls matches the goals. Calculations should be made when thinking about how many new customers acquisitions the company is aiming to reach and in relation to that how many tires it takes to accomplish (Rubanovitsch M. & Aalto E. 2007). Calling a potential customer that the company has never spoken before is mentally much more challenging. It is always good idea to keep in mind what benefits the customer can gain from the service or product and not just justify how great the product or service itself is. How we can serve the customer is a great starting point.

Contacting new customers may be difficult and often calling the customers can be viewed disturbing but actually activity from the client's point of view is often rather positive. Often the sales people consider making the phone call difficult even though it is important step in the process of new customer acquisition (Rubanovitsch M. & Aalto E. 2007). This happens a lot with longer customer relationships as the communication phase decreases the customer may feel unnoticed or uncared for because the before, so active salesperson does not reach out anymore. Customers should be treated as individuals when thinking of their needs and ways they like to contact (Altmann H. 2002, 152). Talking about benefits instead of money and costs is wiser at this point is wiser and arousing interest is the main point at this stage of the sales process.

In Trainers' House and more specifically in Ignis Ltd where the booking for meetings is done for our clients focuses deeply on the structure of the phone call. For many people working in various fields of work is often not easy to call new clients and constantly make new customer acquisitions. Often it is also waste of time because the calling process cannot be done systematically and in a needed volume. Booking as a service comes very clear when we think about the time the sales person spends on the phone trying to book new meetings and at the same time should be going to

the already set meetings. Performing well in this first step of new customer acquisition is very beneficial for the outcome of the process and the number of high-quality meetings set for the salesperson correlates to the amount of deals and sales the company makes.

Prospecting is one of the possible marketing support services Ignis Ltd provides. By prospecting is meant map up potential clients. To make sure that the potential deal happens and benefits both parties it is crucial to prospect leads that fit the target group of the company. Prospecting could be mentioned first since this is the very first step even before making the phone call. With the prospecting process you can do in-depth analysis from the target group. Prospecting has to be done constantly and usually it is said that prospecting is often the step that is left undone. This results directly to the sales goals not being made (Manning G, Reece B. & Ahearne M. 2010, 180 - 181.).

In Ignis Ltd is often offered prospecting services to our clients and in many cases prospecting and booking meetings is done in the same deal. In most cases where further trades are made Ignis Ltd often offers to prospect for the client. Ignis marketeers do prospecting in the middle of projects to ensure a smooth transition from previous deal to another.

Auditing in Ignis Ltd is done by a different dimension of marketeers specialized on auditing. By auditing is meant a process that follows a certain path and it is one mode of operation that helps evaluate compliance. It is done objectively and aims to evaluate how well the set standards have been met. Almost anything can be audited for example; processes, products or services. Auditing can be done inside or outside the company depending on what is audited. Usually auditing studies how well a certain party can meet the set standards. Companies can evaluate each other's quality in processes and services and test if they are as good as they say it is. Auditing can be qualitative or quantitative and it can be measured with recordings, support documents and other documents that meet the standard (Woodhouse D 2002). The quality of auditing is usually the main factor that determines the effectiveness of the auditing process (Behzadian F. & Nia N. 2017).

In the case of Ignis Ltd services auditing is often directed towards meetings and how well did the salesperson do in that meeting. This gives very valuable information in order to develop selling skills and communication etc. In Trainer's House auditing services belongs to Ignis Ltd and for these services there is a different section of employees that work in auditing. In Ignis Ltd is done audits that are ordered from our clients and specified based on their needs and development sections.

Ignis Ltd also offers other additional services to its customers. Booking meetings, prospecting and auditing being the main services. Ignis Ltd offers market mapping services in some forms and also direct sales in done via telephone. The goal of Ignis Ltd is to offers wide range of services to its customers and every service can be identified based on the customer. Ignis builds the speak to every company using a base that works in terms of great phone call, but all the references and additional information is based on the customer's needs.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

In the following chapters is investigated how the questionnaire is formed in order to answer the research questions RQ1: How companies feel about outsourcing / attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services? RQ2: Why companies should outsource marketing support services? RQ3: What are the biggest challenges companies face that outsourcing marketing support services could solve? Also, the data collecting methods are introduced and which tools are used to collect the data. The sample was collected with an online survey made in Google Forms. The survey is divided in two sections based on whether the companies have outsourced marketing support services. In order to get broader view, the questionnaire is aimed for entrepreneurs but also people working in companies. In many cases people can be in a decisive position or have full understanding about the company but not own the company themselves.

The research is done in a quantitative approach since this bachelor thesis aims to find out the state of knowledge and awareness about marketing support services now. Quantitative approach is efficient way to get a numeric view of the company's views on the subject and acquire a larger number of respondents. A larger amount of respondent ensures that the company has a broader scale of industries and companies with different premises. A qualitative approach would have given a more concise perspective and wouldn't have been able to compare many different industries at the same time.

#### **3.1. The aim of the research**

The first aim of the research is to investigate how companies, operating in different fields of business feel about outsourcing marketing support services. This helps the author answer the RQ1: How companies feel about outsourcing / attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support service. The second aim of the research is to study why companies should outsource in the field of marketing support services. This aims to investigate the need for these services and together with the gained knowledge about attitudes it is easier for the author to form a clear frame

about the potentiality of marketing support services. The third research question; “RQ3: What are the biggest challenges companies face that outsourcing marketing support services could solve?” is investigated by asking about the common problem’s companies have, that marketing support services could fix.

The questionnaire is divided in two sections based on the answer to question number 1, “Has your own company / the company you work for outsourced in the field of marketing support services, such as booking services, auditing services, prospecting services”. The respondents have options to answer 1) Yes, 2) No, 3) I don’t have the information. If the answer is “yes” the survey will lead the respondent to the Experiences-section, where are questions about the outsourced services, the process of the outsourcing, problems that the company was aiming to solve and the results the company had caused by outsourcing marketing support services. If the respondent answers “no” or “I don’t have the information” the survey directs the respondent to the Attitudes-section of the survey. This section measures the knowledge about marketing support services, problems companies have that could be solved with marketing support services and have the respondents considered outsourcing in this field. The second question appears in both sections of the survey experience, attitudes. The question two investigates the field of business the company operates in. This helps to form an overall picture about the industries that favour outsourcing marketing support services.

This chapter helps to navigate through the Experience sections of the survey. Question three studies the marketing support services the company has outsourced. The question is a multiple-choice question and helps the author get a understanding about which services are the most common to outsource. This will reveal the popularity of certain marketing support services and the questions derives from the theoretical framework where Ignis Ltd.’s marketing support services are introduced. Question four aims to find out the problems the company aimed to solve with outsourcing marketing support services. The answers will be reflected to the main problems Trainers’ House has discovered from their associated companies. Questions five to seven studies the experience about the process of outsourcing and the choice of a partner. In the theoretical framework came out many problems related to outsourcing. The theoretical framework helped to from these questions since there are introduced clear points where companies have troubles. These problems usually come from the process of outsourcing and the incapability to achieve the desired and set goals. Possible unwanted effects are listed, and they are based on the theoretical part of the thesis 1.3. Challenges in outsourcing. Questions from eight to nine studies the benefits and the

results outsourcing enabled to the company and also the probability that the company would recommend outsourcing to others. This derives from the theoretical framework and is based on the main goals outsourcing in the best-case scenario can enable to companies.

The attitudes section is formed in a similar way as the experience part but viewing outsourcing based on attitudes and beliefs. Questions from one to two are the same for both sections of the survey. It is also important to find out the possible difference between industries that have and haven't used outsourcing in the field on marketing support services. Question three is similar to the experience part but investigates what outsourcing services the respondent knows. Again, the question derives from the theoretical framework about the marketing support services Ignis Ltd provides. In the survey is also added a couple more marketing support services in order to get full understanding such as customer service done via telephone. The question four aims to investigate the potential problems the companies have now that outsourcing marketing support services could solve. This question derives from the theoretical part where is introduced the marketing support services and what each one of them can solve for the company. This measures the need for these services. Questions five to six aims to investigate the attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services and case examples of problems that companies may have that could be solved with marketing support services. In the theoretical framework was highlighted the reasons why companies outsource in the first place. The question from seven to eight studies the preferred outcomes the companies aim to have that could be solved by outsourcing marketing support services. Also, the point of view about the helpfulness of marketing support services is asked to understand if there is willingness to outsource.

The whole survey is designed to support the theoretical framework of the thesis. The most highlighted subjects are brought into the survey. 1) Knowledge about marketing support services 2) The main problems companies have in the process of outsourcing marketing support services 3) The biggest hidden problems in outsourcing 2) The positive outcomes in outsourcing marketing support services 4) Could marketing support services solve problems for more companies. The answers of the survey will most likely support the theoretical framework, but the knowledge and attitudes are more difficult to predict.

### 3.2. The results of the research

The survey gained sixty-two respondents from which 55% which means thirty-four respondents had outsourced in the field of marketing support services, 37% meaning twenty-three respondents had not outsourced in the field of marketing support services and 8% did not have the information about their companies or the company they work for status. This 8% that means five respondents can be explained with these respondents working in bigger companies and not knowing all the processes, not being in a decisive position or the respondent is working in an entry-level.

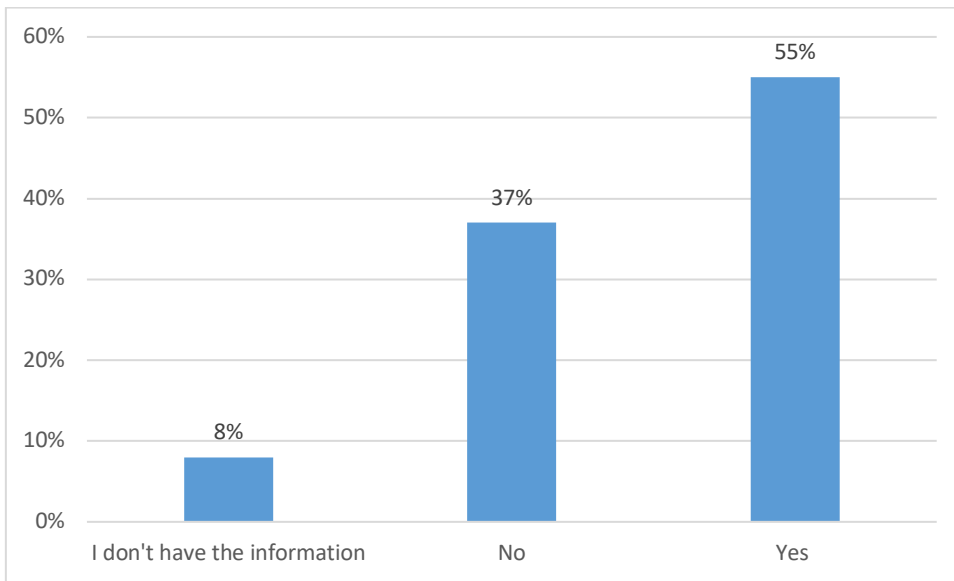


Figure 1 Outsourcing marketing support services (n=62)

The industries of the companies that had outsourced in the field of marketing support services was quite various. Most common industries to outsource in this field seemed to be companies that offer marketing and hospitality services. Overall service industries seemed to be more likely to outsource in the field of marketing support services. No drastic difference was not to be noticed between the companies that had not outsourced marketing support services. As a proof from this also the companies that had not outsourced in the field of marketing support services the most common field of business was marketing in some form. Also, sales industries seemed not to outsource in this field. The answers show that outsourcing marketing support services fit many different industries and since there are various marketing support services companies can form a functioning marketing support service delivery.



In this section is gone through the answers from the experience part of the questionnaire. The first question that was not common for both companies dealt with the marketing support services the companies had outsourced. Outsourcing customer service (47%) was the single most outsourced service with sixteen respondents choosing this option. Booking meetings received fifteen responses (44%), directs sales (35%), prospecting (32%) and auditing (41%) were also seemingly common. Reflecting to the services that Ignis Ltd provides booking meetings, auditing and prospecting were common services to outsource and this supports the theoretical framework about Ignis Ltd.'s service supply. Only one being customer service that Ignis Ltd does not provide. Online chat services (18%) and market mapping services (18%) got equally six answers both. Other booking services got two responses (6%) and one of the respondents did answer I don't have the information (3%).

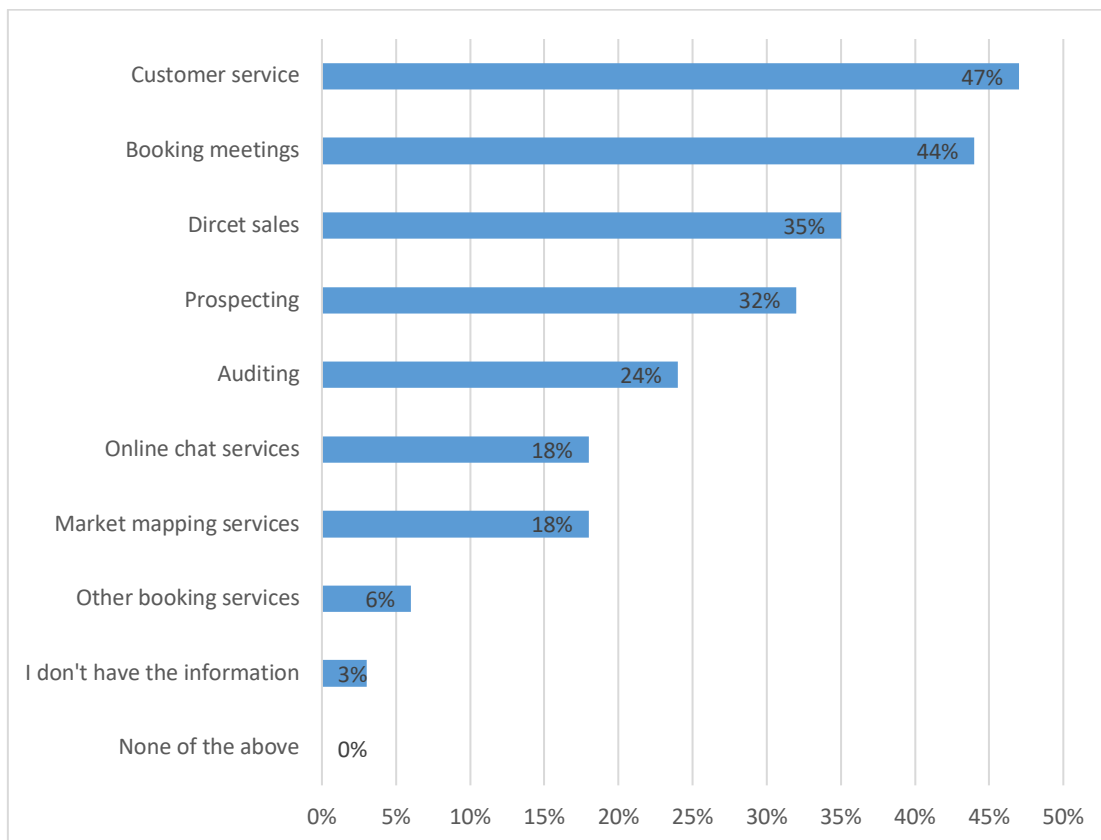


Figure 2 Marketing support services the respondent had used (n=34)

The fourth questions dealt with the reason, what fore the company made the decision to outsource in the field of marketing support services. This information is crucial for the author to be able to answer the RQ3: What are the biggest challenges companies face that outsourcing marketing support services could solve? Two of the most common problems companies had with fourteen

answers each were 1) Help to concentrate on the core business (41%) and, 2) Sales people were not efficient enough to acquire new potential customers (41%). The first one correlates with the theory very strongly and is one of the two most common reasons for companies to outsource, the other one being cutting costs. Surprisingly cutting costs gained only five responses (15%) and this may mean that outsourcing marketing support services is not about cutting costs but rather maximizing the time and efforts of the people working in the company. Lack of time (29%), flexibility of time (27%) and the lack of knowledge in the field of marketing support services (18%) were seemingly common reasons for the decision to outsource. These answers strongly suggest that lack of time alongside helping the company to concentrate to the core-business are the most common reasons to outsource marketing support services. Also, prospecting turned out to be a major reason to outsource and as in the theoretical framework it was stated that prospecting and finding new leads and contacts is often difficult for the companies and often left undone.

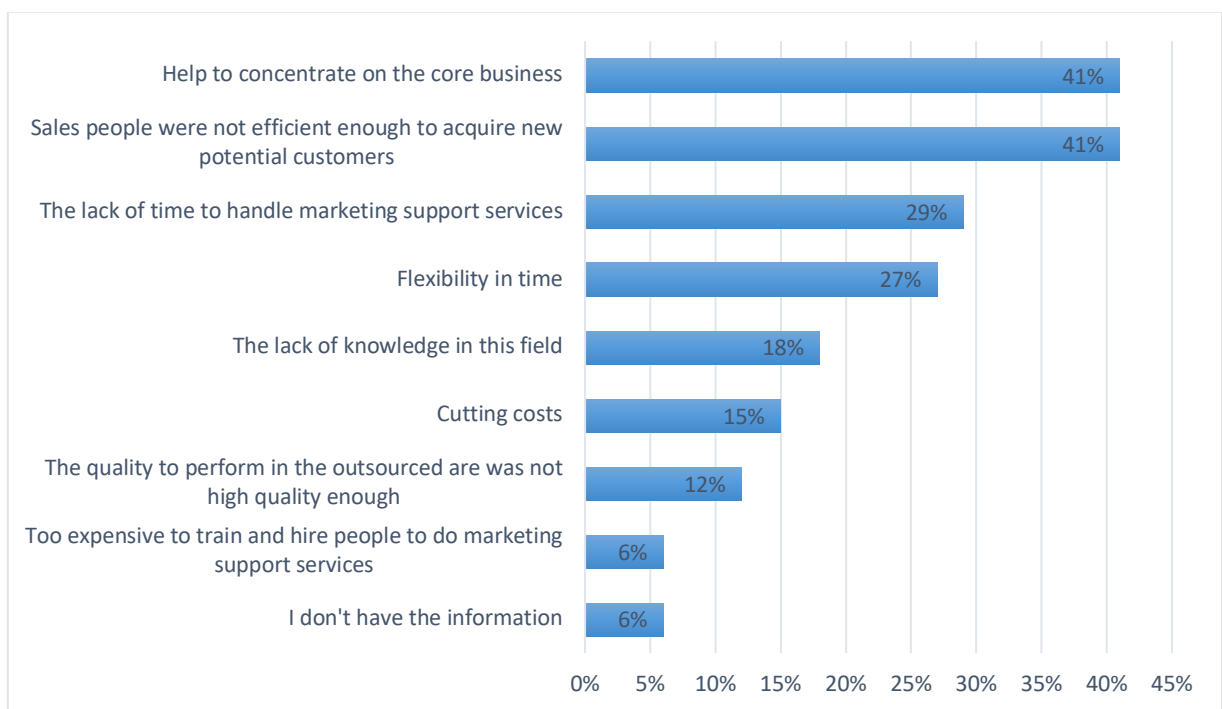


Figure 3 Reasons for outsourcing (n=34)

The usefulness of marketing support services was asked and eleven of the respondents considered marketing support services totally useful, nineteen of the respondents considered marketing support services to be rather useful (56%), three of the respondents felt neutral (9%) about the usefulness of marketing support services and one of the respondents considered marketing support services rather useless (3%). None of the respondents thought marketing support services totally

useless. In the middle was also a neutral option since it may be possible that the respondents are not able to evaluate the usefulness of outsourcing.

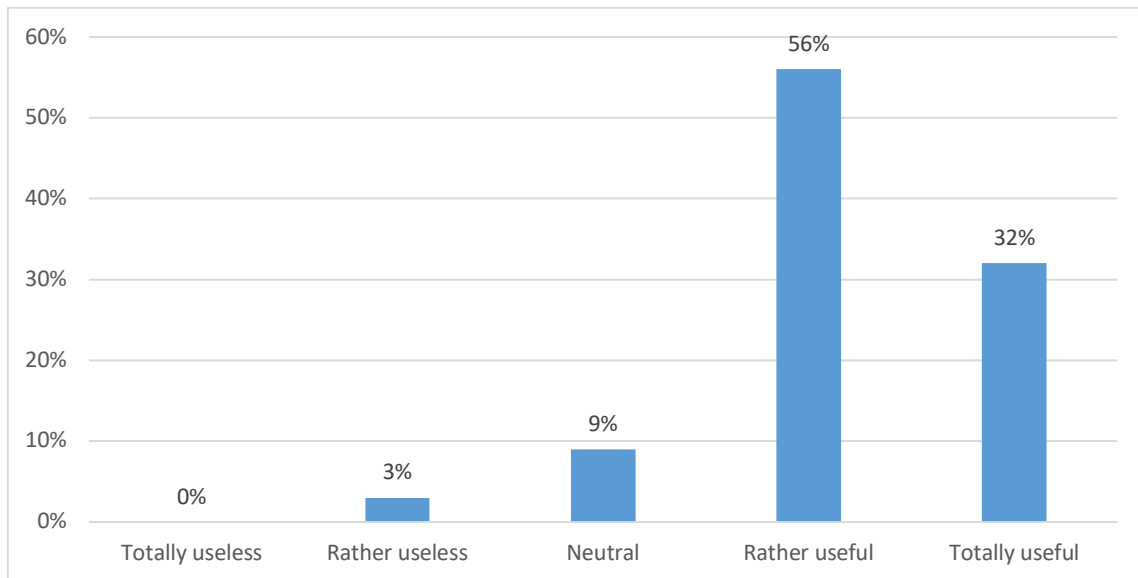


Figure 4 How useful companies consider outsourcing marketing support services (n=34)

In the same manner was asked about process of outsourcing marketing support services and the experiences of it in the scale from 1-5, one being very poor and five being very good. Seven of the respondents answered that the process of marketing support services was very good (21%), seventeen of the respondents answered that the process was rather good (50%), eight of the respondents answered that the process was neutral (24%). Two of the respondents answered that the process was rather poor (6%) and none of the respondents answered that the process was very poor. Neutral option was added in the question below since the respondents may have had difficulties to evaluate the experience of outsourcing.

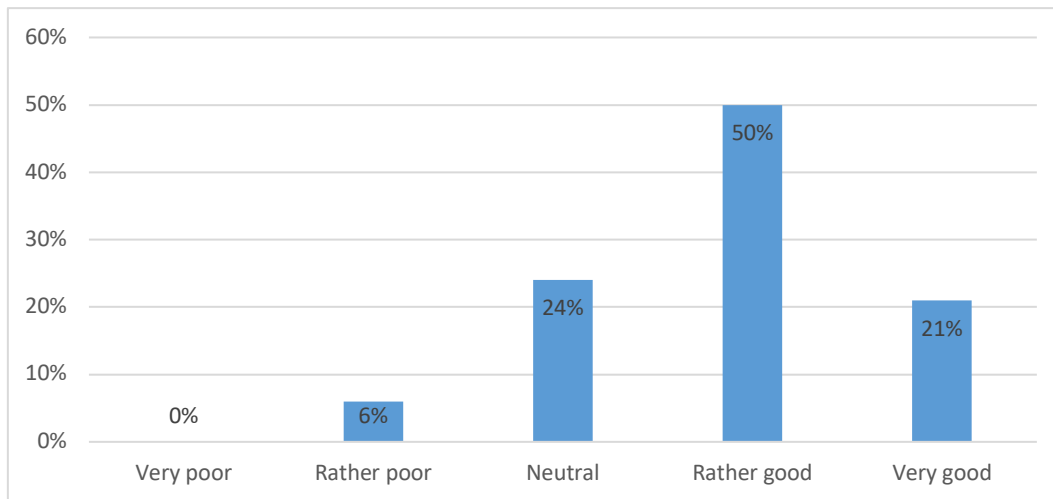


Figure 5 Evaluation of the experiences with the process of outsourcing? (n=34)

The next question dealt more specifically with the problems the companies had during the process of outsourcing since in the theoretical framework suggested that outsourcing has got many benefits but on the other hand it includes many problems as well. The main problem among the respondents was unclear goals (33%) in the process of outsourcing with ten respondents. The second and the third most common reasons were poor choice in the choice of a partner (23%) with seven responses, eight of the respondents answered that they have had none of the problems mentioned above (26%). Four of the respondents told that they don't have the information about the problems during the process of outsourcing marketing support services (13%). Hidden costs (7%) were problem by two of the respondents, poor communication (13%) was chosen by four of the respondents. Two of the respondents did left a comment in the section other reason. Quality of the outsourced service in this case customer service did not meet the respondent company's expectations. These problems derived from the theoretical framework where difficulties related to outsourcing were introduced. In the theory main problems were poor choice of a partner, poor contract, hidden costs, not achieving set goals, lack of experience and unclear goals. These statements are indeed confirmed but a positive surprise was the lack of problems for eight of the respondents. This shows that 26% of the respondents that have outsourced in the field of marketing support services has not had problems in the process. This can also indicate that the respondents are not aware about the process enough. Poor contracts were not chosen by any company which again can indicate that the respondents had no experience about the actual contract work or in the other hand the companies have been careful while making the contract, which in the theoretical framework is one of the key factors in a successful outsourcing.

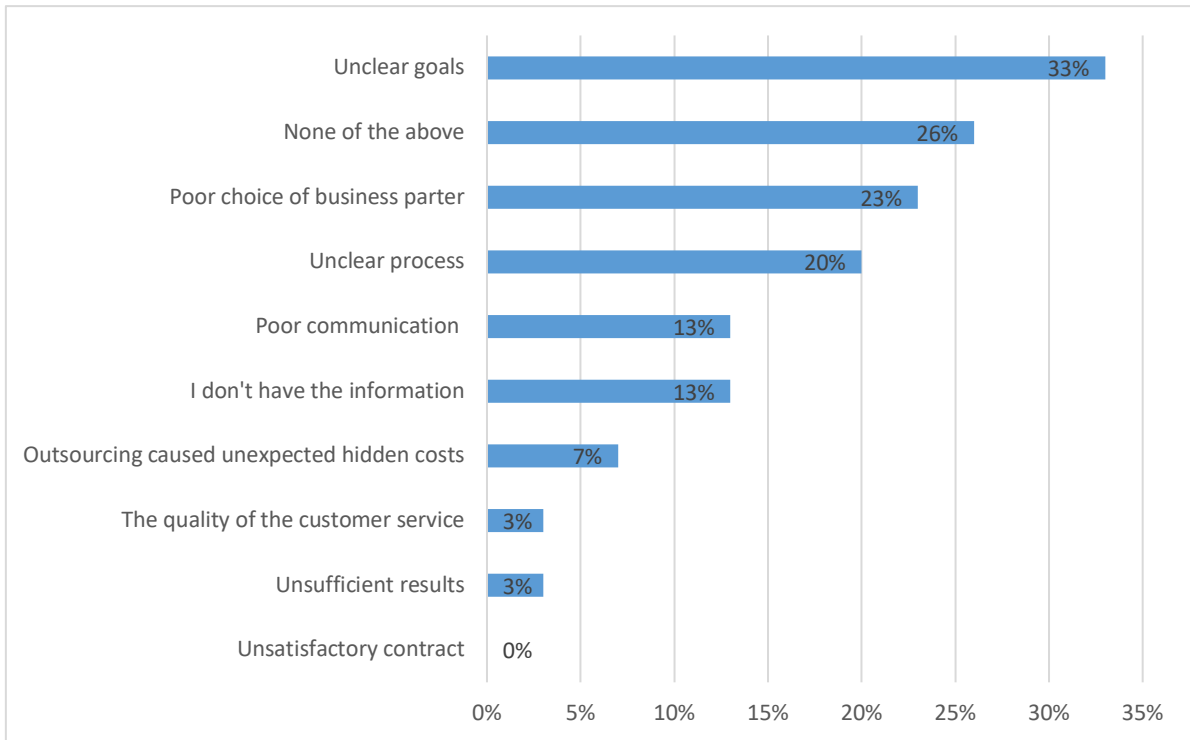


Figure 6 Difficulties in the process of outsourcing (n=34)

The second last mandatory question dealt with the benefits the company gained from outsourcing marketing support services and this question plays a key role when answering the RQ2: Why companies should outsource marketing support services? Eighteen responses received two of the listed possible benefits 1) More efficient use of time (56%), 2) Positive results in business (56%). Both of these answers support two of the main reasons to outsource: cutting in costs / more positive business results and flexibility in time. Similar option to more efficient use of time, saving in time (47%) received fifteen responses. Eleven responded that outsourcing marketing support services gained them better understanding about the market itself (43%). Saving in costs- statement (31%) received ten responses which again supports strongly the theoretical framework. Also, six of the respondents answered that they have more clear development points (19%) because of the decision to outsource. Outsourcing in general does not differ from outsourcing marketing support services and the benefits are similar. Positive results in business, more efficient use of time and savings in costs are the most common benefits companies can gain from outsourcing marketing support services.

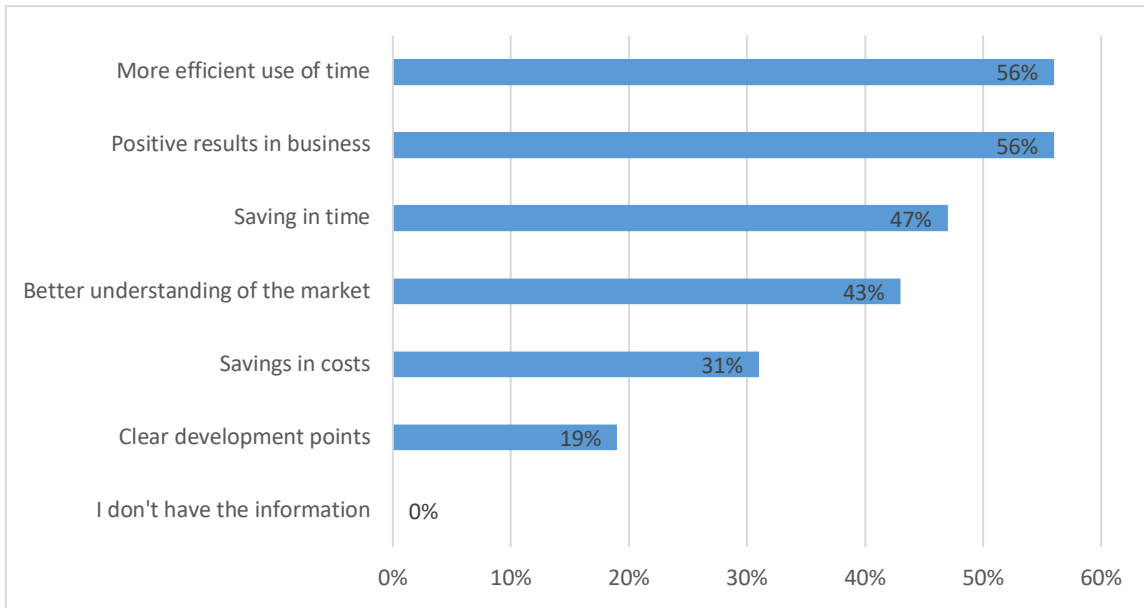


Figure 7 Positive results caused by outsourcing marketing support services (n=34)

The last mandatory question dealt with recommending outsourcing marketing support services in the field of marketing support services. Twenty-five (78%) of the respondents told that they would recommend outsourcing marketing support services. Three respondents (9%) told that they would not recommend outsourcing marketing support services and four (13%) told that they don't know if they would recommend marketing support services.

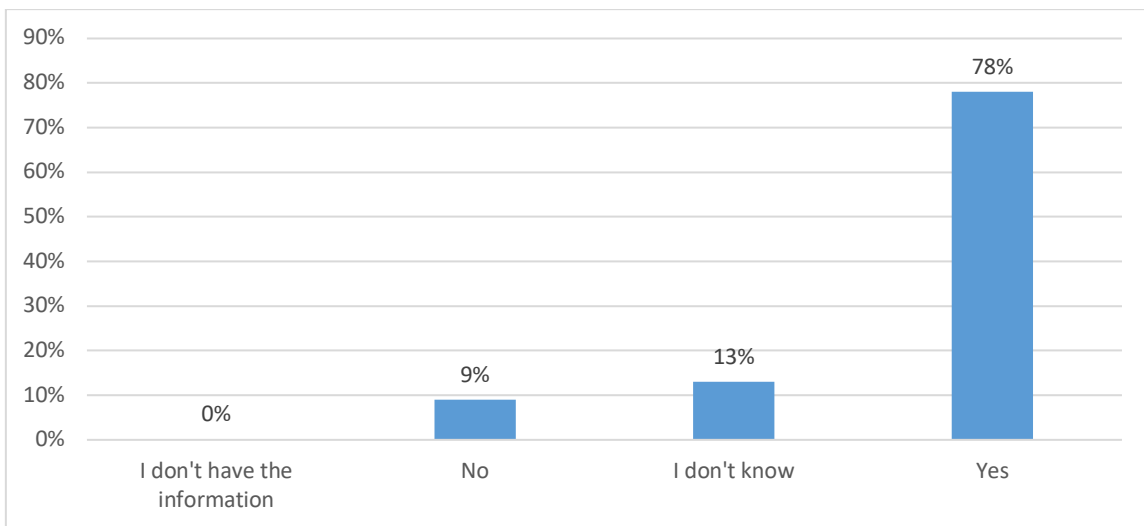


Figure 8 Intentions to recommend outsourcing marketing support services (n=34)

The survey was divided into two sections. The chapters above dealt with the companies that had outsourced in the field of marketing support services. The second sections dealt with attitudes about outsourcing marketing support services. This section in whole helps the author answer the first RQ1: How companies feel about outsourcing / attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services?

The first question only for the respondents who had not outsourced in the field of marketing support services was: Have you considered outsourcing marketing support services in your company/ the company you work for? Together there was twenty-nine respondents in the attitudes section. Four of the respondents told that they have considered outsourcing in this field (14%), eleven (38%) told that they have not considered outsourcing in the field of marketing support services and fourteen told that they might consider outsourcing (48%).

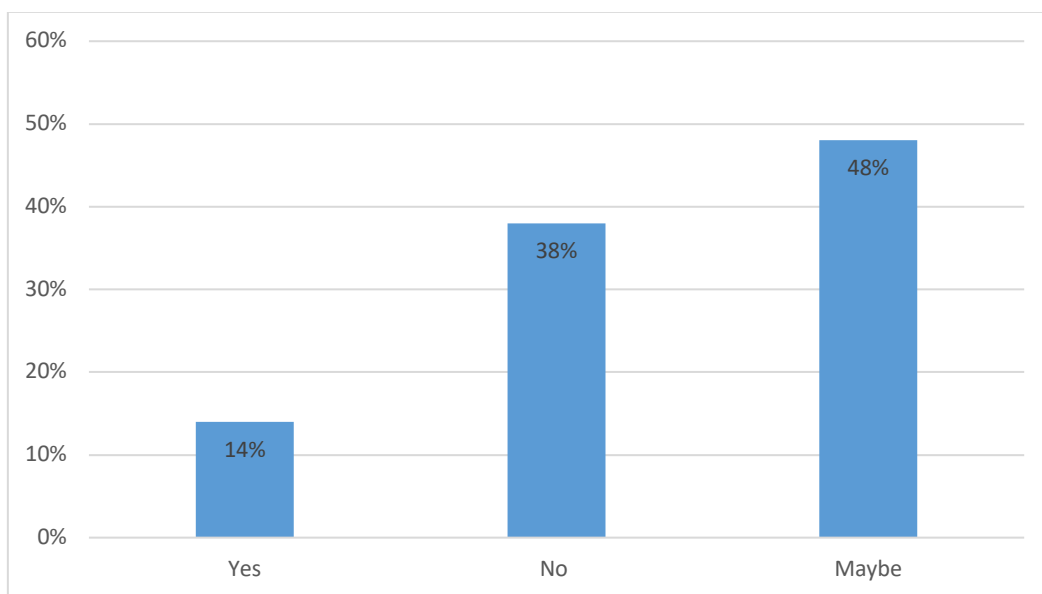


Figure 9 Considerations about outsourcing marketing support services (n=29)

The next part aimed to investigate which of the marketing support services are most common for the respondents and if they are similar to the choices the companies that had outsourced in the field of marketing support services. Twenty responses received booking meetings (69%) and customer service (69%). These answers are the same when compared to the answers in the experience part and this can mean that both of these marketing support services are common among companies. Online chat services (48%) and directs sales (48%) gained fourteen responses each. Auditing (41%), prospecting (38%) and market mapping services (28%) got less responses and this can

indicate that many of these services are not that common for companies and can lead outsourcing in this field left undone since companies are not aware about the possibilities.

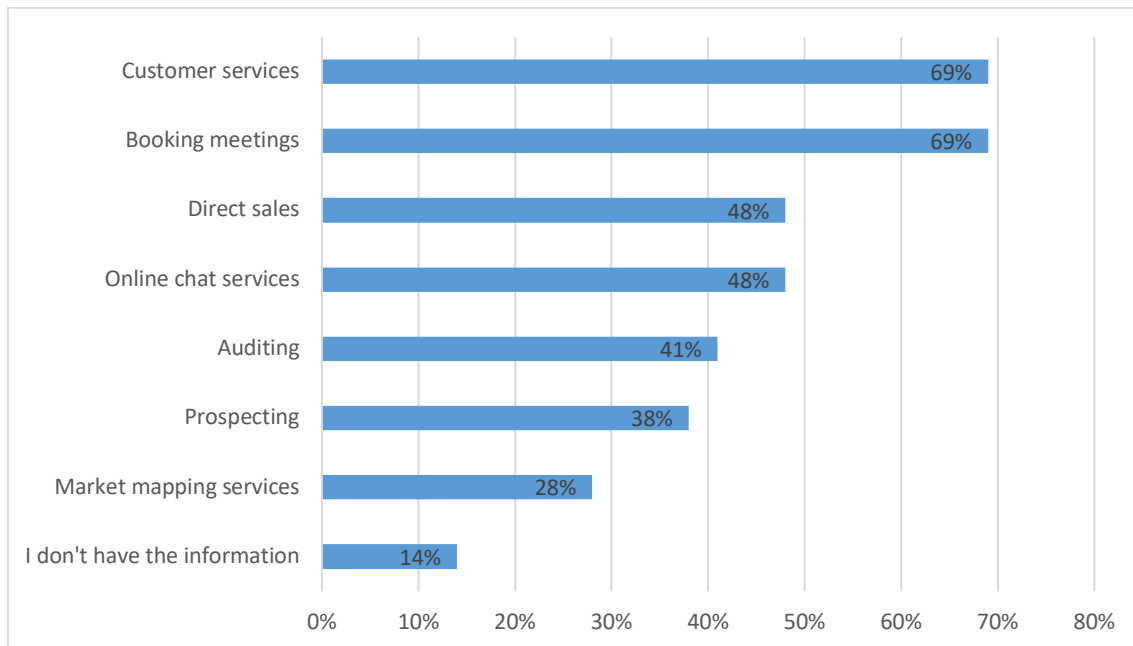


Figure 10 Awareness of marketing support services (n=29)

To be able to support theoretical framework and find out what problems the companies may be facing that marketing support services could fix. Finding new leads (59%) was clearly seen as the main problem with seventeen responds out of twenty-nine. No other problem gained nearly as much responses and this shows that there indeed is a need for prospecting services and companies offering marketing support services should be aware of this and act on it. Eight responses received both calling new customers in order to set up new meetings (28%) and getting customers feedback on your performance (28%). These three most common problems are also Ignis Ltd.'s most common marketing support services to offer for the customers; prospecting, booking meetings and auditing.



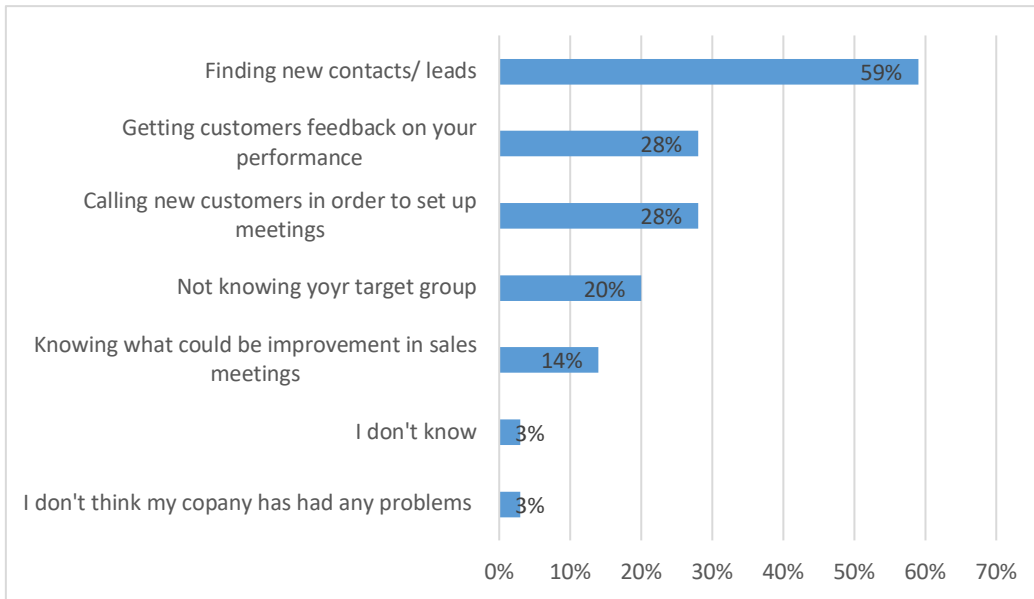


Figure 11 Problems with alternatives (n=29)

Similar question to the experience section of the survey measuring about the usefulness of outsourcing marketing support services but in the perspective of respondent companies that have not used outsourcing in this field. Five of the respondents told that they feel that marketing support services are totally useful (17%) and ten of the respondents told that they consider marketing support services rather useful (35%). Nine of the respondents felt neural (31%) about marketing support services. Two respondents felt that marketing support services are rather useless (10%), and one respondent considered them totally useless (7%). This indicates that the attitudes are rather positive, and companies are open to the possibility to outsourcing in this field.

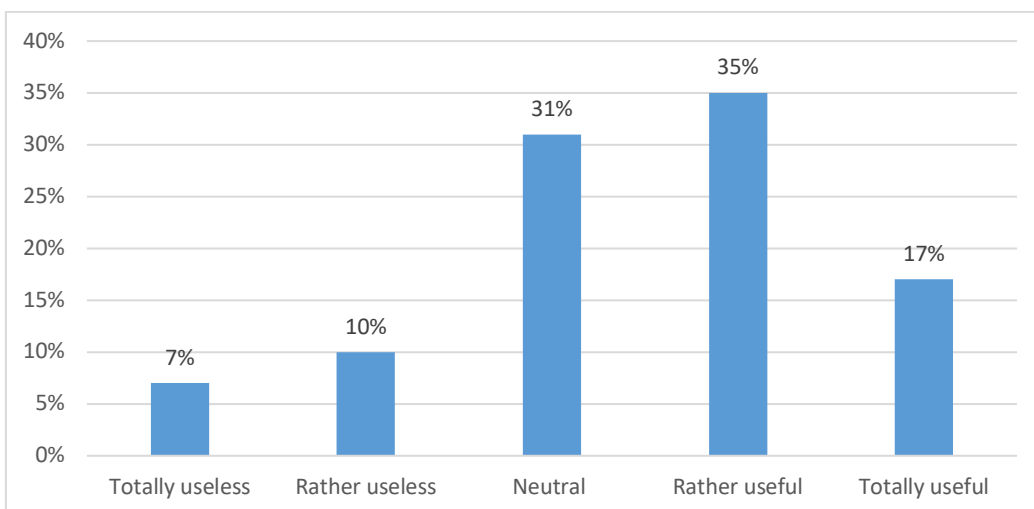


Figure 12 Evaluation of marketing support services? (n=29)

So far, the respondent has got an overview about marketing support services and a slight understanding about the problems they could solve. The next question goes a little deeper into the roots of the problems that marketing support services could solve. The questions go: In which of these situations would you see outsourcing marketing support services as a good idea? Eighteen of the respondents told that they feel that the sales person wants to focus on going to the meetings not booking them (62%) as a situation that outsourcing could solve. Fifteen of the respondents thought that the employees have no time to set up new meetings (52%). Twelve of the respondents thought that searching new contacts / leads takes too much time away from the employees (41%). This leads us back to the fact that there is an issue with prospecting and that booking meetings is a great help for many companies and ensuring a maximal ability to control the use of time. Nine of the respondents told that people might be afraid to make the phone call to an acquire new customers (31%) and eight of the respondents told that problem may be that the sales person does not know how the potential client felt about the sales meeting (28%). Again, the need for booking meetings and auditing is very visible.

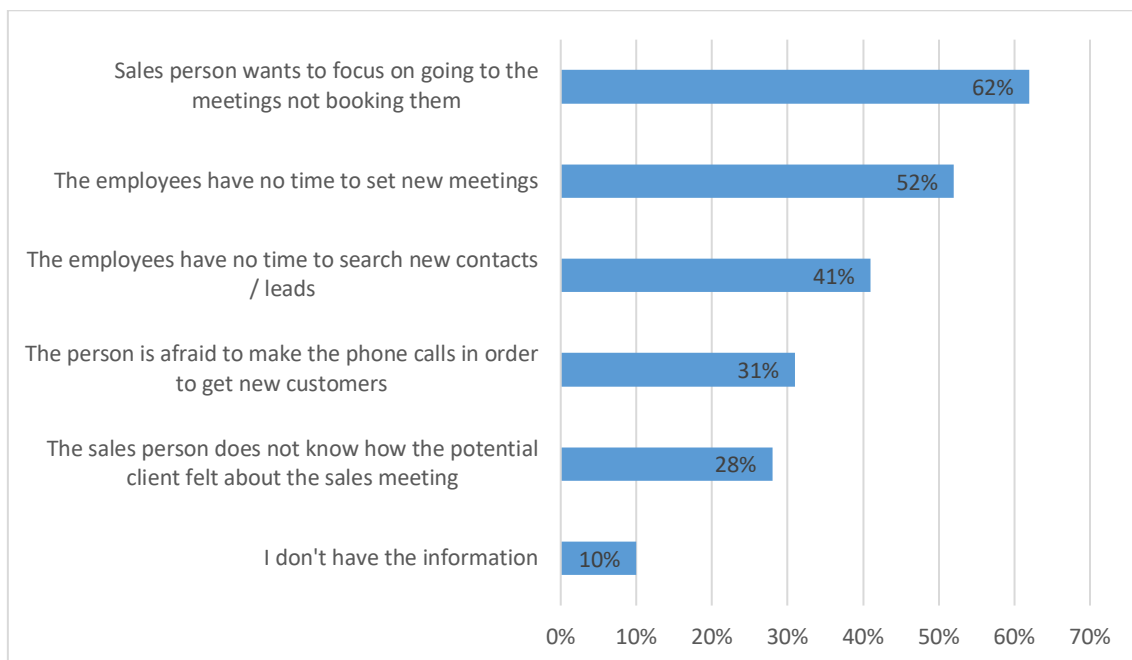


Figure 13 What of the following problems could marketing support services fix in your opinion? (n=29)

Potential benefits marketing support services were asked in order to find out further details about the attitudes for marketing support services. Fifteen respondents told that saving in time (56%) is one benefit marketing support services could provide. The lack on time and the efforts to maximize

the use of time turned out to be a repeated theme and this really proves the utility of marketing support services that among many other benefits help companies focus their actions in to the core business and in the case on Trainers' House helps companies follow through change and help companies to serve their clients better and for the most gain new customers. Thirteen respondents thought that one benefit of outsourcing marketing support services is more efficient use of time (48%) and twelve thought that it could bring positive results to business (44%). Eight thought that it could bring savings in costs (30%) and five thought that outsourcing in this field could bring a better understanding about the market (19%). Altogether three respondents did not have the information or did not know what benefits outsourcing could bring.

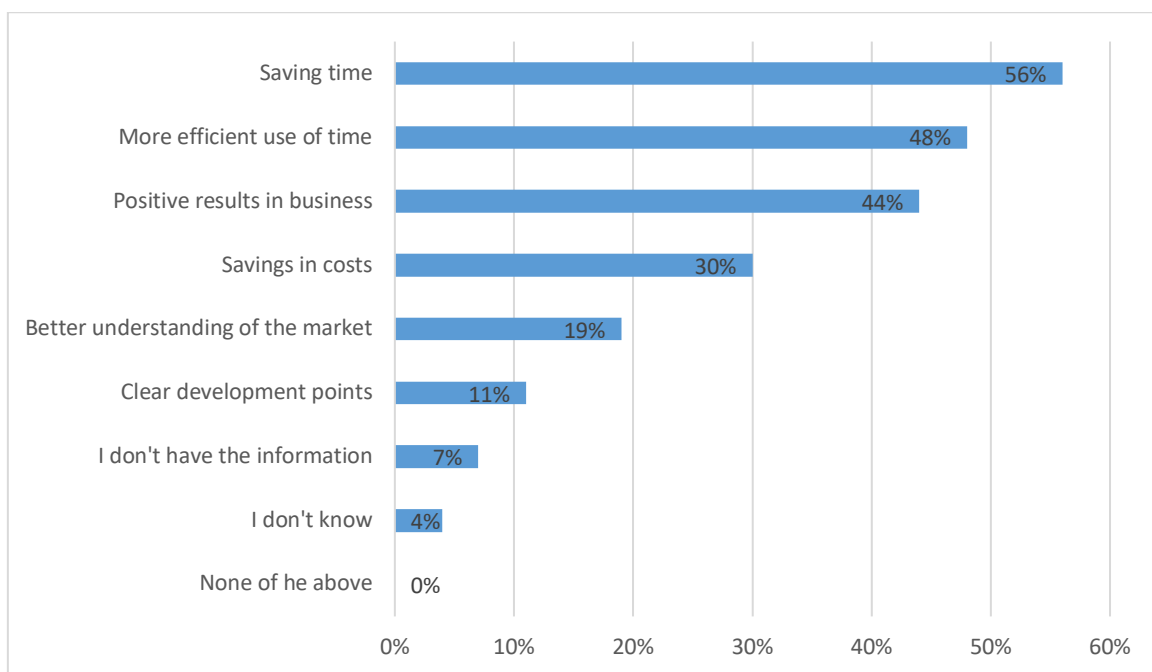


Figure 14 What benefits could outsource marketing support services bring (n=29)

The last mandatory question was: Do you feel that outsourcing marketing support services such as booking meetings could be beneficial for your company/ the company you work for? Seven respondents (24%) told that they feel that marketing support services could be beneficial for their company. Four respondents (14%) told “No” and three respondents (10%) told “I don’t know”. Fifteen (52%) told that outsourcing marketing support services might be beneficial for their company.

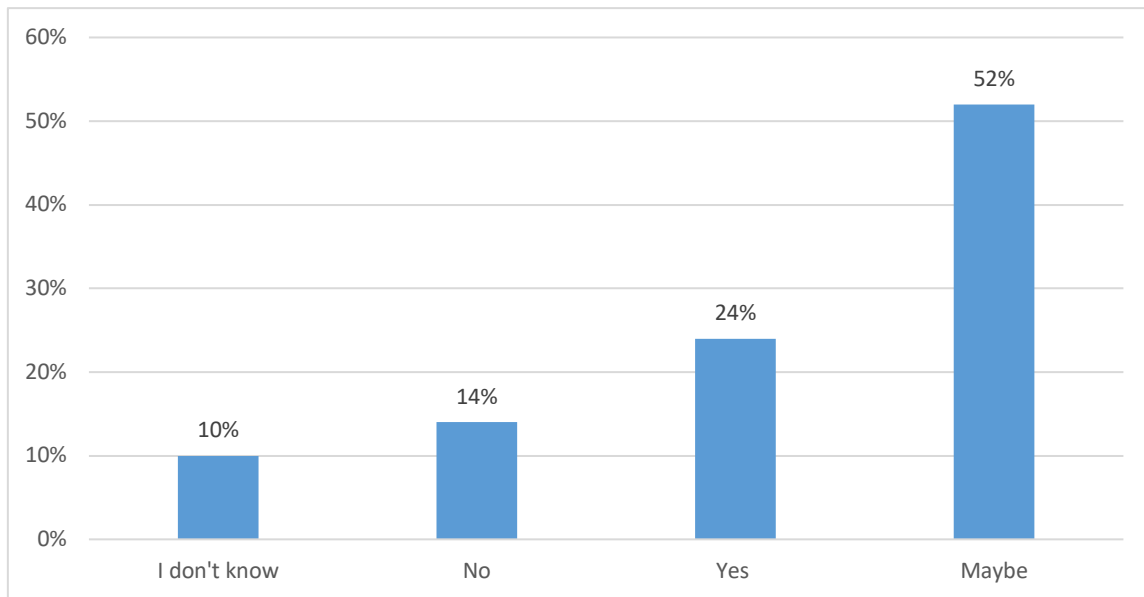


Figure 15 Could outsourcing marketing support services be beneficial for your company / the company you work for (n=29)

Overall the result supported the theoretical framework and the research objective. The majority of the respondents had a rather positive mindset about outsourcing marketing support services. This can indicate that the attitudes and experiences were in the positive side regarding outsourcing in this field of operations. The marketing support services that companies knew and had outsourced supported the research objective company's service supply rather well. In the next chapter the findings are analysed more deeply.

### 3.3. Findings and further research

The research aims finding out the attitudes companies and people working in companies have towards outsourcing marketing support services. Marketing support services are a field of services that in many cases can be executed in-house. The aim of the study is to show why outsourcing marketing support services could be beneficial for companies which now may be executing marketing support services themselves or have considered outsourcing them. The practical research in this bachelor thesis clearly points out the benefits that outsourcing in this field has brought to companies. The following chapters will deal with the results and how they derive with the theoretical framework of the thesis and answer the authors research questions; RQ1: How companies feel about outsourcing / attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services?

RQ2: Why companies should outsource marketing support services? RQ3: What are the biggest challenges companies face that outsourcing marketing support services could solve?

The first research questions dealt with the attitudes towards marketing support services. The theoretical framework shows some concerns relating to outsourcing but mainly in the sense of losing the feel of control and exposing confidential information about the company to a third party. Also, attitudes are covered as one -two and three-component model where each step brings out a new factor to consider about attitudes. This can be aimed for every subject and has to be taken into consideration. The respondents can have a certain type of attitude or experience towards outsourcing marketing support services. These attitudes are measured in the practical part of the thesis and the component theory helps the author know justifications towards the attitudes presented from the questionnaire. In the theoretical framework about attitudes and experiences was highlighted the role of experiences to attitudes and this is why it is important to study both in the practical part.

The answers from the research questionnaire reveal that most companies and people working in companies have rather positive attitude towards outsourcing marketing support services and many consider the services to be rather useful. There weren't many respondents that felt poorly about outsourcing. There were some problems mentioned in the process of outsourcing such as unclear goals, poor choice of a business partner and unclear process. Still many respondents told that they have had no problems in the process of outsourcing. This indicates that overall the attitudes toward outsourcing are positive and outsourcing in the field of marketing support services is no exception. From the experience section of the survey 78% would recommend outsourcing marketing support services to other companies and only 9% told that wouldn't. In the attitudes section which was aimed for the companies that hadn't outsourced in the field of marketing support services felt a little more neutral about the subject and 24% told that they think outsourcing in this field could be beneficial for their company and 52% said that they are not sure, or they don't know if their company would benefit from it. The positive result when thinking about the overall attitudes towards outsourcing in this field is the facts that only 14 % said that outsourcing marketing support services would not be beneficial.

In this chapter is dealt with the RQ3, since in order to answer the research question 2 needs both of the aspects to be covered; attitudes and problems companies are facing that outsourcing marketing support services could fix. The biggest challenges companies are facing according to

the theoretical framework that derived the questions for the survey: “The companies are not able to prospect enough, our sales people spend too much time at the office and not meeting potential customers, we are not able to increase the sales fast enough, our sales people books the meetings themselves and this takes time away from taking care of the new and old customers, too much time is spend with the old customers and still there seems to be no time to contacts old customers enough”. Many of these issues are related to the lack of time. The research questionnaire also indicates that the lack of time is the most common reason for the decision to outsource marketing support services. Also, other reasons such as the lack of efficiency to acquire new potential customers and wanting to focus on the core-business where reasons to outsource. Still, lack of time and the intent to increase flexibility in time turned out to be major factors for making the decision to outsource. This indicates that even though companies are able to execute marketing support services themselves there is clearly a time management issue that leaves the companies inefficient when it comes to time management. This is one of the most significant reasons for making the decision to outsource specially marketing support services to maximize the use of time and the ability to focus on the core business.

Referring to the attitudes section of the survey many snags were revealed. The theoretical framework clearly stated issues companies are having that outsourcing in the field of marketing support services could fix, such as sales people not being able to make new customer acquisition systematically, sales people being afraid to call new clients in order to set up new meetings, having difficulties to prospect new lied’s and not knowing what went wrong in the sales meeting. The research survey indicates and verifies many of these statements. It turned out that prospecting new contacts was one of the most faced problem for the companies that haven’t outsourced in the field of marketing support services. The second biggest reasons were calling new customers in order to set up new meetings and not having the knowledge about what went wrong in the sales meeting. The questionnaire results support the theoretical framework completely in this section which furthermore verifies the need for marketing support services.

The RQ2 “Why companies should outsource marketing support services?” helps the author answer the reader of the bachelor thesis, why they should consider outsourcing in this field. Together with the information gained by answering the research questions one and three the author is able to answer the research question two. In the theoretical framework it is found out that cutting costs and increased flexibility in time are the main reasons for companies to outsource. The last chapter revealed that especially inefficient use of time management is a common problem for many

companies and especially time to manage marketing support services. From the practical part of the survey was found out that in the case of marketing support services cutting costs is not the biggest motivation to outsource in this specific field of business operations. Still more positive business results were mentioned in the benefits that companies gained from outsourcing but cutting cost initially wasn't the motivation to start doing so. The actual benefits that were mentioned in the questionnaire and the highest points that came through from the respondents to the survey were 1) more positive results in business 2) more efficient use of time and 3) saving time. These three benefits form a good understanding about the importance of outsourcing marketing support services.

It is clear that almost every single marketing support service can be executed in-house. Still the research highlights the reasons why it should be outsourced and especially through the benefits it offers for the companies. First of all, the attitudes and experiences towards outsourcing marketing support services were rather positive. In both sections of the survey outsourcing in this field of operations was viewed useful and in the experience over half of the respondents would recommend it to other companies. Some issues were experienced with the process of outsourcing and this is one thing that marketing support service providers should take into consideration. Unclear process was one of the most common reasons for unsatisfaction in the process of outsourcing and the other was a poor choice of a partner. This indicates and supports the theoretical framework where the two parties involved in outsourcing are introduced. The role of the communication and the common ground rules and goals plays a key role in a good outsourcing co-operation.

The lack of time to prospect, the lack of time to acquire new customers or overall lack of time turned out to be a main factor and the most pressing reason to make the decision to outsource. The salespeople and employees can maximize their efficiency by outsourcing marketing support services and focusing their time to their core-business. After all the benefits companies gained from the experience of outsourcing in the field of marketing support services were, more positive results in business, more efficient use of time and saving in time. As a summary these benefits are definitely worth considering of and as the survey sample revealed that outsourcing in this field can be applied in many different fields of business. It is still important to be careful with the choice of a partner and make sure that both parties are aiming towards the same goal.

The research could be studied further in a qualitative manner and find out more deeply the ground reasons for making the decision to outsource in this field or on the other hand not to outsource.

This could reveal more deeply the points where marketing support service providers could improve their services and customize them based on the customer's needs. The sample size was n=62 respondents and this a good number of respondents. Still the sample could have been bigger and more specifically aimed for the people that are actually in charge of the decision whether the company is going to outsource or not. The difference between the fields that outsource more likely than others would be very interesting to study further and see if there are major differences. This research did not reveal any major differences but if the sample would have been greater it could have shown more broad view about the industries.



## CONCLUSION

The research problem of this bachelor thesis was the lack of knowledge about the benefits of outsourcing since almost all of the marketing support services can be executed in-house. The problems lie on the fact that many companies could increase the productivity of the sales cycle by outsourcing marketing support services. For this reason, the paper aims to investigate the attitudes and experiences towards marketing support services. By analysing both experiences and attitudes the author is able to answer the main research problem and the supporting research questions.

The main results from the research were that the overall attitudes were rather positive in both sections of the survey. The majority of the companies that had outsourced in the field of marketing support services would recommend outsourcing in this field to other companies. The majority of the companies that hadn't outsourced in this field answered that they felt marketing support services to be rather useful. This shows that companies can consider outsourcing at least based on the research sample the experiences have been rather positive and based on the attitudes the expected knowledge about the subject seemed rather positive based on the research sample.

The most common problems companies face is the lack of time, inefficient use of time and prospecting. Outsourcing overall solves problems such as cutting in costs and increases the flexibility in time and outsourcing marketing support services makes no expectation and on the positive side the most common benefits caused by outsourcing marketing support services were more efficient use of time, positive results in business and saving in time. This shows that there is a need for these services and based on the research, outsourcing marketing support services can solve many of the issues. The problems companies faced correlates with the benefits it has brought to the companies that had outsourced in the field of marketing support services.

The lack of time turned out to be the major issue alongside other problems such as incapability to concentrate on the core business and inefficiency of the sales people to set up new meetings. Lack of time is rather subjective and depends on the companies and people working in them. On the other hand, the findings show that the respondents felt that they were not efficient enough to

manage their time or the marketing support services. Even though the concept of not having time may be subjective the fact is that there is a need for these services is real and can help companies solve many issues especially related to time management issues when it comes to acquiring new customers.

The reader of this bachelor thesis gets an overview about the topic of outsourcing and about the biggest problem's companies have in the operations of marketing support services. The research gives confirmation for the decision to outsource and seek sticking points companies have in the field of marketing support services and offer solutions. On the other hand, the paper shows some difficulties companies may have in the process of outsourcing and be prepared to problems such as unclear goals, poor choice of a business partner and unclear process. Every time companies aim to outsource to a third party there are risks involved. In the best-case scenario, the company is able to ensure a smooth flow in new customer acquisitions and increased flexibility in time and positive results in business.

Attitudes and experiences correlate each other, and this research reveal that the attitudes and experiences were quite similar towards outsourcing marketing support services. The theoretical framework supports the idea that the experiences that companies had about outsourcing could influence the attitudes of those companies that hadn't outsourced in this field. On the other hand, one poor experience for example with a poor partner can affect the overall attitude towards the subject. This research showed both attitudes and experiences towards outsourcing marketing support services and based on the research outsourcing in this field is a good option for companies to consider in order to maximize a smooth flow of new customer acquisition.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1. Research results**

Q1: Has your own company / the company you work for outsourced in the field of marketing support services, such as booking services, auditing services, prospecting services

Yes 55%

No 37%

I don't have the information 8%

#### **Experience section of the survey:**

Q2: What is the field of business of your company/ the company you work for?

Open short answer

Q3: Which marketing support services has your company/ the company you work for outsourced? You can choose multiple choices

Booking meetings 44%

Prospecting 32%

Auditing 24%

Direct sales 35%

Customer service 47%

Online chat services 18%

Market mapping services 18%

Other booking services 6%

None of the above 0%

I don't have the information 3%

Q4: Why did you make the decisions to outsource on the field on marketing support services in your company/ the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices

Cutting costs 14%

Help to concentrate on the core business 41%

Flexibility in time 27%

The lack of knowledge in this field 18%

The lack of time to handle marketing support services 29%

Sales people were not efficient enough to acquire new potential customers 41%

Too expensive to train and hire people to do marketing support services 6%

I don't have the information 6%

The quality to perform in the outsourced are was not high quality enough 12%

Q5: How useful are outsourcing marketing support services in your opinion? 1= totally useless 2= rather useless 3= neutral 4= rather useful 5= totally useful

Totally useless 0%

Rather useless 3%

Neutral 9%

Rather useful 56%

Totally useful 32%

Q6: How was your experience about the outsourcing process in your company the company you work for? 1= very poor 2= rather poor 3= neutral 4= rather good 5= very good

Very poor 0%

Rather poor 6%

Neutral 24%

Rather good 50%

Very good 21%

Q7: Have you had problems in the following sectors during the outsourcing process in your company / the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices

Outsourcing caused unexpected hidden costs 7%

Poor choice of business partner 23%

Unsatisfactory contract 0%

Poor communication between the outsourced company 13%

Unclear goals 32%

Unclear process 19%

None of the above 26%

I don't have the information 13%

Other 6%

Q8: What benefits did outsourcing marketing support services do for your company / the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices

Savings in costs 31%

Saving in time 47%

Positive results in business 56%

Better understanding of the market 34%

Clear development points 18%

More efficient use of time 56%

I don't have the information 0%

Q9: Would you recommend outsourcing in the field of marketing support services?

Yes 78%

No 9%

I don't have the information 0%

I don't know 13%

Thank you for your response!

You're welcome 94%

No problem 6%



**Attitudes section of the survey:**

Q1: What is the field of business of your company/ the company you work for?

Open answer

Q2: Have you considered outsourcing marketing support services in your company/ the company you work for?

Yes 14%

No 38%

Maybe 48%

Q3: Which of the following marketing support services do you know? You can choose multiple choices.

Booking meetings 69%

Prospecting 38%

Auditing 41%

Direct sales 48%

Customer service 69%

Online chat services 48%

Market mapping services 28%

I don't know any 14%

Q4: Have you had problems in following sectors in your company/ the company you work for?

You can choose multiple choices

Calling new customers in order to set up meetings 28%

Finding new contacts/ leads 59%

Knowing what could be improved in a sales meeting 14%

Getting customers feedback on your performance 28%

Not knowing your target group 20%

Other 10%

Q5: How useful do you consider outsourcing marketing support services to be? 1= totally useless  
2= rather useless 3= neutral 4= rather useful 5= totally useful

Totally useless 7%

Rather useless 10%

Neutral 31%

Rather useful 35%

Totally useful 17%

Q6: In which of these situations would you see outsourcing marketing support services as a good idea? You can choose multiple choices

Sales person wants to focus on going to the meetings not booking them 62%

The person is afraid to make the phone calls in order to get new customers 31%

The employees have no time to set new meetings 52%

The employees have no time to search new contacts / leads 41%

The sales person does not know how the potential client felt about the sales meeting 28%

I don't have the information 10%

Q7: What benefits could outsourcing in marketing support services (=booking meetings, auditing) bring in your opinion? You can choose multiple choices

Savings in costs 30%

Saving time 56%

Positive results in business 44%

Better understanding of the market 19%

Clear development points 11%

More efficient use of time 48%

None of the above 0%

I don't have the information 7%

Other 4%

Q8: Do you feel that outsourcing marketing support services such as booking meetings could be beneficial for your company/ the company you work for?

Yes 24%

No 14%

Maybe 52%

I don't know 10%

Q9: Thank you for your response!

You're welcome 67%

No problem! 33%

## Appendix 2. Research questionnaire

Osio 1/3

### Outsourcing Marketing Support Services survey

The following questionnaire is for my Graduation Thesis under the topic Outsourcing Marketing Support Services.

The survey contains 10 questions related to the topic. Those companies who have used outsourcing in the field of marketing support services will answer questions about experiences and those companies who haven't will answer based on attitudes.

The aim of the study is to find out the benefits of outsourcing marketing support services and what attitudes companies have towards outsourcing marketing support services.

In this Thesis Trainers' House is used as a case example and the marketing support services it provides for companies to outsource. To make it more clear these services can be for example: Booking meetings, Auditing services, Prospecting services, Market mapping services etc.

**Has your own company / the company you work for outsourced in the field of \* marketing support services, such as booking services, auditing services, prospecting services**

Yes

No

I don't have the information

Osio 2/3

### Experiences of outsourcing marketing support services

This section aims to investigate what kind of services has your company / the company you work for outsourced for the field of marketing support services

**What is the field of business of your company/ the company you work for? \***

Lyhyt vastausteksti

---

## The questionnaire continues

⋮

**Which marketing support services has your company/ the company you work \*  
for outsourced? You can choose multiple choices**

- Booking meetings
- Prospecting
- Auditing
- Direct sales
- Customer service
- Online chat services
- Market mapping services
- Other booking services
- None of the above
- I don't have the information
- Muu...

⋮

**Why did you make the decisions to outsource on the field on marketing  
support services in your company/ the company you work for? You can  
choose multiple choices**

\*

- Cutting costs
- Help to concentrate on the core business
- Flexibility in time
- The lack of knowledge in this field
- The lack of time to handle marketing support services
- Sales people were not efficient enough to acquire new potential customers
- Too expensive to train and hire people to do marketing support services
- I don't have the information
- The quality to perform in the outsourced are was not high quality enough
- Muu...

The questionnaire continues

How useful are outsourcing marketing support services in your opinion? 1= <sup>\*</sup> totally useless 2= rather useless 3= neutral 4= rather useful 5= totally useful

	1	2	3	4	5	
Totally useless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Totally useful

⋮

How was your experience about the outsourcing process in your company <sup>\*</sup> the company you work for? 1= very poor 2= rather poor 3= neutral 4= rather good 5= very good

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very good

⋮

Have you had problems in the following sectors during the outsourcing <sup>\*</sup> process in your company / the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices

- Outsourcing caused unexpected hidden costs
- Poor choice of business partner
- Unsatisfactory contract
- Poor communication between the outsourced company
- Unclear goals
- Unclear process
- None of the above
- I don't have the information
- Muu...

The questionnaire continues

⋮

**What benefits did outsourcing marketing support services do for your company / the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices** \*

- Savings in costs
- Saving in time
- Positive results in business
- Better understanding of the market
- Clear development points
- More efficient use of time
- I don't have the information
- Muu...

⋮

**Would you recommend outsourcing in the field of marketing support services?** \*

- Yes
- No
- I don't have the information
- I don't know

**Thank you for our response!**

- You're welcome!
- No problem

The questionnaire continues

Osio 3/3



## Attitudes towards outsourcing marketing support services

This section aims to study companies that have not outsourced in the field on marketing support services



What is the field of business of your company/ the company you work for? \*

Lyhyt vastausteksti

Have you considered outsourcing marketing support services in your company/ the company you work for? \*

- Yes
- No
- Maybe



Which of the following marketing support services do you know? You can choose multiple choices \*

- Booking meetings
- Prospecting
- Auditing
- Direct sales
- Customer service
- Online chat service
- Market mapping services
- I don't know any
- Muu...



The questionnaire continues

⋮

**Have you had problems in following sectors in your company/ the company you work for? You can choose multiple choices** \*

- Calling new customers in order to set up meetings
- Finding new contacts/ leads
- Knowing what could be improved in a sales meeting
- Getting customers feedback on your performance
- Not knowing your target group
- Muu...

**How useful do you consider outsourcing marketing support services to be? 1= totally useless 2= rather useless 3= neutral 4= rather useful 5= totally useful** \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Totally useless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Totally useful

⋮

**In which of these situations would you see outsourcing marketing support services as a good idea? You can choose multiple choices** \*

- Sales person wants to focus on going to the meetings not booking them
- The person is afraid to make the phone calls in order to get new customers
- The employees have no time to set new meetings
- The employees have no time to search new contacts / leads
- The sales person does not know how the potential client felt about the sales meeting
- I don't have the information
- Muu...

The questionnaire continues

⋮

**What benefits could outsourcing in marketing support services (=booking meetings, auditing) bring in your opinion? You can choose multiple choices** \*

- Savings in costs
- Saving time
- Positive results in business
- Better understanding of the market
- Clear development points
- More efficient use of time
- None of the above
- I don't have the information
- Muu...

**Do you feel that outsourcing marketing support services such as booking meetings could be beneficial for your company/ the company you work for?** \*

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- I don't know

⋮

**Thank you for your response!**

- You're welcome
- No problem!

Note: Takaisin = Back, Lataa = Send, Pakollinen = compulsory, Lyhyt vastausteksti = a short answer, Muu = Other, Osio = section

Google Forms was used as a tool for the online questionnaire and the terms in the notes appear in the questionnaire since the original language is in Finnish.



