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KEY MARKS OF QUALITY ON THE EXAMPLE OF TRADE SYSTEMS IN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS IN ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract: *The paper shows the key marks of quality on the example of trade systems in manufacturing companies and service systems in non-profit organizations. The very important elements of modern trade systems are communication by computer and professional services. Companies and organizations build communication nets, create new procedures, instructions and codes to better collaborate with clients. Clear and easy procedures of trade transactions, professional personnel in a trade department, speed of transaction, modern trade infrastructure in sales offices, opening for changes and innovation are the key marks of quality in these systems. Modern trade communication is based on creating permanent relations between customers (clients) and companies. This process is called the relationship marketing or customer relationship management (CRM). According to C. Gronross, relationship marketing is based on a promise made and kept. Companies prepare a unique sales offer for each client. The relation between producers and clients is based on confidence and value of trade offer. In the paper the new values of client management organization are presented, illustrated by the example of some companies and organizations located on the Polish market. Service quality is part of a management system and creates a service brand. Services quality in trade system is connected with*

company strategy, work and service organization and operations in companies.

Key words: CRM – Customer Relationship Management, product and service quality, trade system, client service system

1. INTRODUCTION

Every company can improve the quality of customer service. CRM can be implemented in almost any organization. Customer Relationship Management is a system based on modern software, whose essence is an efficient management of customer relations. The system requires the establishment of procedures and standards of customer service. The procedures and standards should cover all elements of the sales and customer service system. They should, on one hand, be adjusted to the skills of the staff (their knowledge and experience), and on the other hand, to the needs and expectations of customers, giving them the impression of being someone special at the sales point. Specialist literature provides the following definition of customer service: 'customer service is the reliable provision of services to customers at a set time and place, according to their expectations; customer service is a set of actions of all departments of a company participating in the supply of goods and services in accordance with customers' expectations and company's goals; customer service includes all tasks necessary to be carried out in order to accept customers' purchase orders, manufacture and supply the ordered item as well as actions aimed at the remedy of mistakes made at any stage of service provision' [1, 2].

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEM AT A MANUFACTURING PLANT

The analysis of the trading and customer service system was carried out based on the biggest metallurgical company on the Polish steel market i.e. ArcelorMittal Poland. The basis for the establishment

of a new customer service quality was the development of 'Customer Service Strategy' (functional strategy). The adopted strategy reflects the company's aspirations in terms of customer service. It presents the main principles of customer service i.e. comprehensive service, active market research for the establishment of development directions for the company in accordance with customers' expectations, identifying in detail the requirements of particular customers, registering all queries from customer, analyzing each purchase order to ensure its full and timely completion, handling short deadlines, taking into consideration individual customer and contractor expectations, complying with legal requirements, obeying the rules of dialogue and cooperation, e.g. providing customers with immediate replies, negotiating terms and conditions of contracts with customers, confirming purchase order acceptance, concluding written agreements with customers, constant measurement of customer satisfaction, improving staff skills and qualifications and continuous improvement of service system. The assumptions of the customer service strategy have to be in line with the principles of the *Quality Management System*, company vision and the 'Our Steel Builds the World' development mission. The vision and the values jointly constitute the foundations of a new customer service culture [3].

	improvement of skills and qualifications of employees servicing customers.
Kindness and cordiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'smile via the telephone, e-mail', - treating each customer with respect, - committed workers, - in-depth knowledge of service package /identity of each clients, - top-class relations based on confidence and transparency.
Professionalism and multi-directional approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accurate and adjusted processes that make it possible to answer any questions from the customer in the shortest time possible, - high regard for the customer, - access to full data on the customer at each working station.
Openness to changes, innovation and dynamism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - customer service staff are flexible towards customers' requirements, - the value of customer service contributes to building corporate culture.

Table 2. Marks of customer service process at a manufacturing company [4]

Mark	Implementation method
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - full information available in one place, - a single employee responsible for the whole process of contacting the customer, - information on the progress of a customer's order available at all times, - clear and orderly outline of all tasks related to customer service.
Ease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - customer orders completed within the shortest possible time, - effective after-sales service, responsive to customers proposals, - full responsibility for solving customers' problems, - optimal accessibility of customer service -telephone, fax, the Internet, electronic mail, - service in a chosen language (e.g. English).
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meeting the promised deadlines of order completion, - centralized and well-defined responsibility, - investments in the

ArcelorMittal Poland applies a rule according to which: 'the customer and customer service worker are partners, with the latter being customer-oriented, focused on the needs, feelings and problems of the customer; the customer service worker's duty is to respect customer rights even if the customer is not aware of them; in case of conflict the customer service worker does not attack the customer; the customer service worker appreciates the customer's initiative and plays the role of an advisor assisting the customer in making decisions without any coercion; the customer service worker is qualified and their communication with the customer is clear, flexible and based on partnership; information provided is comprehensible and the form of its transmission dependant on the situation' [4]. The company has developed a special, easy to remember customer service instruction for the trading department employees. Its main guidelines are: 'keep your desk tidy at all times, look presentable, be natural, pay attention to the customer, start the conversation with the question: how can I help; treat the customer the way you wish to be treated (smile, kind attitude, eye contact), while talking use a simple, communicative language and offer the customer the best solution, present the advantages of a given product but leave the final choice to the customer; be flexible and adjust your behavior to the individual customer, control your emotions' [5,6].

The metallurgical plants change. They remove old components of their image and add new client's orientation marks (tables 2).

Table 2. Elements of a brand at metallurgical companies [7]

Changes in a brand	Component examples
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reliability, – use of state-of-the-art technology, – experience of the staff, – maintain the high quality of steel and metallurgical products
Remove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – slowness of introducing changes, – lack of flexibility, – uncontrolled emissions of pollution, – obsolete technology, – overstaffing.
Add	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – decision-making, – energetic actions, – competitiveness, – professionalism, – customer-oriented attitude, – global aspect, development vision, – production specialization, – introduction of innovations.

New components are directed on clients, workers and local community and others institutions and persons in environment (table 3). Clients look at the enterprise through new values such as: quality, sustainable development, solidarity, opening, experience, enterprising, leadership, etc. The companies declares the highest quality of their products, efficient and quick service and trust-based relations.

Workers want to work safely, they want to develop and increase their capacities. Employer expects more professional job and uses the change and knowledge management. Knowledge used at the metallurgical company is very broad. Managers, engineers use[8]:

- metallurgical knowledge (knowledge on metallurgical processes, steel melting, cleaning, so called "cleaner steel"),
- technical knowledge (construction of machinery and equipment; technical specification and parameters of equipment; operating conditions and technical limitations),
- technological knowledge (terms of use of technologies; information about emerging technologies (new technologies),
- chemical and physical knowledge (physical and chemical reactions in metallurgical processes),
- accounting and financial knowledge (financial analytical skills, controlling and accounting rules),
- environmental knowledge (wastes management rules (recycling), elimination or reduction of pollution),
- psychological and social knowledge (operation of a unit, group, organisation; mutual interactions between employees; human behaviour rules;

employee selection rules in relation to particular functions -psychological tests),

- market and marketing knowledge (all market phenomena favouring the company or not (opportunities and threats) and customer behaviour in the market, customer behaviour motives, customer characteristics, needs and expectations, marketing efficiency),
- structural knowledge (structure of the company, division into branches, departments, sections, units, mutual relations and rules of co-operation),
- management knowledge (management techniques and methods allowing for adequate use of the company's potential and external conditions).

The biggest metallurgical company in the Polish market is Arcelor Mittal. The company introduced its Knowledge Management Programme (KMP) based on the motto "Knowledge means success". The company implements economic, organisational, marketing, technological, personnel and other changes. These are internal and external changes.

Every year the number of actions of the companies for the benefit of local communities is growing. The companies organize various events, open door days, immediate assistance for public and local governmental institutions. The company sponsors local schools, libraries, hospitals and local events. Inhabitants want to live in cleaner environment so companies protect it. They use Cleaner Production Strategy and minimize waste.

More over companies have got ethical codes. The rules of the codes are directed to the whole company, as well as to all its subsidiaries, all employees, directors and members of the corporate bodies. The codes determine the principles of the employees' behaviour in their place of work, as well as in their contacts with the environment. The essence of the professional ethics is elimination of activities which might endanger a positive image of the company. The codes regulate the following issues: using the network of electronic data transfer, accepting gifts and other benefits, observance of the professional secret, conducting political activities, health protection, safety at work, respect for the right of other people, relations with co-operating parties, customers, personal data protection, protection of the company's property and value, reacting to unethical and illegal activities[9].

Table3. System of value at the modern companies[8]

Component	Value
Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality Management is very important part of the management system (ISO 9001:2000). – Clients can contact by Internet web page and mail address – There are electronic customer data systems in companies – There are CRM – Customer

	<p>Relationship Management in companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Companies have got computer systems. The systems render efficient all the business processes for example SAP.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Companies realize the Knowledge Management Programme (KMP). That programmes consist of training, instructing, lectures etc. Besides personnel learn foreign language. Trainings are both off - the job and on-the-job. Managers and workers learn and study new areas of management for. example: change management, total quality management, environmental management, staff management, marketing management, financial management, time based management, knowledge management, benchmarking, reengineering, just in time, lean management. – Companies develops communication system.. In the companies there is Intranet – indoor communication system. Each worker's problem is solved at now. Besides the companies do research to know what workers think about company activities and what their needs are. – Companies organize rest for its personnel. Workers take a rest during their holidays in company's rest centres. Besides they take part in sports competitions and celebrate The Day of Company. – Companies remember about workers' families (children obtain sweets – Charismas Holiday and The Children Day).
Municipal (local) community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Companies organize various events, open door days for municipal community. – Companies sponsor local schools, libraries, hospitals and local events.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Companies use ethical codes. – Companies protect environment and realize Cleaner Production Strategy.

3. CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEM IN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The analysis was based on customer service systems at municipal offices. In case of this type of services the customer does not have a free choice of the service provider. City inhabitants have to use the services of a municipal office in their own hometown. Municipal office customers turn to the office to handle various matters e.g. residency, ID issue. All matters are handled as provided for by the law. The customer service process is shaped, to a lesser or greater extent, by local government employees [10]. While considering specific cases the commune or municipal office acts in accordance with certain procedures and provisions of the Administrative Procedures Code [10]. The office customers expect a swift, professional, comprehensive and efficient service, carried out in accordance with 'minimum bureaucracy, maximum politeness' [11]. Local government administration also puts the emphasis on the importance of timely provision of services and meeting deadlines [10].

The establishment of an office focused on the quality of service required internal organizational changes. In the past few years customer (enquirer) service offices, information desks, internal control units and the disabled service points have been created in local government offices [10,11].

The process of service quality improvement has also covered communication – forms have been made available on the local government offices websites and an electronic service system has been introduced [9].

The past few years have seen a number of local government offices implement quality assurance systems. At the forefront of the new trend there are two offices: Municipal Office in Dzierżoniów (14th January 2000 - ISO:9002 certificate) and Municipal Office in Kwidzyna, which obtained the ISO 9001 quality certificate in May 2000 [12].

4. CONCLUSION

The customer service system has a few quality aspects i.e. the technical, interpersonal, organizational and marketing aspect. The technical aspect pertains to issues such as the latest technical achievements used in handling customer cases (applications) as well as computer databases on customers and other CRM subsystems. The interpersonal aspect concerns the relations between customer service staff and customers, whereas the organizational aspect consists in adjusting the organizational structure of an organization, the scope of its competencies and tasks of individual employees to customers' expectations. It also means the transparency of procedures and promptness of the service. The marketing aspect is related to the image of an organization [2].

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