


## STANDARD TITLE PAGE FOR PROJECTS

To be completed by the student(s)

Subjects: <b>(tick box)</b>	Project :	Thesis: <b>x</b>	Written Assignment:
Study Programme:	MSc. International Marketing		
Semester:	4 <sup>th</sup> Semester		
Exam Title:	Master's Thesis Exam		
Group Number:	10		
Names + Student Nos of group member(s):	Name(s)	Student Number(s)	
	Brigita Holendová	20185291	
Submission date:	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2020		
Project Title /Thesis Title			
According to module description, maximum number of characters/words/pages of the paper	100 pages/240 000 characters		
Number of characters/words/pages <i>(Standard page = 2400 characters including Tables and Figures, excluding References, Appendices, Front Page, Table of Contents)</i>	83 pages / 200 420		
Supervisor (project/thesis):	Christina Öberg		
<p>We hereby declare that the work submitted is our own work. We understand that plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own without crediting the original source. We are aware that plagiarism is a serious offense, and that anyone committing it is liable to academic sanctions.</p> <p>Rules regarding Disciplinary Measures towards Students at Aalborg University:  <a href="http://www.plagiarism.aau.dk/Rules+and+Regulations/">http://www.plagiarism.aau.dk/Rules+and+Regulations/</a> </p> <div style="text-align: right;">   31<sup>st</sup> May 2020  Signature and date </div>			



**AALBORG UNIVERSITET**

# MANAGING SOCIAL WORLDS OF THE MARKETING AND SALES DEPARTMENTS

Master Thesis for MSc. in International Marketing  
Aalborg University

Brigita Holendová  
Student no.: 20185291

Supervisor: Christina Öberg  
June 2020

# Acknowledgment

I would like to say a big “Thank you” to everybody who supported me during my whole studies and did not hesitate to help me anytime I needed advice. Especially my family who believes in me and supports me so I can achieve my goals. I am also grateful for having such a great supervisor Christina Öberg who provided me with guidance and motivation to work on the project. Last but not least, I would like to thank the interviewees who shared great insights from their professional practice.

# Summary

The purpose of the research is to provide a closer look on how a company manages the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. As both departments should serve the customer, their coexistence within a company does not necessarily have to be smooth and without conflicts. The aim of the research is to provide an explorative case study with insights into social world management and coordination of the Marketing and Sales departments. As one of the main distribution channels in the researched company is personal selling, marketing has a dominant function in the strategy creation process. Therefore, the researcher was interested in how the managers deal with shaping the social worlds and conflict management.

To collect the data, two semi-structured interviews were conducted as the author adopted the social constructivist approach and explored the researched problem from the subjective perspectives of the managers in the researched company. Based on the systematic literature review, the analytical framework created and used as a guideline when evaluating the data. There are two theoretical considerations in the background of the research - Differentiation and Integration Theory by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) and Hofstede dimensions (2000) providing the basic understanding of behavioral predisposition based on the country-cultural specifics.

The findings show that although there is a high level of integration between the Marketing and Sales departments in the researched company, there are still differentiated regarding the role specialization, training, goals and time orientation which signalizes differences in the social worlds of the departments. The employees are proud to be a part of the company, hold beliefs of bringing value to the customer, and have a hard-working attitude. Last but not least, the organizational environment shapes the social worlds of the marketers and salespeople by defining the company's culture, strategy, and ensuring the communication flows between the team members.

# Table of Contents

<b>1 Introduction and Research Background</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Differences between departments	8
1.2 Social world differences	10
1.4 The orientation of the studies and Research Gap	10
1.5 Problem formulation and Research Questions	12
<b>2 Theoretical Consideration and Literature review</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Theoretical Consideration	13
2.1.1 Differentiation and Integration Theory (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969)	13
2.1.2 Hofstede Dimensions	14
2.2 Literature Review	18
2.2.1 Marketing and Sales Interface	18
2.2.2 Marketing mix perception	19
2.2.3 Relationships between the Marketing and Sales departments	20
2.2.4 Thought-world differences	22
2.2.4.1 Conflict management	25
2.2.4.2 Information management and perception	26
2.3 Analytical framework	29
<b>3 Philosophy of Science and Methodology</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1 Paradigms	31
3.2 RRIF Classification by Burrell and Morgan	32
3.3 Ontology	34
3.4 Epistemology	34
3.5 Social Constructivism	35
3.6 Selection of studies for the Literature Review	39
3.7 Methodology	40
3.7.1 Data Collection Method	41
3.7.2 Company and Context of the Research	43
3.7.3 Primary data collection	44

3.7.4 Data Analysis	45
<b>4 Data Analysis</b>	<b>47</b>
4.1 The characteristics of the Marketing and Sales departments	47
4.2 Marketing - Sales interface in the researched company	50
4.3 Company environment	54
<b>5 Discussion</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1.1 Differentiation and Integration of the Marketing and Sales departments	58
5.1.2 Current social worlds of the marketers and sales representatives	60
5.1.3 Shaping the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments as an organization	62
<b>6 Conclusion</b>	<b>64</b>
The impact of the chosen method	68
Limitations	69
Implications for managers and researchers	70
Opportunities for future research	71
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>77</b>

# List of Figures

*Figure 1: The Hofstede dimensions in Slovakia (Hofstede Insights, 2020)*

*Figure 2: Thought-world conceptual model (Homburg and Jensen, 2007, p. 125)*

*Figure 3: The Analytical Framework*

*Figure 4: “Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory” (Burrell and Morgan, 2008, p.22)*

## List of Tables

Table 1: “*The Objectivist- Subjectivist Dispositions in Social Science*” (Kuada, 2012, p. 72)



# List of Appendices

*Appendix 1: The structure of the semi-structured interview*

*Appendix 2: The interview with the Sales Director in Slovak*

*Appendix 3: The interview with the Sales Director translated to English*

*Appendix 4: The interview with the Marketing Director in Slovak*

*Appendix 5: The interview with the Marketing Director translated to English*

# 1 Introduction and Research Background

Marketing and Sales play important functions in every company. Although both usually strive to achieve the same superficial goals - company growth and prosperity, their activities, when not aligned, do not necessarily have to bring desired results. (Cespedes, 1994; Kotler et al., 2012). Palic et al. (2012) point out that cooperation issues between the Marketing and Sales departments were evaluated as one of the most important for the organization. Although marketers and salespeople should be supportive of each other, the differences may often cause conflicts and misunderstandings. As a result, common collaboration is either ineffective or can directly affect the performance of a company. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007) On the other hand, the alignment between the Marketing and Sales departments help better serve the market and bring value to the customers. (Rouzies and Hulland, 2014) Salespeople can sell more confidently through the market insights generated by marketers who understand the needs of sales representatives (Cespedes, 1993).

## 1.1 Differences between departments

In order to ensure the best results of their activities and collaborate effectively, the Marketing and Sales departments need to overcome many differences considering the roles, objectives, knowledge, education, orientation, personalities, team dynamics, and time spent on the position. Marketers play a role in creating value for the customer through product or service development, price setting, building distributing networks, and promoting the products or services. They are supposed to build a brand and awareness of the product/services among a potential customer base. Marketing goals are long-term oriented and the results are usually also measured in the long-term time periods. They mostly work “behind the desk” and according to the statistics spent on their position 2-3 years on average. (Dannenberg et al., 2009)

On the other hand, salespeople's responsibility is to build relationships with potential customers. Their orientation is short-term as they usually need to fulfill the monthly, quarterly, and yearly quotas. As they work "in the field" and meet the customer, they usually dispose of valuable feedback on the product or service from specific customers and tend to be more customer-oriented than product-oriented. In addition, statistics show that the average time spent on the position is 10 years. Whereas marketers are seen as professionally younger, creative, and analytical personalities, salespeople have strong social skills with valuable experience from the field. (Dannenberg et al., 2009; Kotler et al., 2006; Zupancic, 2007; Kelly et al., 2017) The psychological dissimilarities can complicate the trust-building in the relationships between managers and further cross-functional integration in the companies. Marketers and salespeople usually hold different associations, read different literature, and tend to maintain social distance from other groups. Additionally, they identify themselves with their function which needs to be taken into consideration when solving cross-functional conflicts. (Massey and Dawes, 2007)

The discrepancies may appear due to the cross-functional relationships and sociocultural differences between sales and marketing managers. According to the researchers, the better-educated managers, the fewer disputes arise as their anti-conflict systems are more developed. However, maybe surprisingly, the findings of the study conducted by Dawis and Massey (2005) show that the cross-functional training itself does not reduce the level of conflict. Based on social identity theory, although the managers have cross-functional training, they feel like a part of a certain community in terms of their identity. Consequently, as members of the marketing or sales community, the individuals have tendencies to see themselves as different from other groups and hold negative biases about the other group. It may be, therefore, advantageous to hire people with psychological similarities as there will be a tendency to reduce conflicts. (Massey and Dawes, 2007)

Sales and marketing decisions are influenced by different contexts of the Marketing and Sales department. Every department may hold a different perspective on the topic and separate the information accordingly. To prevent conflict, it is important that both sides are able to understand each other's context in terms of time frames, objectives, language, and power. To bridge the differences, researchers recommend establishing and emphasizing the same vision for both departments. (Biemans, 2007; Rouzies and Hulland, 2014)

## 1.2 Social world differences

The different backgrounds in combination with the aspects mentioned above form different *thought-worlds* (also called social worlds) of marketers and salespeople (Homburg and Jensen, 2007). The thought-world means that every human or social group sees the world based on their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions. Based on this, activities such as the perception of which facts are important, understanding of goals and strategies, or an approach to planning may differ across the company's departments. (Dougherty, 1992) It would be expected that salespeople have social nature, driven by intuition and spending most of the time interacting with potential or current customers. Marketers are expected to be more creative, analytical, and oriented to create future competitive advantages for the company. On top of it, top-management sets the company's culture and different goals for both departments. (Palic et al., 2012) The important role in shaping the social worlds also play country-cultural predispositions. The differences in perceptions based on the different thought-worlds can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, elimination of collaboration between the Marketing and Sales departments, and, therefore, to the lower performance and prosperity of the company. Thus, it is important for the company to adopt solutions that will prevent and help to overcome thought-world differences and create an environment that supports a collaborative culture. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

## 1.4 The orientation of the studies and Research Gap

There are already various research studies regarding the Marketing and Sales departments' interface in the company. Firstly, the vast majority of the studies point out all kinds of differences between the nature of the Marketing and Sales departments' roles within the organization. Furthermore, the authors stress that these differences may lower the quality of the cooperation between the mentioned departments (Weissbrich, 2009). Creating synergies between marketers and salespeople lead to the creation of superior value for the customers (Palic et al., 2012). On the other hand, some of the authors tend to distinguish between the type of differences and according to their research, specific differences may be beneficial for the company's performance (Homburg and Jensen, 2007).

Secondly, researchers in their studies often work with the four main levels of the Marketing - Sales department relationship. Kotler et al. (2006) define them as undefined, defined, aligned, and integrated relationships. Companies with an aligned and integrated relationship between marketers and salespeople are better at coordinating activities and conflict management. (Madhani, 2016) Kotler et al. (2006) argue that there are usually two main sources of friction: cultural and economic. The reason behind both could be also differences between the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. Therefore, for every company, it is really important to understand the main source of the conflict and find a way of effective conflict resolution management. This can help to improve the performance of the company and also the effectiveness and efficiency of the marketing and sales activities. (Palic et al., (2012); Madhani, 2016)

Thirdly, there are tendencies to offer a list of drivers for increasing the effectiveness of the alignment of the activities of the Marketing and Sales departments (Maxwell, 2008; Weissbrich, 2009; Madhani, 2016; Palic et al., 2012). Studies often mention factors such as information management, conflict management, organizational culture, or job rotation.

All drivers aim to the same objective of narrowing the focus of the Marketing and Sales departments to support and understand each other and, as a result, create superior value for the customers. (Day, 1994; Palic et al., 2012)

Although the researchers examine the topic of cooperation and marketing-sales relationship from different angles, there is a research gap when looking at the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. As already mentioned, Jensen and Homburg (2007) examined what kind of differences in social worlds may be positive for the company. However, there is a need to examine how these social worlds can be managed by a company to deliver the desired results. In addition, there is a lack of research on the Marketing-Sales interface conducted in the companies based in Central European countries as the current focus is on the US, Western Europe, and the Nordics area.

## 1.5 Problem formulation and Research Questions

The project aims to provide an exploratory case study on how a company manages the social worlds of its Marketing and Sales departments. During the process of the research, it will be necessary to understand the organizational environment as well as a marketing-sales interface to be able to backtrack the most impactful factors shaping the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments.

Therefore, the problem formulation for the research is:

*How does a company manage the social-world of the Marketing and Sales departments?*

And the research questions to are:

1. *How can the Marketing and Sales departments be integrated or differentiated?*
2. *What are the crucial beliefs, attitudes, and other aspects that form the current social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments?*
3. *How does an organizational environment shape the social-worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments?*

## 2 Theoretical Consideration and Literature review

In the following chapter, the theoretical consideration and literature review will be introduced. Firstly, the reader will be introduced with the Differentiation and Integration Theory by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969), followed by Hofstede's dimensions (2000). Furthermore, the literature review will present the relevant studies regarding the Marketing and Sales departments' coexistence in a company.

### 2.1 Theoretical Consideration

#### 2.1.1 Differentiation and Integration Theory (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969)

Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) devoted their research to studying interdepartmental complex organizations and environmental influence on the organizations. It is important to note that they put a strong emphasis on the social worlds of the departments and the necessity to take into consideration differences in the attitudes, beliefs, goal orientation, time perspectives, or interpersonal skills in the departments of the organization. (Alderfer, 1970). Concretely, they deal with the two basic concepts of differentiation and integration.

Firstly, authors define an organization as *“the system of interrelated behaviors of people who are performing a task that has been differentiated into several distinct subsystems ... and the efforts of each (subsystem) being integrated to achieve the effective performance of the system.”* (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969, p. 3) Differentiation is not understood just as the labor division, but also as behavioral aspects of the members in the subsystems. More precisely, *“differentiation is defined as the state of segmentation of the organizational system into subsystems, each of which tends to develop particular attributes in relation to the requirements posed by its relevant external environment.”* (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969, p. 4)



Oppositely, “*integration is defined as the process of achieving unity of effort among the various subsystems in the accomplishment of the organization’s task.*” (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969, p. 4) The concept of integration deals with the quality of cooperation between departments. This can be achieved for example by the different ways as formal structures, scheduling, or special departments. Nevertheless, well-developed interpersonal skills are necessary to make the process integration seamless. (Alderfer, 1970)

The two concepts of differentiation and integration are antagonistic. The more differentiated the organization, the harder it is to integrate the tasks. The differentiation is often necessary because of the environmental pressure on the organization. Due to the environmental changes the organization needs to stay flexible and ensure the strength and stability of the overall output. The demands usually come from the technological or economic conditions of the market. (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969) The most important finding of the study is that “*the most effective organizations exhibited the greatest degree of differentiation. Each department is oriented toward its own function.*” (Alderfer, 1970, p. 182) Therefore, the most effective organizations need to handle integration problems. The key is successful conflict management and resolution. This may vary according to the type of problem and the company’s specifics. (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969; Alderfer, 1970)

### 2.1.2 Hofstede Dimensions

The social worlds of marketers and salespeople are also formed by the cultural context of the country. Companies as sub-systems located in a specific country adopt the general beliefs and values to be consistent with society. The societal values and beliefs are further in the behaviors, norms, and practices typical for the country. The examination of the country's specifics in social sciences is dominantly based on Hofstede’s dimensions. (Magnusson, 2014) These are power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence. (Soares et al., 2007)

Power distance describes the level of authority and inequalities of the individuals. The dimension signals to what extent the authorities are accepted in the society and expectations from the leaders if they will use the power and set the norms and structures. Although the nation scores a specific number of points on the scale, this dimension may be influenced by the profession or education of the individual. In countries with a low power distance score, society tends to eliminate the inequalities between people. The decentralization is popular and the gaps between salaries are usually not large.

On the contrary, in countries with high power distance, the inequalities between people are expected and the leader is considered as the one setting the direction for the team. Centralization is common and privileges and symbols showing the status of the leader are popular and widely respected. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

Individualism dimension serves to examine the level of individualism-collectivism in society and whether individuals tend to be loyal to their social groups and take care of each other or act individually. This dimension has a great influence on professional and business relationships. In individualistic countries, there is a universal approach to everybody, whereas the collectivistic countries, there are tendencies to prefer individuals belonging to a particular group (e.g. employee, customer, business partner). The Collectivist's identity is based on the group while sustaining a harmonic behavior and following the norms. Individualists are mostly focused on themselves and their nuclear family, do not based their identity on any group, and likely confront others and express their opinions. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

Masculinity-femininity dimensions explore whether individuals are more goal and success-oriented or rather tend to care about others and their life quality. In feminine society, there are strong values and emphasis on relationships. There is a focus on solidarity, equality, and the high life quality. On the other hand, masculine nationalities tend to be more competitive between each other and performance-oriented. People often see their purpose at work and strive for exceptional results.

Men are expected to be assertive, tough, and ambitious whereas women should be neat and take care of family and relationships. Money and material things play an important role in the life of individuals. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

Uncertainty avoidance deals with the need for the rules and prescribed behavior to prevent any risks of unknown situations. Low uncertainty avoidance may be characterized by individuals having the low-stress levels and subjectively positive feeling about themselves, relatively liberal style of living, tolerant and acceptant of the innovation, and different style of living of others, considering strangeness as interesting.

On the other hand, high uncertainty avoidant nations are more prone to anxieties, having tendencies to work constantly, because time represents money. They are afraid of unknown and innovative ideas, considering strange things as uncertain and dangerous. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

Long-term orientation describes to which extent the individuals and society are connected to their past and deals with the link when dealing with the presence and future. Individuals with a short-term orientation have respect for the traditions, expecting short-term results or return to the investment. Usually, the amount of financial savings are not sufficient for investments. Contrarily, long-termism may be characterized by the ability to adapt tradition into the modern context. The ecological orientation and prudent approach to the resources. The results are expected in the long-term. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

Last but not least, indulgence monitors how individuals tend to manage and control their impulsive behavior and desires. (Soares et al., 2007) When the culture is high on indulgence, people tend to value their leisure time and natural desires to enjoy life. As opposed, the restraint cultures express positive emotions less freely, the leisure and freedom are not given great importance. (Piškanin et al., 2010)

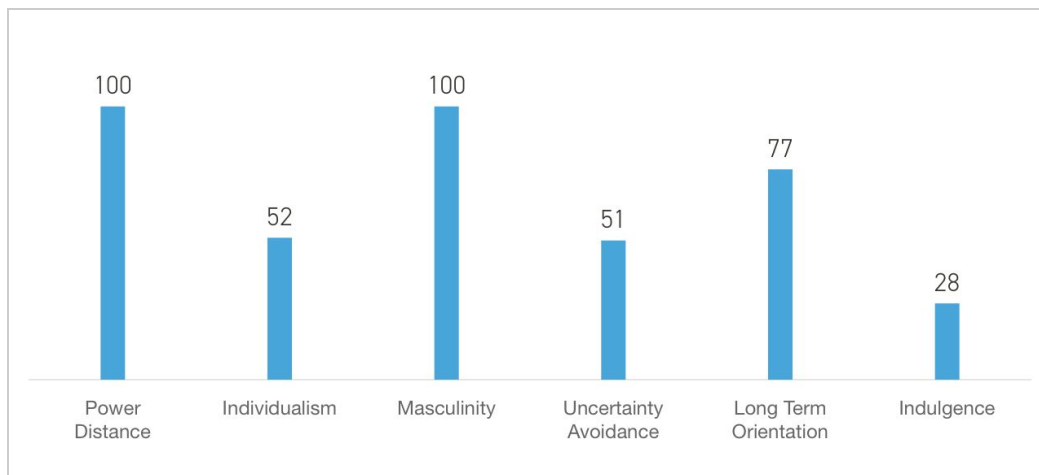
Magnusson (2014) examines in his study how the national characteristics impact the inter-functional collaboration between departments. Results show that the alignment of the reward systems is particularly successful motivators in countries with a high level of individualism and masculinity. Managers in this type of society should also set the broader organization goals to promote collective behavior which might not naturally occur. On the other hand, in more feminine and collectivistic societies the collaborative environment is enhanced by the character of the values adopted by the society. Therefore, the company should adopt the right mechanisms moderating the unwanted effects caused by the national values and, on the other hand, support the positive consequences. As an example, the strong masculinity societies are Germanic countries, Japan, and countries in Eastern and Central Europe like Hungary or Slovakia. Contrarily, Nordic countries are much more feminine.

This research is conducted with the cooperation of the company with a Slovak background. Therefore, the specifics of the country will be presented below.

As may be seen in Figure 1, Slovakia scores on the highest possible levels in the dimension of power distance and masculinity. Power distance signals that the authorities are accepted in the society which expects that the leaders will use the power and set the norms and structures. Moreover, the managers have to prove and maintain their respect and credibility by being visible and demonstrating the results. This is directly connected with the high score on masculinity, which can be interpreted as the constant need for competition and success-orientation. People tend to demonstrate their status and achievements also by symbols such as expensive cars or houses. They are dedicated to their work and often work long hours. (Hofstede Insights, 2020)

The score of 77 in the dimension of Long-Term orientation signals that Slovakia is more pragmatic than normative culture. This means that they are able to adapt traditions into the present world and see the truth in the context of time, place, and conditions. The scores on uncertainty avoidance and individualism are in the middle level which means that there is no clear preference within these dimensions.

Lastly, with the low score of 28 on the indulgence, Slovakia can be apprehended as restraint culture, which means the individuals do necessarily put emphasis on their leisure time. The actions can be seen as limited by the social norms and the tendency to pessimism may arise. (Hofstede Insights, 2020)



*Figure 1: The Hofstede dimensions in Slovakia (Hofstede Insights, 2020)*

## 2.2 Literature Review

In the following part of the project, the literature review will be presented. The research in the area of marketing - sales interface will be discussed, including the roles and relationship description in combination with the research on the thought-worlds differences. The author will, furthermore, elaborate on the conflict and information sharing management as these two aspects are considered as one of the most important company's systems for supporting inter-functional relationships.

### 2.2.1 Marketing and Sales Interface

The Marketing - Sales interface is one of the most important among internal collaborations in a company (Zupancic, 2007). Madhani (2016) points out that both – the Marketing and Sales departments – aim to serve the customer. The role of the Sales department is more tactical e.g. marketing strategy execution, contacting customers, and deal closing. Marketing plays a supportive role to the salespeople and is responsible for building a brand image and brand awareness of the product or services. (Matthyssens and Johnston, 2006; Madhani, 2016)

If this relationship is strong and activities aligned, salespeople willingly share more information about the market, consumers, and competitors. The information enables marketers to create a more effective strategy, product management, and addressing needs. Insights generated by marketing research are helpful in the performing sales activities of the salespeople as they have more inputs. (Madhani, 2016) The effective cooperation between the Marketing and Sales departments allow the organization to better serve the customers, deliver value, and brings a competitive advantage (Day, 1990; Madhani, 2016).

The Marketing and Sales departments may be viewed from the two perspectives: activity-based perspective and functional perspective (Homburg and Jensen, 2007). The activity-based perspective distinguishes between departments by labeling activities, either to marketing or to sales activities. (Workman et al., 1998) Many marketing definitions are based on an activity-based perspective and related to 4Ps - product, pricing, place, and promotion. These activities may be dispersed across different organizational departments, e.g. marketing research or product department. From the activity-based perspective, sales activities may be perceived as a part of promotion and distribution, so they should be rooted and aligned with the marketing strategy (Palic, 2012). On the other hand, the functional perspective distinguishes between the Marketing and Sales departments as different entities regardless of the activities (Homburg and Jensen, 2007). Workman et al., (1998) also note that the two perspectives are not necessarily exclusive nor totally integrative but help to navigate the perception of the departments.

For the purpose of the project, the researcher is interested and views the problem from the social perspective as the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments are explored.

Authors (Kelly et al., 2017) categorized the differences between the Marketing and Sales department into three groups: goals and economic; cultural differences; cognitive differences that are directly connected to the buy-in of the marketing strategy by the salespeople. (Kelly et al., 2017) Whereas marketing has a more strategic role, sales can be perceived as a part of the marketing mix.

For Business-to-Business oriented companies, personal selling is one of the most effective parts of the marketing communication mix as salespeople communicate messages tailored for the specific customer. (Weitz et al., 2002) Salespeople are also a valuable source of information about the market and customers. However, they do not always feel included in the process of creating marketing strategies. (Kelly et al., 2017)

### 2.2.2 Marketing mix perception

Marketing and Sales departments also view the importance of the priorities within the marketing mix variables differently, as they have different goal-orientations (Weitz et al., 2002; Madhani, 2016).

Firstly, marketers are responsible for setting the prices in accordance to the market positioning. Afterward, they demand from the salespeople to sell the product for the set price instead of selling through the price reduction. On the contrary, salespeople prefer lower pricing as the deal closing is easier and they can easily reach the quota. Upon the agreement with management, salespeople often make the final decision about the price for the contract without inputs from the marketing. This causes incongruences between the prices and market positioning as low prices can easily undermine premium pricing strategy and brand image of premium products. Therefore, inter-departmental tension can arise and disturb collaboration processes. (Madhani, 2016) The marketing department aims to build brand awareness and product desire in the market. As these activities are long-term oriented, the results are measured over a long time period.

Salespeople often see the investments in promotional activities, such as television, as a waste of money which could be used to pay higher commissions or to increase the quality and size of the salesforce. However, marketing activities should generate prospects and furthermore qualify the leads, which salespeople can use for further follow-ups. Additionally, salespeople usually question the quality of the leads and create their own ways of prospecting. (Madhani, 2016)

The third Marketing mix variable - place - deals with product distribution. Marketing creates a marketing plan for the product or service. Their activities concern building brand awareness and bringing the company's product to the right place at the right time. (Kotler et. al, 2006, Madhani, 2016) Sales can be seen as a part of the product distribution and should act in accordance with the marketing plan. However, strong customer focus may create conflicts and discrepancies between sales activities and marketing plans. (Madhani, 2016)

Lastly, the product should address the needs of the markets. Marketers are responsible for designing features, styles, and qualities. The focus is on broad market appeal. Contrarily, salespeople are concerned and focused on the needs of specific customers. They often require different features of the product to serve the needs of this specific customer. This may create conflicts between departments. (Madhani, 2016)

### 2.2.3 Relationships between the Marketing and Sales departments

Kotler et al., (2006) recognize four types of relationship between the Marketing and Sales departments. These relationships are dynamic and change over time as the company grows and develops. The types are *Undefined, Defined, Aligned, and Integrated relationships*. (Kotler et al., 2006)



The undefined relationship between the Marketing and Sales departments may be observed in smaller companies and startups. Both departments have their own independent agendas and there is any or only very little alignment of activities and goals. Therefore, the conflicts may arise very easily and there is an absent effort to build interdepartmental collaboration. (Kotler et al., 2006) The meetings are usually held to resolve the conflicts and not with cooperative intentions. Marketers create marketing strategies without the involvement of salespeople, which often leads to the failed implementation of the adopted strategy from the sales department. (Palic et al., 2012) On the other hand, the defined relationship between the Marketing and Sales departments clearly defines the marketing and sales activities. The common language is developed to communicate in potentially contentious topics (e.g. lead definition). There are also common events such as conferences, where both departments cooperate on the organization. (Kotler et al., 2006) When moving from undefined relationships to defined relationships between the Marketing and Sales departments, managers have to be cautious not to disturb informal relationships between employees in the departments, which usually exist. Build on this, the tasks, agendas, and rules of engagement need to be clearly defined. (Kotler et al., 2006) The nature of the undefined and defined interdepartmental relationships may be easily influenced and shaped by the country-cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede, as there are any significant established mechanisms for their moderation. For example, the intensity of natural collaboration between the departments may naturally differ in the countries with the higher and lower score on the individualism dimension. (Magnusson, 2014)

When the relationship between the Marketing and Sales department is aligned, there are clear but also flexible boundaries between the activities. Both departments are involved in common planning and training to understand the terminologies in the same way. Marketers and salespeople support each other in their activities and share the knowledge to maximize the output. (Kotler et al., 2006; Palic et al., 2012) Integrated-type of the relationship between the Marketing and Sales departments blurs the boundaries and introduces shared structures, rewards, and systems. In this case, the Marketing department usually splits into two groups - the upper and lower stream.

The upper stream is responsible for strategic tasks and a long-term orientation, whereas the lower stream is more tactical, actively helps salespeople with developing tools or lead qualification, and collects the feedback. (Kotler et al., 2006) The ability to execute the transformation process from aligned to the integrated type of the inter-departmental relationship between the Marketing and Sales departments depends on the company's specifics and may take a long time to complete. (Kotler et al., 2006) However, it provides several important benefits afterward. The benefits are improved marketing effectiveness by the better reflection of customers' needs based on the feedback from salespeople; improved efficiency of the sales activities by higher closing ratio and customer satisfaction; improved overall performance of the company as a result of strong internal cooperation, conflict elimination and customer satisfaction. (Madhani, 2016) Lastly, another advantage of these types of inter-departmental relationships is that the country-cultural characteristics (based on Hofstede dimensions) of the individuals can be moderated by establishing various systems and routines mentioned above. There is an opportunity to minimize the unwanted effects of the national specifics while supporting the positive ones. (Magnusson, 2014)

#### 2.2.4 Thought-world differences

Homburg and Jensen (2007) come with research on thought-world differences between the Marketing and Sales departments. According to their theory, in some cases, the differences may be beneficial for the organization.

The authors use the functional perspective of understanding the Marketing and Sales departments (Homburg and Jensen, 2007). This means that they focus on departmental subunits in the researched organizations independently of the tasks assigned to the specific department. As the activities of the Marketing and Sales departments may slightly differ among companies, a functional-based view does not take these differences into consideration. (Workman et al., 1998; Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

Furthermore, Homburg and Jensen (2007) researched the thought-world perspectives of the Marketing and Sales departments. The thought-world may be characterized as “*the world as seen in terms of attitudes, belief systems, assumptions of given society or people.*” (Hutt and Walker, 2015, p. 69) As already mentioned, there may be remarkable differences between attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions of the marketers and salespeople in the organization. Dougherty (1992) explains that within the thought-worlds, the crucial aspects are systems of meaning. The system of meaning causes variations in understanding of the specific tasks, distinguishing critical and important facts, and making future plans. Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) add that emotional and cognitive orientations may vary among the managers of the different departments. The different orientations cause different working styles (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969). Based on this, Homburg and Jensen (2007) split the thought-world into two dimensions - competence dimension and orientation dimension.

The orientation dimension refers to time and goals. It looks at how the departments evaluate the importance of the information and which information proceeds. In the specific case of the Marketing and Sales departments, the differences in time orientation are short-term (sales) and long-term (marketing). Regarding goals, the Marketing department is viewed as product-oriented and on the contrary, the Sales department is viewed as more customer-oriented. (Dougherty, 1992; Homburg and Jensen, 2007) The competence dimension deals with specialized knowledge, which may cause communication difficulties. Besides the knowledge of the market and product, the important aspect of the competence dimension is interpersonal skills, which help to overcome conflicts and sustain effective communication. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

Homburg and Jensen (2007) developed a conceptual framework (Figure 2) based on the concept of Differentiation and Integration of Lawrence and Lorsch (1969). The framework helps to assess how the thought-world differences impact cooperation quality between the Marketing and Sales departments on one hand, and market performance on the other hand.

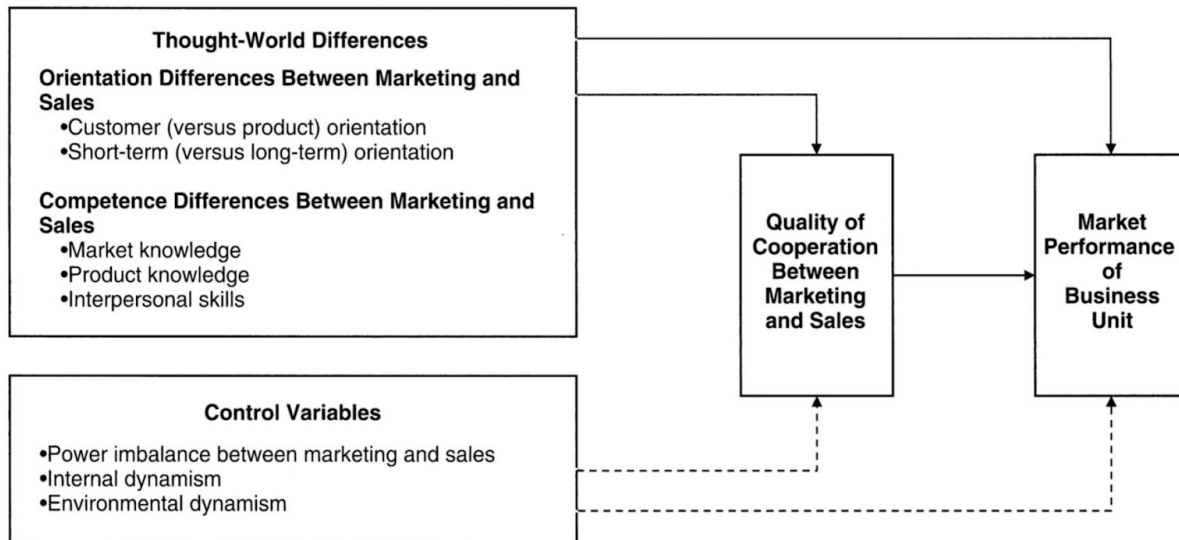


Figure 2: Thought-world conceptual model (Homburg and Jensen, 2007, p. 125)

Based on the thought-world conceptual framework, Homburg and Jensen (2007) tested the hypotheses of whether the kind of difference between the Marketing and Sales departments makes a difference. According to the results, the thought-world differences - regarding orientation as well as competences - have a significantly negative effect on the quality of the cooperation between the Marketing and Sales Department. The results also show that the thought-world differences between orientation are beneficial for the overall market performance of the business unit. On the other hand, competence differences have a negative effect on the market performance of the business unit. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

To provide more details, firstly, the study found that the differences within the orientation - specifically in time and goals may contribute to the market performance. The key is that different orientations help to sustain the balance. In terms of time orientation, marketers are seen as long-term oriented, with the focus on brand building and long-term strategies and financial implications. On the other hand, salespeople have to accomplish short term goals and quotas which lead to a different view on resource investments. Similarly, the conceptual model distinguishes the differences within goal orientation.

Marketers are usually advocating for the product and its development, whereas salespeople are strongly oriented to the customers and for example tend to make price-cuts. The authors also compared the strength of the positive effect on the market performance of the business unit with the strength of the indirect negative effect of the cooperation quality between the Marketing and Sales department. The final result shows that the thought-world differences in the orientation (time and goals) lead to a positive effect on the market performance of the business unit. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

Secondly, the differences between certain knowledge and competences of the Marketing and Sales departments lead to a negative effect on the market performance of the business unit. Firstly, there was no significant effect caused by market knowledge differences. However, knowledge differences regarding product knowledge and interpersonal skills appear to be strongly significant. Both of them have a negative impact on the market performance of the business unit. The problem occurs within sharing and understanding different ideas between departments. Moreover, the differences between interpersonal skills could lead to unresolved conflicts and non-optimized decision making. (Homburg and Jensen, 2007)

#### 2.2.4.1 Conflict management

Liberman et al. (2009) study the most effective ways of conflict management in the organizations and the system of creating conflict management systems. The authors see conflict as an inevitable part of every organization no matter how successful it is. It can be rooted in dissatisfaction regarding any aspect of the organization - product or service, operations, systems, or procedures. (Liberman et al., 2009)

In the past, the conflict was seen as negative and harmful to the organization. Nowadays, the premise has changed, and conflict is considered more as an organization growth catalyst and development opportunity. It opens discussions that may result in improved management and greater performance of the employees. However, there is a necessity to handle the conflicts in the proper way. (Liberman et al., 2009)

The majority of the conflicts result from the organizational structure or culture. The recognition of the key problems and issues can lead to effective solutions. While conflicts may arise at any level in the organization, the conflicts between departments that have interdependent relationships are the most common. In the center of the discussions often may be methods of cooperation. These discussions may lead to strong feelings affecting overall motivations and workplace atmosphere. Therefore, it is crucial for management to offer and implement effective conflict management systems, which will help to eliminate negative effects and support constructive solutions resulting from conflict discussions. (Lieberman et al., 2009)

When designing conflict management systems, Lieberman et al. (2009) approach involve *“identifying the type and source of conflicts, taking into consideration the parties' interests, and studying possible conflict resolution measures that would satisfy these interests”* (Lieberman et al., 2009, p. 65). In addition, there is a tight connection between conflict management systems and organizational culture. Thus, to reach the maximum compatibility, the system needs to be tailored according to the specific needs, structures, and cultural aspects of the organization. The success of the conflict management system is measured by its usage. (Lieberman et al., 2009) Study shows that in the long run the usage is conditioned by *“whether the system offers employees a broad array of choices and professional well-trained neutrals”* (Lieberman et al., 2009, p. 72).

#### 2.2.4.2 Information management and perception

One of the effective ways to prevent conflicts is effective information management integrated into the company's systems. Espejo and Watt (1988) argue that to make the information flows effective, it is important to identify all triggers of the informational noise within a company.

Furthermore, researchers distinguish between two crucial factors in terms of information management in the organization:

1. People
2. Organizational structure

Firstly, the people factor is the most salient for sharing knowledge. The better employees' motivation to share the knowledge, build valuable networks and relationships the better information flows in the organization. It is the role of the leadership to motivate the employees, build trust, and facilitate knowledge sharing. (Park and Kim, 2015) Espejo and Watt (2015) suggest managers make *“interpersonal interactions more effective by offering ways of increasing the chance of meaningful commitments, increasing the chances of coordinated action and increasing the chances of learning from inevitable breakdowns.”* (Espejo and Watt, 2015, p. 12) In addition, managers should not force the one-sided view and prevent poor conversations which can fill the communication channels with invalid information (Espejo and Watt, 2015).

It is important to mention that understanding of new information is always based on individual experiences and beliefs (Greeno, Collins, and Resnik, 1996; Hubers et al., 2017). Cognitive psychology studies point out that every individual puts the new information into his/her own already existing cognitive framework. This can, therefore, impact the understanding of specific information within the context. (Spillane and Miele, 2007, Hubers et al., 2017) Phillips (2007) says that every individual builds a bridge between the information and the responses. The process of bridging involves a series of judgments and assumptions resulting from previous experiences. In addition, every individual is motivated to maintain a positive self-image. Therefore, any evidence showing the bad light or raising questions about performance may be discounted. On the other hand, motivation to reach certain goals may improve overall perception and greater effort to interpret the information in various ways. (Homburg et al., 2007) These findings are directly connected to the thought-world of the Marketing and Sales departments, as there are remarkable differences in the beliefs and assumptions, which may, as already mentioned above, cause information-flow constraints.

Secondly, the organizational structure is considered as the second most important factor influencing the flow of the information in the companies. The organizational structure may have a synergy effect on sharing knowledge between employees. Espejo and Watt (2015) consider organizational as a “*complex of relationships - channels, loops, linkages - and commitments, responsibilities, accountabilities*” (Espejo and Watt, 2015, p. 10). Through organizational structure, managers build a way of information flow. The organizational structure determines the patterns of data use. (Espejo and Watt, 2015)

Hubers et al. (2015) also point that data use routine may have a significant effect on how the data/information proceeds. Data use routine is defined as “*the modal ways that people interact with data and each other in the course of their ongoing work*” (Hubers et al., 2015). The data use routines do not necessarily need to be formal, but also informal. In addition, these processes of using data/information may be designed but also naturally evolved. The importance is that the data routines cause patterns of how employees interact and interpret data and interact with each other during completing their tasks within an organization. Therefore, social interactions are also directly influenced by these patterns. The effect may be either positive or negative in terms of organizational learning, and opportunities recognition. Data use routines also shape the discussions between employees as certain types of data are perceived more important than others and there is centered attention. (Hubers et al., 2015) The relation of organizational structures and the thought-world of the Marketing and Sales department may be seen in the different use of performance metrics and success definitions. The importance of other department inputs may not be seen because of the one-sided data routine of marketing or sales.

Hubers et al. (2015) suggest ways to intervene and change data use routine systems. Firstly, the accountability policy. This intervention brings focus on incentives connected to the data usage and change of current practices. Additionally, there is an enhanced motivation to use data findings to improve performance.



Secondly, the authors recommend implementing different tools for information management, e.g. software systems for creating reports or new formative assessments. The coaches or mentors may also be introduced to the intervention process. It is important to point out that interventions can be implemented on the local level in certain departments. (Hubers et al., 2015)

As already mentioned, data use routines may shape the collective and individual beliefs of the employees in the organization and specific departments within this organization. Therefore, management should pay enough attention when creating new data routines systems. It is necessary to understand how the intervention process will interact with the existing concepts in the organization. Specific reactions shape the interpretive process and future outcomes. (Hubers et al., 2015) The system of meaning should be provided to ensure that every employee understands the purpose and process of data use routine change (Sauder & Espeland, 2009; Hubers et al., 2015).

The information sharing within the organization is directly connected to the concept of the learning organization. When there is an effective system of knowledge sharing among employees the organization opens to gain a great competitive advantage on the market. The organization structures should be designed to support the learning-conductive workplace in the long run. As a result, the employees will stimulate and drive learning, so the organization learns on a global level. (Tam and Grey, 2016)

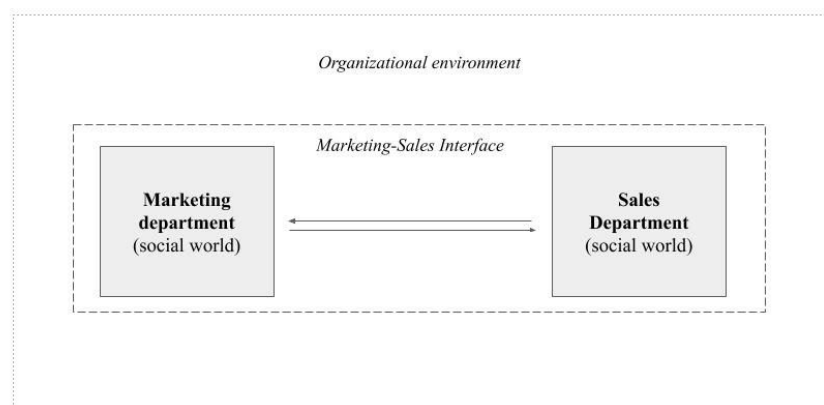
## 2.3 Analytical framework

In order to answer the research questions, the analytical framework (Figure 4) was created. The researcher is interested in exploring how a company can manage the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. Therefore, the analysis will be concerned with the description of the company's environment, marketing-sales interface, and the characteristics of the Marketing and Sales team in the research company.

Firstly, the researcher will analyze the characteristic traits of the Marketing and Sales departments. There is a specific interest in discovering what creates the identity of the teams, if there are a specific language and knowledge the teams possessed. To what extent the departments share and develop the role-related knowledge and what makes them competent for performing the role of marketer or sales representative. It is expected that this type of information will provide a baseline for a better understanding and identification of the crucial factors shaping the social worlds.

Secondly, the researcher aims to understand the Marketing-Sales interface in the researched company. The relationships between the departments and the mutual perception of each other. There is an interest in exploring the level of dependence/independence of working processes, routines, and what are the roles of the individual departments in the organization. Furthermore, the specifics of the hiring processes will be discovered in relation to the secondary internalization process, to see what it takes to become a valuable team member accepted by the other employees working in the departments.

Thirdly, the organizational environment needs to be analyzed. More concretely, there is a focus on the company's culture, values, and priorities. To what extent are these values lived and embedded into the company's processes. The researcher is also interested in exploring the information-sharing systems adopted by the company and finally, a preferred communication style in combination with the conflict perception and resolution.



*Figure 3: The Analytical Framework*

### 3 Philosophy of Science and Methodology

The following part of the project presents the reader with the concept of different paradigms and provides the positioning of the research within the Burrell and Morgan (2008) RRIF classification. The research problem will be described from the ontological, epistemological, and methodological viewpoint. Furthermore, the methodology and the method of the semi-structured interview will be introduced. Last but not least, the methodology of the literature review process will be described, and the quality of the research assessed.

#### 3.1 Paradigms

Burrell and Morgan (2008) describe paradigm as a term emphasizing the commonalities in perspectives of the theorists and their approach to social theory within the problematic. In addition, it focuses on the unity regarding the assumptions of these theorists (Burrell and Morgan, 2008). Kuada (2012) explains that the choice of the paradigm describes the set of common understandings adopted by researchers when studying specific phenomena. Paradigms also lead the researchers in the process of formulating research questions, approaching the research structure, how they answer their research questions, and interpret the results. (Kuhn, 1970; Kuada, 2012) In social science, the paradigms are seen in the two polar perspectives based on either an objectivist or subjectivist approach.

The two different perspectives on paradigms may be compared in terms of four sets of assumptions - ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology. The ontology describes how the researcher sees the world and the relationships between humans and the environment. Ontological decisions define the perception of reality by the researcher. Epistemology provides information on what the researchers consider as true and how the knowledge is created. The assumptions about human nature study if humans are just responding to the environment or if they actively participate in its creation (Burrell and Morgan, 2008).

The methodological approach explains the reasons for a specific choice of research methods. (Kuada, 2012) Based on the choice of objectivist or subjectivist paradigm, Burrell and Morgan (2008) compare the perspectives on ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology (Table 1).

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>The Objectivist Approach</b>	<b>The Subjectivist Approach</b>
Ontology	Realism	Nominalism
Epistemology	Positivism	Antipositivism
Human Nature	Determinism	Voluntarism
Methodology	Nomothetic	Idiographic

Table 1: “*The Objectivist- Subjectivist Dispositions in Social Science*” (Kuada, 2012, p. 72)

### 3.2 RRIF Classification by Burrell and Morgan

Based on the objective-subjective discussions, several typologies of paradigm classifications were created. Burrell and Morgan (2008) create an RRIF classification system. Paradigms are classified according to the two dimensions - objective vs. subjective and sociology of radical change vs. the sociology of regulation (Kuada, 2012). The sociology of regulation aims to provide an explanation and to understand society and its forces. On the other hand, the sociology of radical change seeks to explain the reasons for the radical changes in society. It is often visionary concerning the possibilities that might happen in the future. (Burrell and Morgan, 2008) In the RRIF classification, 4 paradigms exist (Figure 4) - Radical Humanist, Radical Structuralist, Interpretive, and Functionalist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 2008, p. 22).

The presented typologies of paradigms provide different ways of analyzing social phenomena. They should be used separately, however, they are contagious in a way of some shared characteristics.

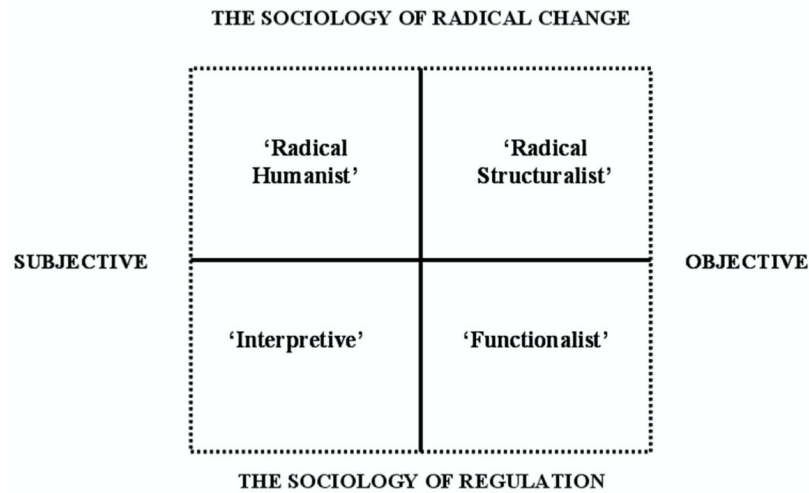


Figure 4: “Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory” (Burrell and Morgan, 2008, p.22)

This research subscribes to the *interpretive paradigm*. It aims to understand the actual nature of the social world from the subjective perspectives and experience. The world is seen as created by individuals and still developing over time. Interpretive researchers pursue to discover and understand the basic source of reality by researching human subjectivity and consciousness. (Burrell and Morgan, 2008; Kuada 2012) The issues are usually relating to the “*status quo, social order, consensus, social integration and cohesion, solidarity, and actuality*” (Burrell and Morgan, 2008, p. 31) Interpretive paradigm rejects analyzing the structures that are characteristic for functionalist and promote qualitative approaches in the studies (Kuada, 2012).

### 3.3 Ontology

As already mentioned, the ontology describes the nature of how the researcher sees the world or his/her view of reality. The social world is usually perceived from two main points. The first, also called realism, is that the social world is external and the human individual and imposes his or her consciousness. Moreover, the world is made of structures and tangible elements. (Kuada, 2012)

On the opposite side, some scholars prefer the nominalistic view which means the social world is created by an individual, therefore this social world is a product of human consciousness and cognition. This approach is characteristic of using various names, concepts, and labels. (Kuada, 2012)

For the purpose of this research, nominalism is chosen as the ontological approach for several reasons. Firstly, it is aligned with the interpretive paradigm. Additionally, the purpose of the research is to explore the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments within the specific company. Therefore, the reality is viewed through the subjective eyes of marketers and salespeople at the researched company whose realities are subjectively constructed.

### 3.4 Epistemology

The epistemological approach explains the way how knowledge is created. Positivist epistemology describes and tries to explain the causalities and regularities between the elements. The researchers act as external observers of the world and investigate the social world from this position. Antipositivism can have various forms but in the bottom line, it assumes that the social world is relativistic. It can be understood only from the view of the involved individual. According to the antipositivistic approach, the research can not generate objective knowledge of any kind. (Kuada, 2012)

In this research, antipositivism is adopted. The researcher aims to discover and create knowledge by gathering insights into individual perceptions of marketers and salespeople. Moreover, the causes of differences between the subjective worlds between the Marketing and Sales departments are backtracked and explored.

### 3.5 Social Constructivism

Berger and Luckmann (1966) brought the concept of social construction which is considered as one of the first stepping stones to Social Constructivism (Egholm, 2014). The concept highlights that the perception of the world of the individual depends on his or her social world which forms singular interpretations of reality. The interpretation of reality is created by the different experiences embedded in the social and local context of the individual. (Egholm, 2014) Gergen (1994) takes the explanation further and states that “*subjective experience of thinking and knowledge is never individual but always constructed and embedded in social relations, and can only be observed collectively*” (Gergen, 1994; Egholm, 2014, p. 149) Additionally, this experience is shared by the language and the individual is perceived as defined by the society (Egholm, 2014)

The identity of the individual depends on the presence of a sociological and cultural context, but also the history and space in which humans find themselves. The historical and cultural context are strongly embedded in the social world and shape the perception of the individual. Moreover, the phenomena in the social world are considered dynamic and fluid, changing over time depending on the context. (Egholm, 2014)

Berger and Luckmann state that the reality is available to the common sense of the ordinary members of society and has intrinsic character. Therefore, everyday life is seen as coherent but interpreted differently by every man. The world has its origin in thoughts, actions, and experiences and it is further maintained by them. Humans are conscious of everyday reality, which is already objectified, and they just appear on the set scene. Here, the important aspect is the language which provides information about objectification and helps to maintain the order within the different meanings. Additionally, the reality is organized around ‘here’ and ‘now’. Every member of the society acts primarily in his or her closest zone where there is a presence of the physical body.

In this zone, everyday life is determined by the present, past, and future actions of the individual. It is important to note that the actions of one individual within his or her everyday zone overlaps with the actions of others. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) “*There is an ongoing correspondence between my and their meanings in the world, that we share in common sense about the reality*” (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p.37). Therefore, common sense knowledge of the group is the knowledge shared in self-evident normal everyday routines. Everyday life routines are perceived by humans as unproblematic although the different problems within their flow may arise. When the problem appears, there is a tendency to incorporate it into everyday life, so life becomes again unproblematic. Here, the common-sense knowledge is very helpful as it usually contains the information needed for the transformation. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)

It is important to mention the role of language and knowledge in everyday life. During the process of objectivation, the products of human expressivity are created and become a part of not just the world of creators but also the common world with others. This leads to the establishment of different signs. The signs serve to express subjective meanings and by the process of objectivation, they become detached from creators and embedded into the common world. Language is, therefore, defined as “*a system of vocal signs, which is the most important sign of human society*” (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p.51) Additionally, language is a tool for the majority of the objectivation in everyday life. It facilitates the repository of experiences and knowledge. The everyday interaction with humans is facilitated by the common knowledge available. The knowledge is distributed and possessed differently among a society that means different individuals have different knowledge. This is based on the relevancy and interest in the specific knowledge to the individual. Some kinds of knowledge are relevant to humans in general, whereas specific knowledge tight to the specific profession is relevant only to the professionals. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)



All human activity can be habituated. The frequently repeated actions create patterns and lower one's effort. Moreover, the meaning of the routine is embedded within the activity although its meaningful character is detached, and the activity is taken for granted. Therefore, in many situations, certain activities are anticipated and predefined. The habituated actions of singular humans may intersect and interlock as they experience common situations. This will create a common subjective world of the involved individuals. When a new individual joins this world, the habits are perceived as objective and given, and the social formations are passed on him. The world perceived as objective or institutional is an experience of objective reality with its history and traditions. Radical deviations in actions may appear to the members of the society as a departure from reality. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)

The actions in the institutional world are typified in terms of each other's performances. Playing roles is a way how individuals participate in the social world. The further internationalization of the roles creates the social world which becomes the subjective reality a man experiences. It is important to note that in the knowledge of the common world there are accessible standards for performing the role. These standards can serve as a control mechanism of the performers. Additionally, the role often also represents a certain institution or allows the institution to exist and make it real in the social world. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)

Various types of institutions and roles bring the appearance of different sub-universes of meanings in society. Role-specific knowledge is likely to be understood by professionals with the interest in the role in contrast with common-knowledge accessible for every individual. The origin of the sub-universes of meanings may be based on various criteria like gender, age, occupation, or aesthetic taste. Additionally, the sub-universes have to be sustained by a particular collectivity. This means that the group constantly produces the meanings which become objectified. It is important to note that conflict or competition may arise between different groups and their sub-universes of meaning.

To maintain the universe or sub-universe of the meanings the two mechanisms are usually established. The first is habitualization, tradition-strengthening, and the fact that some actions are done not just because they work but because they are right. The second mechanism is the emergence of so-called experts as a result of the labor division. Their knowledge is ultimate, significant, and operates apart from just common knowledge of everyday life. This leads to creating pure theories that may be abstract from everyday life. The modern urban society is pluralistic that means the coexistence of the various subuniverses of the meanings but many conflicts between the universes were rather replaced by tolerance or cooperation. This presupposes the society to high labor division and differentiation in the social structures. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)

Once the individual is born, he has automatically a predisposition to become a member of society. The process of socialization is a sequence of processes called internalization. The internalization is defined as “*the immediate apprehension of an objective event as expressing meaning, that is, as a manifestation of another’s subjective processes which thereby becomes subjectively meaningful to me*” (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p. 149). It is a starting point for understanding others and grasping the meaning of the world and social reality. There are two types of socialization - primary and secondary. The primary is the first one in the life of an individual through which he or she becomes a member of society. The secondary socialization introduces a member of society to the new sectors of the objective world. It usually builds upon the primary socialization. The individual is socialized into the institutional sub-world and learns the role-specific knowledge which arises as a result of the labor division. Appropriate vocabulary is adopted. The process of the secondary socialization further requires also self-identification with the role and its norms, additionally to the necessary training as a part of learning sequences. The differences between specific knowledge of the individual contribute to the differences between the intrinsic worlds between different roles. This leads to the different ways of life of the professionals. Besides, the variations may also arise within the same specific roles depending on the task assigned. (Berger and Luckmann, 1966)

Once the reality of the individual is created either during the primary or secondary socialization process, it needs to be further maintained and reinforced. There are two ways of reality-maintenance - routines and crisis maintenance. Routines serve to maintain the internalized reality of everyday life. Conversations are the most important medium for maintaining reality. Most of the conversations are carried against the background of the world which is taken for granted and provides subjective context. The casual conversations help to reaffirm the routines and taken-for-granted reality. Apart from reality-maintenance, conversations also serve as reality-modifiers. Through conversations, various elements and experiences are allocated to specific positions in the world. To maintain the reality, the language of the individual has to be consistent with the language of the sub-universe. The frequency of the conversation is important but can be substituted by intense conversations less often.

To summarize, the subjective reality of every individual is an outcome of various processes he or she has gone through from childhood. At the same time, the individual contributes to the creation of the social worlds. As a part of the universe but also sub-universes he or she disposes of the common-knowledge and role-related knowledge. These, furthermore, shape his or her identity which is maintained by the other individuals in society.

### 3.6 Selection of studies for the Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to gain an overview of the studies conducted on the specified topic. It gives the researcher the opportunity to gather information and knowledge in the chosen area. The approaches of other researchers may be examined and reflected regarding the theories and consistency of findings. (Kuada, 2012) In this project, the literature review provides an outline of the research on the Marketing and Sales department differences and further needs and drivers for their alignment. Afterward, the analytical framework that purpose is to navigate the exploratory process of data analysis was developed.

The literature review was conducted in a systematic manner to eliminate the bias of the researcher and maintain the replicability and transparency. A systematic literature review firstly consists of the planning and identifying the most appropriate search string in accordance with the research questions. Secondly, the relevant studies are identified based on the specific search-strings and, furthermore, evaluated in line with inclusion and exclusion criteria. The chosen studies should be critically apprehended and synthesized. Finally, the findings of the review should be disseminated. (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006)

After testing various alternatives of the search string, the following one was finally used in this study as it brings the more appropriate results: *"marketing", sale\*, role\*, "company", "perception", conflict\*, and "department"*. As the usage of the specific search string brought limitations in terms of the studies identified the reference list of the relevant articles was screened, and the essential and repeating resources were added to the literature review list.

The search database was AAU Primo. The query resulted in 37 entries of which 20 were relevant. Inclusion criteria consisted of the conditions that the resource has to be in English, in the form of an article or book which is peer-reviewed to ensure its reliability. The keywords had to be anywhere except full text. Additionally, the search was specified in the following fields: *Business, Economics, Marketing, Management, Entrepreneurship, and Sales*. Exclusion criteria left out articles in any other language than English, without online access, not peer-reviewed and in any other form than article or book. In addition, in the articles fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the abstract was assessed and some of the articles were considered irrelevant to this research.

### 3.7 Methodology

To find the answers to the research questions, the researcher has to choose the most appropriate way of empirical investigation. There is a broad choice of data collection methods and techniques in social science. This choice, however, has to be aligned with the paradigmatic, ontological, and epistemological views adopted for the research. (Kuada, 2012)

Data collection methods are usually classified into two categories which are *qualitative* and *quantitative* data collection. The study is designed to gain deeper insights into the subjective social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. The researcher holds the view that reality is constructed by society and, consequently, adopted an interpretive paradigm. Therefore, to maintain consistency in the paradigmatic view and objectives of the research, the qualitative research method will be used. By definition “*qualitative research is any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification*” (Kuada, 2012, p. 93). The important aspect is a context in which the phenomena are examined and require a detailed description of the presented case. Qualitative methods are an appropriate way of gaining new insights whereas the quantitative methods rather aim to find confirmation for existing theories. (Kuada, 2012)

One of the biggest challenges when conducting qualitative research is the inductive approach when there is no theoretical understanding of the phenomena researched, which have to be extracted from the data. The literature review theories serve as a base for pre-understanding of the investigated issue. During the data analysis, new insights are generated. (Kuada, 2012) Researchers usually ask why questions aim to discover some meanings and the findings should go beyond the pure description and have interpretive character. (Lichtman, 2017) The specific method chosen for the data collection is the conduction of semi-structured interviews which will be further presented in the next sub-chapter.

### 3.7.1 Data Collection Method

The data for the research was collected through qualitative interviews. The method aims to gain insights into the world of the interviewee as he or she provides information from their subjective perspective. (Kuada, 2012) Additionally, the data are filtered by the eyes of the researcher and his or her point of view (Lichtman, 2017) Researchers distinguish three types of interviews: realistic, contextual and constructionist (Lichtman, 2017). In every type, the researcher holds a different position. In a realistic interview, the interviewer tries to be as objective as possible and strive for neutrality. On the other hand, in the contextual interviews, he or she is seen as a part of the process due to his or her subjectivity. Last, but not least, during the constructionist interview, the interviewer plays a reflective role and helps to co-constructs the answers (King and Horrocks, 2010; Lichtman, 2017).

The researchers may choose between three kinds of interviews regarding their structure. These are structured, semi-structured, and unstructured or in-depth interviews. (Lichtman, 2017) For the purpose of the data collection for this study, the semi-structured interview was chosen. This involves the development of general questions and the structure which is followed during the process. However, the researcher may vary the asked questions according to the situational context and development of the conversation. (Lichtman, 2017)

The interview process should start with planning, structure preparation, and gaining the required knowledge about the interviewee and the situation. It is important to obtain permission to conduct the interviews in the company. At the beginning of the conversation, the interviewer should provide an overview of why the interview is conducted, the purpose of the research, how the data will be used and protected. Furthermore, the interviewer should establish a rapport with the interviewee, so he or she trusts and shares the information. (Lichtman, 2017)

During the interviews, five kinds of questions may be used (Lichtman, 2017). *Grand Tour* questions, *Concrete* questions, *Contrast* questions, *New topic* questions, and *Closing* questions. Grand Tour questions are usually used at the beginning of the interview as a conversation starter which encourages the interviewee to talk in length. The researcher will, therefore, have an opportunity to gain a general sense of the parameters. (Lichtman, 2017) Concrete questions lead to the sharing of specific experiences. The answers are personal and usually rich sources of data. The comparison questions help to draw the differences within the frameworks regarding time, situations, places, or people. The gained insights are additional and filling the information gaps. New topic questions help to transit from one area to another. It may happen that the respondent will get stuck and keep mentioning the same information. Thus, the New topic questions can help to move further in a subtle manner. Lastly, the closing questions provide the interviewee an opportunity to add some more information on what has been said or what he or she feels would be relevant to the topic. (Lichtman, 2017)

During the process of interviewing, the researcher should be elaborative and expand the mentioned ideas. Moreover, there is a need to get deeper into the topic and explore the underlying meanings. However, the interviewer should maintain neutrality during the process and not guide the interviewees to the answers he or she wants to hear. It is also very useful to ask just one single question at a time and avoid interrupting the interviewee, on the opposite, rather encourage him or her to talk by nodding and giving him a space to talk. To clarify the meaning, do not make assumptions and ask for explanations. (Lichtman, 2017)

The form of a semi-structured interview in this project was prepared according to the process described by Lichtman (2017). Firstly, the interviewees have to be identified in terms of their role, bio, and demographics. *The choice was to interview the Marketing professional(s), Sales professional(s) within the researched company. Preferably, at least one sales team lead, one marketing team lead.* As Kuada (2012) says, the number of respondents in qualitative research depends also on the feeling of the researcher and the data richness of the interviews. Usually is remarkably lower than in quantitative research (Kuada, 2012).

Furthermore, the interviewed areas were identified according to the analytical framework. Concretely, three main areas were chosen: *Marketing and Sales interface*, *Marketing/Sales social world*, and *Company environment*. Within these areas, the sub-areas were pointed out (Appendix 1). Based on the areas, the list of questions was created, so every area is covered. Naturally, during every interview, the situational questions will be asked. The list of the questions may be found in Appendix 1.

### 3.7.2 Company and Context of the Research

The research is conducted with a company operating in the construction industry providing solutions for the maintenance of buildings, energy, and manufacturing. The products and services are designed to the professional end-users which means Business-to-Business orientation. The company operates in more than 100 countries and has one entity established in Slovakia. The focus of the research will be on this Slovak entity which is currently having over 100 employees while the major part is represented by the Sales representatives. The company put a great emphasis on relationship building with the customers. The products are manufactured in the company's laboratories in cooperation with the researchers and universities to provide high quality and set innovative trends in the market. This product positioning is related to the high pricing of the products and services.

The company holds four main strong values which are *integration*, *courage*, *teamwork*, and *commitment*. It strongly focuses on building relationships on trust and openness. Additionally, there is a strong focus on the responsibility regarding customers but also the environment and society. As a part of the different organizations, the company contributes to minimizing the corruption rate in the construction industry. The strict internal codex is established which is valid for all employees, especially salespeople and also contractors. Furthermore, there is a strong employee focus, promoting their development and growth in combination with leading a healthy and balanced lifestyle. The employees are encouraged to build their careers within the company and 80% of managers are hired from internal resources. The company was rewarded in its category as the Slovak employer of the year 2014 and 2016.



The company was chosen for the research due to its specific company's culture mentioned above and the strong channel of distribution by personal selling. Therefore, the Sales department plays an important and strong role. As the company presents integration as one of the primary values, it is expected that there is an established relationship with the Marketing department. This interface and social worlds will be further researched within the company's context.

### 3.7.3 Primary data collection

The data collection was conducted on the 6th and 7th of April 2020. In this time period, the company provided two semi-structured interviews. The Marketing director responsible for the Slovak part of the marketing team and the Sales Director responsible for five teams operating in the Slovak market were interviewed. Both interviews were conducted online and lasted approximately one hour. Participants' requirements to stay anonymous were ensured in the project. The interviews were recorded with the interviewees' approval and transcribed afterward. Moreover, the discussions were held in Slovak. To stay transparent in the data collection, the researcher translated the interviews into English by using Google translator and further made the adjustments to improve the accuracy and maintain the meanings of the answers. The Slovak and English transcripts may be found in Appendix 2 - Appendix 5.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher introduced himself and the project. Furthermore, the approval for recording the interview was gained. The researcher presented the data security and the purpose of the recordings. Moreover, it was stated that there is no right or wrong answer for the questions and that there is a strong interest in the personal perception of the interviewees. The first interview started with the perception of the Marketing and Sales interface in the company, then moved to the personal perceptions of the teams and motivations. The last questions aimed to examine the view of the company's environment. As opposed to the first interview, the researcher decided to start the second interview with the part of personal history and perceptions and afterward move to the understanding of the Marketing and Sales functions in the company. The change of the strategy set a more personal tone and moved the focus of the interviewee from the general functioning of the systems.

More personal opinions were presented with greater insights into the details. Therefore, the researcher did ask fewer clarification questions. Moreover, the motivators and personal points of view were clearer than in the first interview. Although every interview went in a slightly different direction, both provided sufficient amounts of information for the data analysis.

### 3.7.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed as suggested by Appleton and Appleton (1995). The authors divide the analysis process into the three main stages which help to organize the data into the logical order. Concretely, the phases are (Appleton and Appleton, 1995):

1. Data reduction
2. Data display
3. Drawing conclusion

The first stage of data reduction aims to simplify and transform the data to extract the meanings and insights from the words of interviewees. The interview transcriptions should be read several times so the researchers will become familiar with the data. During this stage as many headings as needed are made to describe the important aspects of the content. Furthermore, the categories are created. For the purpose of this research, categories are in line with the analytical framework described at the end of the previous chapter. Headings are divided into these specific categories. (Appleton and Appleton, 1995) Afterward, every transcript is revised, and colors are used to mark the data belonging to the specific categories (Burnard, 1991).

The second stage of data display provides a coherent text analysis of the data supported by the quotes from the data (Appleton and Appleton, 1995). During the whole process of writing, the researcher should stay open a need to refer back to an original recording or transcript to stay close to the original meanings of the data (Burnard, 1991). Lastly, the conclusion drawing refers to the verification of the findings and the process of the analysis. (Appleton and Appleton, 1995) There are always parts of the interviews that were not included in the analysis due to its relevance to the researched topic. Researchers often refer to these parts as dross.

To maintain the transparency of the process, the complete transcripts should be always provided for the revision of the data. (Burnard, 1991)

To summarize the chapter, the subjectivist methodological approach leads the research to the choice of the interpretive paradigm from the RRIF classification by Burrell and Morgan. Consequently, the nominalist ontology and antipositivistic epistemology were chosen. The data collection is realized by the qualitative research method of two semi-structured interviews. The case study will be realized in the Slovak entity of the company operating in the construction industry. In the next chapter, the data analysis will be presented

## 4 Data Analysis

In the following chapter, the reader is presented with data analysis. The process of analysis follows the Analytical Framework presented in the second chapter of the project (Figure 4). The first subchapter aims to provide an understanding of the environment in the researched company. The analysis progresses with the exploration of the marketing-sales interface and finally, with the main traits and characteristics of the Marketing and Sales teams from the perception of the respondents.

### 4.1 The characteristics of the Marketing and Sales departments

In the following part, the most significant traits of the Marketing and Sales departments from the perspective of the interviewees will be presented.

Both interviewees were asked the question of what the main characteristics of their teams are. The marketers were described as independent and self-driven personalities. The Marketing Manager considers his direct reports as competent and able to bring high-quality solutions. Therefore, he requires them to work independently on their tasks and provides just the consultancy for their solutions. Another characteristic trait mentioned is the ability to make a decision. Besides working independently and proactively, marketers can be characterized also as team-players, which follows “teamwork” as one of the main company values. Therefore, they do not have problems dividing their successes with others. As mentioned by Interviewee 2, they are not “lazy winners” and work with a clear goal in their minds. This goal does not necessarily have to be represented by dollars. They are led not to see their success just in the money value of their activities. Last but not least, the Marketing Manager mentioned the human face and kindness of his people.

*“When I give them (marketers) a task, we talk about what our goal is, but as soon as we get to the goal, I’d like it to be taken over by a team member. So, I build that confidence by trying to encourage people to come up with a solution, and maybe I will also learn something new.”*  
(Interviewee 2)

*“They work all day, understand what we want to achieve, and do everything so we can become successful.”* (Interviewee 2)

The Social worlds of the individual sales representatives are shaped by the role specialization on the specific segment. They are required to follow the strategy set by the management board members. Additionally, when dealing with the clients, there is a strong requirement to follow the company values and the code of conduct to remain professional and adequately represent the company. Salespeople are specialists in specific product segments, so they need to educate themselves to extend the role-specific knowledge, gain the ability to demonstrate and sell the solutions to the customers. Moreover, their competency set contains detailed knowledge of their region and the status of the opportunities. Additionally, they were described as team players helping each other and willingly providing advice on different manners. All sales representatives are also constantly encouraged to be an active part of the information-sharing process and should share the feedback from the market as often as possible.

*“Salespeople also learn how to give feedback and not only receive what has already been produced but also contribute, with their observations.”* (Interviewee 1)

*“Sometimes Sales can say that it is not worth sharing, ...., but the point is to give feedback and be ready to argue. From marketing, each colleague must do research if what sales say is accurate.”* (Interviewee 1)

The frequent horizontal and vertical job rotations lead the employees to develop and count on building long-term careers in the company. Therefore, during their career, they have the opportunity to experience various projects and deal with the vast number of people. It may be assumed that during this process the social skill and bonds between the employees are built and also changing over time. The transitions are often challenging, the individual needs to adapt quickly and invest time in his or her education. Moreover, during the long-term career, the managers have the opportunity to experience different economic states - either growth or crisis and build the skills to navigate the company and people, so the company can overcome the obstacles or use the advantages from the external environment.

*“... career advancement on vertical, but also on a horizontal level, i.e. transfer from different departments, which often happens in our company.”* (Interviewee 1)

*“What is great about this company is that in 14 years I could try several positions and work with different types of people, on different projects - internally or externally”* (Interviewee 2)

The experiences are supported by the company's perception of training and education as an investment and allocate appropriate time resources. Interviewee 2 provides an insight that he is aware of the fact that he does not know everything and needs to be open-minded and constantly develop to be able to improve performance at work. According to the opinion of interviewee 2, it is up to the individual how much is he or she willing to develop and educate himself or herself. Moreover, some of the training is shared between the sales teams or the marketing and sales teams. As a result, besides gaining knowledge, the relationships are built and improved.

*“... we knew each other from the beginning, the relationships were formed there, and then what we got back to everyday life, then the communication and conflict resolution is easier.”* (Interviewee 1)

The remarkable trait is the leadership style of the interviewed managers. Both interviewees trust their people and communicate their expectations. As managers, they regularly hold 1on1 sessions with their direct reports to discuss the tasks, goals, and careers. Once the goals are set, the team members are responsible for creating a solution and take responsibility for execution. The leaders often operate as advisors and provide their opinions on the topic. The main reason is that both - sales and marketing directors have the business education and background while the team members are professionals who have degrees in the construction industry. It appears that there is a mutual trust between the leader and his team.

When looked at the connections between the mentioned traits and the behavioral predispositions based on the Hofstede dimensions, the high score of the Power distance and Masculinity signals tendencies to respect the authorities and leaders as well as work hard and strong result-orientation. It may be also assumed that employees follow the organizational and social norms more naturally. However, leaders have to constantly prove their knowledge and proficiency. As Slovakia is in the middle of the individualism dimension with no preference, it could be related to the ability of marketers and also sales representatives to work in teams but also individually as mentioned by interviewee 2. Tendencies to stability and a long-term orientation may be signalized by the long-term career orientation in the company, which is also seen as an important symbol of loyalty to the firm. The relations between the other two dimensions of Uncertainty Avoidance and Indulgence with the main characteristics of the Marketing and Sales departments in the researched company were not identified.

## 4.2 Marketing - Sales interface in the researched company

It is worth to mention that *one of the main distribution channels is personal selling* with over 100 sales representatives in the field. As the company was originally only sales dominant there were usual conflicts when aligning the marketing and sales strategies. Nowadays, the number of distribution channels has increased to four by opening local stores, creating e-shop, and partnerships with the other vendors.

Therefore, the company became marketing dominant due to the need of activities coordination. The strategy is set by the Marketing department and it has to be ensured that everybody in the Sales departments understands and follows the strategy. As interviewee 2 mentioned, to prevent conflicts, everybody has to understand the motivations and reasons behind the actions and strategic decisions.

The researched company was originally established as a family firm which still resonates in the company culture. Both interviewees described a *current relationship* between members of their departments as “*very positive*” (Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2). This may be caused by the high level of Marketing - Sales integration which was on the scale from 1 to 10 valued as 9 (Interviewee 1). There are several reasons proving the high integration.

Firstly, the company was described as strongly direct sales-oriented but led by the Marketing department (Interviewee 2). The primary role of marketers is to set the strategy for the specific long-time period and the Sales department is responsible for the implementation of this strategy. However, the discussions during the process of strategy creation are regularly held in the presence of sales directors on so-called “Board meetings”. (Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2)

Secondly, the goals are set in the top-down pattern. The superficial goal of the company is profit which is directly connected to improving the market share metric. The importance of goal interconnectedness to the superficial goals is perceived by both interviewees. There are various categories of goals in either marketing or sales and every goal is related to the superficial goal of



the company. Moreover, the team goals are interrelated also between the departments. Here, communication is a very crucial aspect, as interviewee 1 mentioned the importance of taking into consideration the goals of other managers so he can understand the motivations behind the specific actions of his colleagues. Individual goals of sales representatives or marketers are independent and based on the region and sub-segment where the individual operates. However, the single contributions are communicated and explained to the individuals by their team leaders.

*“We have top-down goals which are at the management level, then break down into individual departments, but in the end, the sum is one big goal. And we set it together - both sales and marketing.”* (Interviewee 2)

Thirdly, it is common for sales representatives and marketers to change their positions within the company not just vertically but also horizontally. As both interviewees stated, the majority of the members in the Marketing and Sales departments started their career as a sales representative responsible for a specific region and segment. As horizontal career changes in the company are common (Interviewee 1), in case of the employee's interest, there is an opportunity to change the Sales team to the Marketing team under specific conditions. The biggest perceived positives of this system are that the marketers have the product and market knowledge and most importantly, are able to understand the sales representatives and see the situations also from their perspectives.

*“We as marketing, relationships are great because most people came out from sales positions and we can look at things through the eyes of the salespeople.”* (Interviewee 2)

*“90% of people have experienced being a salesperson. Otherwise, it is difficult to support the sales department.”* (Interviewee 1)

Fourthly, the researched company provides joint training and development opportunities for their Marketing and Sales departments. For a long time, newcomers to the Marketing and Sales department were trained together in terms of 3 months' long elementary training. That provided an opportunity to meet each other in person and establish relationships. In terms of regular training and development, the activities for the sales department are planned and organized by the marketers in close cooperation with the sales team leaders who are further responsible for the training in their teams. As the market is divided into various sub-segments and the sales representatives are highly specialized, the team leader is responsible for passing the relevant information to his/her direct reports. In the case of marketers, the significant part of their job is field rides. The marketer is responsible for monthly scheduling a couple of days which will be spent with the sales representative in the field visiting customers. This is supposed to contribute to the market knowledge of the marketer and provide insights into the specific regions in Slovakia. Additionally, it helps to maintain the relationships and hand-on experience with Sales and ask for the valuable feedback and insights from the sales representatives.

*“... it is very good that all these [marketing] departments have at least the basic knowledge of what our products and applications are, the software solutions we are developing. Everyone has the same foundation.”* (Interviewee 1)

Although the Marketing and Sales departments are highly integrated, both interviewees see the room for the improvements in terms of information sharing. Although the company has established various systems for information sharing, the first interviewee sees room improvement in terms of frequency. Although there is a clear roadmap when the Marketing department shares the information with the Sales department, the frequency is not sufficient (Interviewee 1). On the other hand, interviewee 2 feels the need of getting closer to the sales representatives to collect their feedback more regularly which can be accomplished by completing the field rides mentioned above (Interviewee 2).

*“Specifically, it could be even better to share information on both sides. From sales, the more feedback information that comes from that market ... and marketing colleagues could be faster in passing on what is going on and when”* (Interviewee 1)

The passing of the information from the Marketing to the Sales department and vice versa appears not to be that smooth as needed. Both interviewees are aware of the need to establish the necessary systems to improve the data flows. The lack of information between the departments may cause tensions and misunderstandings between the individuals. Thus, to prevent these conflicts marketers have to regularly join the sales representative in their field rides and meetings with the customer. As already mentioned, the company uses many information-sharing tools to support communication inside the organization. However, it seems the tools and sharing the information does not necessarily help to solve the tensions, as the group communication mostly serves as a channel for sharing success with others. Communication and tools used on the personal level are highly dependent on the individual attitude and willingness to communicate.

### 4.3 Company environment

In the following part, the company’s environment and mechanisms will be introduced.

As both interviews with the respondents revealed, the company has a very strong *culture* (Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2). As already mentioned, there are established four core values - commitment, teamwork, integrity, and courage. All employees are required to honor and live coherently up to them.

*“...it's important that the 4 values are applied”* (Interviewee 1)

Apart from values, the company has defined the top two priorities that are *people* (in terms of the employees) and *VIP customers*. Priorities and values are strongly embedded in the employees' community. As interviewee 2 mentioned, if the individual is not aligned with the values, he or she will probably not be able to stay in the company for a longer time period. The society will naturally either force them to adapt or feel excluded (Interviewee 2).

*"... if somebody is expressly selfish and perhaps insidious, the system will push them out."*  
(Interviewee 2)

Besides the values, the researched company puts a strong emphasis to the *strategy*. Every employee has to understand and has a clear goal in his or her mind. The global strategy is cooperatively created by various departments on the global level and afterward escalated to the national entities. In Slovakia, the local strategy is set by the Executive Board which includes marketing managers, HR, as well as sales directors. The same applies to the creation of new specific solutions and their implementation to achieve the strategic goals of the entity. The goals are set in the top-down pattern. Team goals contribute to the superficial goal of the company. Goals are set also on the individual level of sales representatives or marketers and communicated by the team leaders. Everybody is responsible for actively accomplishing their goals.

*"We know what we want to do and how we want to do it, and most importantly, why we want to do it. We have a strategy until 2023. This is the most important."* (Interviewee 1)

*"We have a top-down goal system, the top goals are the same at the management level, then break down into individual departments, but in the end, the sum is one big goal. And we set it together."* (Interviewee 2)

For a long time, the company was dividing the market only geographically to the three main regions - to the Eastern, Central, and Western Slovakia and further to the smaller districts. Sales representative was responsible for selling all types of products in his or her district. However, with the growing number of products and addition of the new services, it was hard to manage and sustain the detailed product knowledge required for not just selling but also advising the customers. Nowadays, the company has changed the tradition and the market is divided into specialized trades. The small districts were merged into the regions and the sales representatives became specialized to the one specific product category. Thus, it may happen that the customer working on the complex project has to communicate with more than one sales representative, but there is a guarantee that the sales rep will fulfil a professional advisory role.

*“... we sub-segmented the market, that is, from the original districts of sales reps, where everyone was in charge of all types of companies (e.g. construction companies, but also energy customers and the iron industry, etc.) now we have industry experts and we're breaking it down. This is also the way we go into marketing and training.”*

Regarding communication, the company provides employees with various communication tools. They can communicate on the individual level as well as share information with their teams or community within the company. As both interviewees mentioned, everybody is always willing to help and advise each other what signals the teamwork value in practice. Apart from online communication which is quick and efficient, the employees are encouraged to communicate and meet also on a personal level. A good example is the so-called field rides, which are shared client visits of marketers and sales representatives to share and improve the knowledge of the market. Team leaders build trust among their direct reports by communicating often, staying transparent, and sharing the “why” behind their decisions. To ensure all news are communicated on a regular level, the company has set a roadmap of the information sharing, so the managers can expect and adjust their planning processes to be able to work and incorporate new information.

*“The roadmap of sharing the news is given and we review news twice a year at my managerial level.” (Interviewee 1)*

*“... communication is the most important thing. And into tiny details. These are my long-term, short-term goals, and this is what I want from you and why.” (Interviewee 1)*

Both interviewees agreed that the information-sharing systems in the company are sufficient. Product knowledge is reinforced and introduced during the so-called “train days” which are scheduled twice a year. Beside train days, every employee has the opportunity to try a demo of the products and software in the company’s portfolio. Market knowledge is spread through feedback, shared rides, and reports monitoring customer behavior in the regions.

*“... employees can try and work with our software by themselves as customers.” (Interviewee 1)*

It is very appreciated to proactively provide feedback and ideas for the improvements. However, there is also a need to be able to discuss the ideas and bring relevant arguments. The constructive conflicts are supported as the directors see them as an opportunity for exploring further options and development.

*“... conflict is good when it is constructive.” (Interviewee 1)*

*“Salespeople also learn how to give feedback and not only receive what has already been done but also contribute, with their observations.” (Interviewee 1)*

To summarize, the company has clearly specified values, priorities, and strategy. To make informed decisions, there are established information-sharing routines online as well as online. Especially, feedback is very welcomed as one of the main initiating factors for discussions about the products and innovation.

The perception of the company's environment is aligned with the information found on the company's official website. Both interviewees mentioned the importance of the employees which is proved by the company's title of the "Slovak Employer of the year 2014 and 2016". Moreover, the strong focus on job rotation and experiences is apparent, as 80% of managers are hired from the external resources. Claimed culture of the openness, trust, and responsibility is existing and embedded in the leadership styles and employees social worlds.

## 5 Discussion

The following chapter provides the reader with findings - answers to the research questions defined in the first chapter of the project that is:

1. *How can the Marketing and Sales departments be integrated or differentiated?*
2. *What are the crucial beliefs, attitudes, and other aspects that form the current social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments?*
3. *How does an organizational environment shape the social-worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments?*

### 5.1.1 Differentiation and Integration of the Marketing and Sales departments

According to the theoretical concept by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) is it worth examining to what extent are the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales department differentiated and integrated. As the authors conclude in their study, the differentiation helps companies to deal with the environmental pressure and provide greater flexibility. Although the most successful companies experience a high level of differentiation, it may cause problems with internal communication and inter-departmental conflicts. One way to overcome the conflicting situations is development of employees' interpersonal skills. (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969) In our case, the answer to the question in terms of differentiation and integration of the Marketing and Sales department may seem clear, as the high level of integration between departments was mentioned. However, there are certain differentiated aspects that deserve to be mentioned.



Firstly, the general role of a sales representative is divided into the more specialized roles of sales representative responsible for a specific trade (in terms of product category as well as district). That means the market is not divided just according to the region (west, central, east Slovakia) but also specific sub-segments (product category). Therefore, every role requires gaining a highly specific product and market knowledge. This is directly related to the company's division of training activities. The team leaders are trained together regardless of the trade, but they are responsible for further education of their trade-specialized teams and passing the right knowledge to them. Thus, it may be said that the social worlds of sales representatives are shaped within the community of the product or region specialist. In the case of marketers, they mostly take the role of the *product managers* who are divided according to the product categories (the main role is to support the sales specialists) and *trade managers* who are responsible for discovering opportunities in the specific regions.

The differentiation may be observed also in terms of goals and time-orientation. Goals are differentiated on the individual level, but in sum, every goal contributes to the superficial goal of the researched company. As sales representatives have mostly short-term goals, their orientation is focused on a short time period such as month or quarter. On the other hand, marketers are required to have a long-time perspective to effectively plan the activities on the market. This is coherent with the research of Homburg and Jensen (2007) where they discovered that this type of short-term versus long-term differentiation in the social worlds of the marketers and salespeople appears to be beneficial for the companies and our case approves that.

The integration of the Marketing and Sales departments is ensured by the cooperative process of strategy creation. Once the strategy is created and approved, team leaders are responsible for escalation to the lower levels and ensure every team member understands the motivation, purpose, and acts accordingly. As a result, employees have consistent beliefs and a clear understanding of the information. The actions and results are further monitored on the regular Board meetings.

Integration is significant with regard to team goals. These are identified in the process of inter-departmental cooperation and directly intertwined to ensure contribution to the overall goal of the Slovak entity. Besides the highly specialized role-related knowledge, every team member of the Marketing and Sales departments have to have the general product and market knowledge. This is ensured by providing the online platform with the online training and product specifications as well as compulsory regular joint field rides of marketers and sales representatives. Both departments are strongly integrated in terms of attitudes to develop and focus on customers which are the company's VIP clients. Therefore, the main activities aim to serve this type of customer and develop them further as they deliver the major part of the profit. Last but not least, the sales representatives are encouraged to actively share and provide feedback from the market which helps marketers shaping their market research activities. Consequently, the products are innovated and developed according to the latest market needs and ensure the leading position of the company in the market.

Although Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) say that the company is the most effective when highly differentiated and every department is oriented towards its own function, it may be seen that the Marketing and Sales departments in the researched company are still highly oriented towards their functions, however, the integrated activities and clear motivations help to shape their social world and align the functions to reach the superficial goal.

### 5.1.2 Current social worlds of the marketers and sales representatives

The following subchapter aims to discover the crucial aspects which have formed the current social worlds of marketers and sales representatives in the researched company. Assessment will be realized in terms of beliefs, attitudes, habits, and maintenance of the social universes of the departments.

The company's positioning as a premium company offering high-quality products has an influence on the perceived status of the employees. From the tone of both interviewees, a certain level of proudness to work for the researched company may be noticed. This fact leads to a greater commitment to work hard and contribute to reaching the company's goals by bringing value to the customers and the market by offering innovative products and services. Additionally, the feeling of contribution to the customers' well-being may work as a rewarding mechanism strengthening the commitment to the company.

The remarkable attitude is that the marketers and sales representatives see success as a result of the hard work. So-called "lazy-winners" are not accepted in the sub-universes of both departments. This aspect is directly related to taking responsibility for fulfilling the role-specific tasks and delivering the best possible results. In order to sustain or improve the quality, employees held a positive attitude towards the training. As mentioned by interviewees, constant education is necessary. The development results in the trust of their leaders who have mostly the advisory function when managing their teams, leading to the most effective ways of how to reach goals and using the expertise of their employees. Leaders have a clear idea of what makes their employees competent and these aspects are also crucial during the hiring process and further evaluation. On the other hand, the directors are institutionalized as experts due to their long-term experience and results. It appears that trust is usually established in two ways and marketers and sales representatives trust their leaders. This results in a greater goal acceptance. Moreover, trust is strengthened by supporting constructive conflicts and healthy arguments between the team members as well as departments. Therefore, the departments held a rather cooperative than competitive attitude toward each other.

As the vast majority of marketers start working for the researched company on the sales position and have the opportunity to experience sales processes, there is an assumption that both marketers and sales representatives have developed interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships. This may be a very important aspect when exploring their social worlds.

As researchers across academia point out, usually there are personal differences between salespeople and marketers. Marketers are described as more analytical, creative, and working behind the desk, while salespeople are perceived as more open, extroverted, and building relationships with customers in the field. (Dannenberg et al., 2009) In our case, there is a better alignment of the personalities and developed social skills due to the mentioned career development. Moreover, marketers are forced to leave “the desk” and take part in the joint field rides with the sales representatives. As the employees have opportunities to work in various positions, by the time they gain experience of working with different projects and people. A good example is directors who had to cope with the financial crisis during 2008-2009, and now during the crisis due to the Covid-19 virus, they are applying the experiences gained 12 years ago.

The social world of every marketer or sales representative is influenced by the interactions and norms in the collective sub-universe (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). The main pillar is the employees with a long career history in the company as they pass the habits and norms as objective to the new team members. The good examples are keeping the overall atmosphere very friendly, the human approach to each other, and willingness to help. Excessive egoism is not supported, and society tends to eliminate it during the process of secondary internalization. If the process is unsuccessful, the individual usually leaves the company. Although the team leaders tend to support taking responsibility for an individual's own task, there is a strong teamwork culture rooted in the company's main values. The cooperation on a different level requires being on the same page when understanding the information and metrics. This is ensured by frequent communication either online or in person. The culture supports sharing successes, innovation, or any kind of news. Communication is one of the most important maintaining mechanisms. This is complemented by several habits on the official but also unofficial levels. The official events are specified in the roadmap - for example, regular train days, innovation days, or individual 1on1 sessions. On an unofficial level, there are events such as Christmas parties and other types of team building but also shared lunches or coffee time in the office.

The habits, beliefs, and joint attitudes towards the work create a certain flow of the routines that actively help to maintain and shape the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments. One of the most significant factors appears to be the long-term career development of marketers and joint rides to bring more practical insights, improve interpersonal skills, and build relationships between the members of the departments. Secondly, another factor is a strong community built on the employees working for the company for many years. These individuals are crucial in the process of maintaining the traditional norms, attitudes, and culture.

### 5.1.3 Shaping the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments as an organization

In the following sub-chapter, the aim is to examine if and how an organization can shape the social worlds of marketers and salespeople. Based on the collected data, there are three main areas - culture, strategy, and communication.

In our case, the priority is people who are considered as the company's biggest asset. The goals are not just short-term and money-oriented. The activities are planned and executed to bring profitability and maximum effectiveness in the long-term. As the researched company invests a lot into its employees, it also supports the long-term career development of its employees. Even though there are many changes in positions not just on vertical but also horizontal levels, people are encouraged and rewarded for staying faithful to the firm. The employees' satisfaction resulted in the company winning two titles "Slovak employer of the year" where the employees are supposed to share and evaluate various dimensions of their job. The satisfaction and feeling of the importance as an employee is, based on the data, already embedded and reinforced in the beliefs and attitudes of the older faithful employees who pass the motivation to the younger colleagues.

The second important aspect mentioned is a strategy. The Marketing and Sales departments operating in the Slovak entity of the researched company have to base their local strategy on the global strategy. The interesting fact is that the dominant strategy is the same for the Marketing and Sales team. This may be caused by the strong share of the Sales department in the company. Nevertheless, the roles are clearly stated and the Marketing takes the responsibility for strategy but in intensive cooperation with the Sales directors. The Sales leaders are, furthermore, in charge of escalating the strategy to all team members, and, finally, the sales representatives are responsible for strategy execution. Marketers prepare the training sessions and materials to make the strategy implementation as effective as possible. Moreover, they are supposed to collect feedback from the market and validate the data in the market research. The roles are clearly specified so everybody can perform assigned activities.

The strategy is directly related to communication. Firstly, to the clarity and way of communication. Secondly, to the tools which make the information flow available. As already mentioned, the employees are encouraged to share their experiences with clients, innovations, or any kind of information which may be useful to his or her colleagues. Marketers have joined field rides and train days to get closer to the salespeople, salespeople are highly encouraged to provide regular feedback and ideas from the market. According to the data, the team leaders try to stay transparent as much as possible. They share their goals and explain the motivations behind the actions required. As a result, the bigger picture is created, and everybody can identify his or her contribution to the results. To make the information flows as smooth as possible, there are implemented communication tools to allow communication from an individual level to communication between the teams and also a global company.

To summarize the findings, it shows that although it may be apparent that the Marketing and Sales departments are highly integrated, there are still differentiated aspects that contribute to the greater ability to respond to changing customer needs on the market. Current social worlds of marketers and salespeople are influenced by various beliefs, attitudes, habits, and community highly appreciating teamwork and taking responsibility for delivering the results. On the company level, in the case of this research the culture, strategy, and communication are crucial factors, how can a company impact and shape the social worlds of its marketers and salespeople.

## 6 Conclusion

The findings of the study show that the marketing and sales functions in the researched company differentiated according to the subsegments based on the product category and territories. However, there is a high level of integration in terms of united marketing and sales strategy, interrelated team goals, and information sharing. Employees hold the beliefs in the quality and value in the company products and services, have attitudes of hard workers oriented to teamwork and constant development. The universe is maintained by habits, norms, and leaders with a remarkable working history in the company. Finally, the company plays an active role when shaping the social worlds of its Marketing and Sales departments by providing a strong company culture, clear strategy, and communication flows.

The conducted research deals with exploring the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments in the researched company. The study aims to provide an explorative case study and new insights based on the understanding of the internal environment of the company, marketing-sales interface, and backtrack the main factors which shape the social worlds of the departments.

The project starts with the introduction and problem formulation introducing the motivation for conducting the research. The employees with collective goal orientation and relations between each other create valuable company resources named social capital. However, everybody holds different beliefs, works in a different context of the role and function which influences understanding the information, time-orientation, and may create various biases about others. Therefore, shaping the perceptions leads to the psychological similarities of the employees, helps to reduce the non-constructive conflicts, and leads to better company results.



The researcher works with two theories, firstly, Social Construction of Reality by Berger and Luckmann (1966) which was one of the first steppingstones to social constructivism, and secondly, the theory of Differentiation and Integration by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969). The theory deals with differentiation and integration in regard to the social worlds of the different departments and employees in the company. As already mentioned, the authors state that the high level of differentiation and orientation to the specific functions provides the company with flexibility and a higher ability to be responsive to the market needs. The level of integration is related to the quality of cooperation.

For the purpose of the research, the Subjectivist methodological approach was adopted and, thus, the interpretive paradigm from the RRIF classification system by Burrell and Morgan (2008). This means that reality is discovered and researched by analyzing subjective perceptions and consciousness. In relation to the choice of paradigm, the nominalistic ontology, and antipositivistic epistemology are adopted. The data were collected by the qualitative research method - two semi-structured interviews with Marketing and Sales directors in the researched company in Slovakia operating in the construction industry.

The qualitative data were analyzed according to the analytical framework presented at the end of the literature review chapter. The data analysis aims to provide an understanding of the company environment, marketing-sales interface, and present the characteristic traits of Marketing and Sales teams from the perception of the respondents. To stay transparent and allow the reader to check the interpretation of the data, the interview transcript in Slovak and English may be found in Appendix 2-5. Based on the analysis, the research questions are answered in the discussion part of the project.

It is worth mentioning the relation of the results to the cultural context of Slovakia. The high alignment and acceptance of the norms and structures may be supported by the high level of power distance. The leaders are naturally respected and trusted when considered competent. Similarly, the high level of masculinity supports hard-working attitudes and need to reach the goals in order to feel successful. On the other hand, the middle score on individualism signals that although there may be some individualistic tendencies, the employees are able to adapt and work in teams in teamwork company culture.

To answer the research problem on how a company can manage the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments, the study provides insights on different levels.

Firstly, a company should work with the fact that the social worlds of the individual departments exist. Furthermore, they can be influenced by many factors, and the company can implement the mechanisms to either differentiate or integrate them. A good example is the researched company which recognizes people as one of the biggest assets and actively implements the mechanisms to influence the social worlds of both marketers and salespeople.

To ensure the best possible quality of services, products, and customer satisfaction, there is a focus on the role differentiation and need for a strong specialization of the sales professionals and product managers responsible for a specific trade. However, the horizontal career changes in the positions within the company are very common and often challenging for the professionals as they have to switch their specializations. As a result, most sales professionals are forced to step out of their comfort zone and constantly extend their role-specific knowledge. Their social worlds are thus enriched by new perspectives, projects, and clients. They need to trust their older colleagues and leaders and follow their advice in order to meet their goals. After being successful, they see the value in teamwork and also willingly help the other colleagues.

To balance the differentiation and high role specialization, the study shows that in our case there is a relatively effective integration in terms of culture and strategy. The cultural aspect is important in order to set the standards of communication and cooperation between the departments. This means that everybody lives and makes decisions according to the core values which are objectified in the community. By having employees with a long career history in the teams, the stability of these values is ensured. Moreover, as the majority of marketers started in the company in the position of a sales representative, they have an understanding of the salespeople's needs and developed interpersonal skills. There is an assumption that the marketers and salespeople share similar personality traits which may lead to similarities in their social worlds.

The last and most important aspect of integration is strategy. By cooperating in the strategy creation process, the Marketing and Sales departments have a shared understanding of the purpose of their activities. It is prevented that marketers will pursue different goals as salespeople and their activities will be misaligned. They are forced to align their actions in every phase of the sales funnel and customer care. Salespeople understand the products, contribute with their feedback, and believe in the marketing activities. On the other hand, the marketers see the importance of the sales feedback and actively visit the salespeople during the joint field rides.

## The impact of the chosen method

The choice of the semi-structured interview as a researched method influenced to some extent the findings of the study. Therefore, the researcher sees the value in assessing the impact of the method on the results and provides suggestions which methods could be used as complementary to the semi-structured interviews to enrich the data collection.

Firstly, the semi-structured interview method provided the researcher with an opportunity for direct contact with the interviewees. As some of the asked questions needed clarification or examples, it was easy to provide an additional explanation. Moreover, there was the possibility to encourage the interviewees to elaborate on their answers and provide more details. As the method of semi-structured interview provides researchers with flexibility, the individual interviews were adjusted according to the communication flows in terms of getting the best data. On the other hand, the answers are strongly influenced by the reality perception of the interviewees that may skew the data. To eliminate the subjectivity there would be a solution to increase the number of interviewees and cover various positions within the Marketing and Sales team in the company. As both interviewees are in the positions of directors and have a long career history in the researched company, the answers might go in the direction of how they perceive the facts should be and not necessarily are in the reality. However, as mentioned they have intensive contact with their direct reports so the collected data definitely bring the value and are useful for this exploratory research.

The method of the semi-structured interview may be complemented by the additional observations in the company. The researcher would have an opportunity to assess the processes from his or her perception and bring an additional point of view. It is important to take into consideration that this point of view would be subjective as well and influenced by the researcher's social world and perception of reality. Besides the observation, the questionnaires could be distributed among the Marketing and Sales team members.

The data collection would miss the personal contact with the researcher but could provide measurable insights covering a larger sample of respondents. Additionally, the researched sample could be enlarged with the customers and gain insights on their satisfaction with the company's products, services, and customer services. Last but not least, the secondary data (e.g. in the form of employee net promoter score) could be used to provide a bigger picture also on the historical level. Unfortunately, this type of data was not available for this research.

## Limitations of the research

The research meets certain limitations that need to be mentioned.

Firstly, the nominalistic ontological and antipositivistic epistemological choice restricts the possibility to generalize the results. The researcher examines the reality through the subjective perceptions of the respondents. Moreover, the researcher's subjectivity is also part of the data analysis process, as the qualitative data were obtained through the method of semi-structured interviews. To ensure as much transparency of the results, transcriptions of the interviews in Slovak and English language are provided in Appendix 2-5.

Secondly, when selecting the studies for the literature review, the systematic approach strictly limited the number of used resources. During the process of conducting the search, various search strings were tested to see which would bring the most accurate results. To enrich the list of the resources after selection, the reference lists of the chosen articles were reviewed to additionally identify commonly used and repeating studies. Thus, the replicability of the literature search is sustained and the process is more transparent.

Regarding the research method, the number of interviewees was restricted to two, due to the official company's regulations. This may appear as not a sufficient number. Although the higher amount of data could provide more information about the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales departments in the researched company, the collected data provided valuable insights.

Last, but not least, there is also criticism about the Hofstede dimensions which were used in the study as one of the theoretical considerations. Some authors criticize Hofstede on the methodological level, more concretely, the score creation which may have the equivalency and translational issues. It is also not expected that every individual strictly holds the values according to the scale, depending for example on differences between education (academics compared to the working class individuals). Other authors discuss that Hofstede usually revises the calculations of the dimensions based on the critique, but not the concept itself (McSweeney, 2002) On the conceptual level, there is discussion if there is not another important dimension. Additionally, although the nation may score on a certain dimension similarly, there still may be a difference depending on the situational contexts. While one nation may prefer one point of a continuum in one situation - e.g. job-related context, in a different setting, such as religion, the preferences may be in the second point of the continuum. (Bardhan and Weaver, 2011) Nevertheless, for the purpose of the study, the Hofstede dimensions are considered sufficient tools to help analyze the results in combination with the other theories as it provides the basic assumptions about the character traits of the employees in Slovakia.

## Implications for managers and researchers

The findings can serve as an inspiration for managers and researchers.

Firstly, managers can implement an adjusted version of findings in their companies or when working with their teams. As may be seen, rich and long-term experience in the positions within the company can help in building relationships and switching a competitive attitude to the cooperative. For some companies, it may be hard to practice the horizontal internal changes in the positions, however, the previous experience of a marketer in the sales department may be seen as a positive factor helping improve understanding the sales function and needs. On the other hand, the basic understanding of the marketing processes and motivations helps salespeople to get along with marketers and execute the strategy.

The clear definition and communication of the strategy are defined as one of the most important by both Marketing and Sales directors. Furthermore, the company should constantly work on strengthening its culture and put emphasis on the employees to live the given values.

Researchers can inspire their research and continue researching the social worlds of various departments in the company. Apparently, in every company, there are certain factors influencing the social worlds of the Marketing and Sales department, and further research in this direction also by using suggested complementing methods could help to understand the process of creation and roots of these worlds.

## Opportunities for future research

Future research may take this project as a stepping stone and examine the social worlds also of the other than the Marketing and Sales departments such as Finance or Controlling, which also play important roles in the company. The number of respondents may be enlarged to conduct the interviews with the employees also on a lower level in the hierarchy, not just the directors and team leaders.

The research could be conducted using also mixed data collection methods. The more diversified data sample may help to discover the deeper relations between the social worlds, their alignments, and influence on the company's effectiveness or customer satisfaction. Moreover, every researched company could be analyzed in detail to set the particular scene of the company's environment before the analysis.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Appleton, J. V. & Appleton, J. V. (1995)** Analysing qualitative interview data: addressing issues of validity and reliability. *Journal of advanced nursing*. 22 (5), 993–997. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/77828879/>.

**Bardhan, N. & Weaver, C. K. (2011)** ‘Intercultural Typologies and Public Relations Research: A Critique of Hofstede’s Dimensions: Jeffrey Courtright, Rachel Wolfe, and John Baldwin’, in *Public Relations in Global Cultural Contexts: Multi-paradigmatic Perspectives*. [Online]. Routledge. pp. 121–152.

**Biemans, W. (2007)** Designing the marketing-sales interface in B2B firms. *European Journal of Marketing*. [Online] 41 (3/4), 257–273. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/237065620/>.

**Burnard, P. (1991)** A method of analyzing interview transcripts in qualitative research. *Nurse Education Today*. [Online] 11 (6), 461–466.

**Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. (2008)** *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis : elements of the sociology of corporate life* /. Elektronisk udgave. Farnham, Surrey, England ; Ashgate.

**Cespedes, Frank V. (1994)**, *"Industrial Marketing: Managing New Requirements," Sloan Management Review*, 35 (Spring), 45-60

**Dannenberg, Holger. & Zupancic, Dirk. (2009)** *Excellence in Sales : Optimising Customer and Sales Management* / . Elektronisk udgave. Wiesbaden: Gabler Verlag / Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, Wiesbaden.



**Dawes, P. L. & Massey, G. R. (2005)** Antecedents of conflict in marketing's cross-functional relationship with sales. *European Journal of Marketing*. [Online] 39 (11/12), 1327–1344.

**Deshpande, R. and Webster, F. E. (1989)**, “Organizational Culture and Marketing: Defining the Research Agenda”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 3-15.

**Dougherty, Deborah (1992)**, "Interpretive Barriers to Successful Product Innovation in Large Firms," *Organization Science*, 3 (2), 179-202.

**Egholm, L. (2014)** *Philosophy of Science*. Hans Reitzels Forlag.

**Espejo, R. & Watt, J. (1988)** Information Management, Organization and Managerial Effectiveness. *The Journal of the Operational Research Society*. [Online] 39 (1), 7–14. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/231387713/>.

**Hall, R. H. et al. (1968)** Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 13 (1) p.180–186.

**Hofstede Insights. (2020).** *Country Comparison - Hofstede Insights*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/denmark,slovakia/>> [Accessed 24 March 2020].

**Homburg, C. & Jensen, O. (2007)** The Thought Worlds of Marketing and Sales : Which Differences Make a Difference? *Inst. für Marktorientierte Unternehmensführung, Univ. Mannheim*.

**Hubers, M. D. et al. (2017)** The quest for sustained data use: Developing organizational routines. *Teaching and teacher education*. 67509–521.

**Hulland, J., Nenkov, G. Y. and Barclay, D. W., (2012)**, “Perceived Marketing-Sales Relationship Effectiveness: A Matter of Justice”, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 40,

No. 3, pp. 450-467.

**Hutt, M. D. & Walker, B. A. (2015)** Bridging the Theory-Practice Gap in Business Marketing: Lessons from the Field-The JBBM at 21. *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*.

[Online] 22 (1-2), 67–72. [online]. Available from:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1051712X.2015.1020242>.

**Kelly, S. et al. (2017)** *Value-ology Aligning sales and marketing to shape and deliver profitable customer value propositions*. 1st ed. 2017. [Online]. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

**Kotler, P. et al. (2006)** Ending the war between sales and marketing. *Harvard Business Review*. 84 (7 8), 68–78, 187.

**Kuada, J. E. (2012)** *Research methodology : a project guide for university students /* . Elektronisk udgave. -1st ed. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur.

**Lawrence, P. & Lorsch, J. (1969)** Differentiation and Integration in Complex Organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. [Online] 12 (1), 1–47. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1301314663/>.

**Lieberman, E. et al. (2009)** Designing an internal organizational system for conflict management based on a needs assessment. *Dispute Resolution Journal*. 64 (2), 62–74.

**Lichtman, M. (2017)** *Qualitative research for the social sciences*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

**Maxwell, J. R. (2008)**, “Work System Design to Improve the Economic Performance of the Firm”, *Business Process Management Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 432-446.

**Madhani, P. (2016)** Sales and Marketing: Integration. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*. 12 (2), 17–28. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1695026883/>.

**Magnusson, P. et al. (2014)** The influence of national cultural values on the use of rewards alignment to improve sales collaboration. *International Marketing Review*. [Online] 31 (1), 30–50. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1493264461/>.

**Massey, G. & Dawes, P. (2007)** Personal characteristics, trust, conflict, and effectiveness in marketing/sales working relationships. *European Journal of Marketing*. [Online] 41 (9/10), 1117–1145. [online]. Available from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/237030072/>.

**Matthyssens, P. and Johnston, W. J. (2006)**, “Marketing and Sales: Optimization of a Neglected Relationship”, *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 21, No. 6, pp. 338-345.

**Mayers, P. W., and Wilemon, D. (1989)**, “Learning New Technology Development”, *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 79-88.

**Narver, J. C. and Slater, S. F. (1990)**, “The Effect of a Market Orientation on Business Profitability”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54, No. 4, pp. 20-35.

**Palic, M. et al. (2012)** A qualitative approach to intra-organizational cooperation between marketing and sales department. *Zbornik radova - Sarajevo Business and Economics Review (SBER)*. (32), 11–32.

**Park, S. & Kim, E.-J. (2015)** Revisiting knowledge sharing from the organizational change perspective. *European Journal of Training and Development*. [Online] 39 (9), 769–797.

**Piškanin, A., Rudy, J., Bajžíková, Ľ. and Sulíková, R., (2010)**. Manažment: Klasické Teórie A Moderné Trendy. Bratislava: *Comenius University, Faculty of Management*.

**Schmonsees, R. J. (2006)**, *Escaping the Black Hole: Minimizing the Damage from Marketing Sales Disconnect*, Thomson South-Western, Mason, OH.

**Rouzies, D. & Hulland, J. (2014)** Does marketing and sales integration always pay off? Evidence from a social capital perspective. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. [Online] 42 (5), 511–527.

**Soares, A. M. et al. (2007)** *Hofstede's dimensions of culture in international marketing studies*. [Online] 60 (3), 277–284.

**Spillane, J. P. et al. (2011)** Organizational Routines as Coupling Mechanisms: Policy, School Administration, and the Technical Core. *American Educational Research Journal*. [Online] 48 (3), 586–619.

**Tam, S. & Gray, D. E. (2016)** Organisational Learning and the Organisational Life Cycle: The Differential Aspects of an Integrated Relationship in SMEs. *European Journal of Training and Development*. [Online] 40 (1), 2–20.

**Tidström, A. & Hagberg-Andersson, Å. (2012)** Critical events in time and space when cooperation turns into competition in business relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*. [Online] 41 (2), 333–343.

**Weissbrich, D. (2009)** *The Marketing-Sales-Finance Triangle An Empirical Investigation of Finance-Related Interactions & Managerial Challenges among Marketing, Sales, and Finance Actors*. First edition. [Online]. Wiesbaden: Gabler Verlag.

**Weitz, Barton A. & Wensley, Robin (2002)** *Handbook of marketing*. London: SAGE.

**Workman, J. et al. (1998)** Marketing organization: An integrative framework of dimensions and determinants. *Journal Of Marketing*. [Online] 62 (3), 21–41.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: The structure of the semi-structured interview

<b>Participants:</b>	Marketing professionals, Sales professionals in the same company. Preferably one sales team lead, one marketing team lead, one marketer and one salesman.
<b>Ares interviewed:</b>	<p>Marketing and Sales interface in the company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functions</li> <li>• Relationship and Dependence</li> <li>• Information sharing</li> <li>• Conflicting situations</li> <li>• Differentiation and Integration</li> </ul> <p>The social world of marketers/salespeople</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role Perception</li> <li>• Identity</li> <li>• Routines</li> <li>• Secondary Internalization</li> <li>• Trust</li> </ul> <p>Company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture and Goals</li> <li>• Drivers and Environment</li> </ul>

<p><b>Questions:</b></p>	<p>Could you describe the Marketing and Sales interface in your company?</p> <p>How would you describe a relationship between the Marketing and Sales dep.?</p> <p>To what extent you would say that the Marketing and Sales dep. depend on each other?</p> <p>(How) do you share the information between M&amp;S dep.?</p> <p>(How) do you share success or failures?</p> <p>(How) do you handle (solve) conflicting situations?</p> <p>Do you think the departments should be more integrated?</p> <p>What role in your perception does your M/S department play in the company?</p> <p>What characterizes you as a part of the team?</p> <p>How do you see the relationships in your team?</p> <p>Do you have any specific routines/habits in your team?</p> <p>What is the process of involving the new member into your team?</p> <p>Do you trust your colleagues in the M/S department?</p> <p>Do you trust the colleagues from the opposite M/S dep?</p> <p>How do you perceive competences of M/S teams?</p> <p>Do you think there are some differences in how M/S sees the processes in the company?</p> <p>Do you think such differences in perception/orientation can be prosperous for the results?</p> <p>Do you have a feeling that the company is a supportive environment for building interdepartmental relationships?</p>
--------------------------	---

## ***Appendix 2: The interview with the Sales Director in Slovak***

***Interviewer: Researcher***

***Interviewee: Sales Director***

***Interview Setting: Interview conducted online at 10:00 AM on Monday 6th April 2020.***

***Interviewer:*** Dobrý deň, ďakujem za Váš čas a ochotu poskytnúť interview. Rada by som sa na úvod predstavila, som študentkou na dánskej Aalborg University, odbor International Marketing. V mojej Master Thesis rozoberám vzťahy a fungovanie marketingového a obchodného oddelenia v spoločnostiach. Máte nejaké otázky?

***Interviewee:*** Dobrý deň, nie.

***Interviewer:*** Súhlasíte s tým, aby bolo interview nahrávané za účelom analýzy dát? Nahrávka bude následne zmazaná a interview zostane anonymné.

***Interviewee:*** V poriadku.

***Interviewer:*** Ešte by som rada poznamenala, že neexistuje správna alebo nesprávna odpoveď na jednotlivé otázky a zaujíma ma Váš osobný pohľad a perspektíva na jednotlivé otázky. Môžeme začať?

***Interviewee:*** Určite.

***Interviewer:*** Rada by som začala veľmi všeobecnou otázkou a to, ako vy osobne vnímate fungovanie Marketingu a Obchodného oddelenia u Vás v spoločnosti?

**Interviewee:** (Laughter) Keď odpoviem veľmi všeobecne, že pozitívne, ale teraz, aby som dovysvetlil. My fungujeme ako “Marketing organization in the future”, to je veľmi dôležité. To znamená, že viacero oddelení, v rámci toho Marketingového máme z minimálnej časti zdieľané s ďalšou organizáciou v rámci našej spoločnosti a tou je pobočka v Prahe. Toto je veľmi unikátne, samozrejme kolega, ktorý je riaditeľ marketingu na Slovensku má svoje vlastné oddelenie a má svojich vlastných kolegov a kolegyne, ktoré robia na Slovensku. Sme veľmi efektívni, čo sa týka zdieľania. Napríklad, koho zdieľame, tak to sú produkt manažéri. Pre každú business unit máme produktového manažéra v centrále v Prahe a spolupracujú so 6 krajinami. Je to veľmi unikátne a z tohto pohľadu veľmi efektívne. Asi toľko.

**Interviewer:** *To naozaj zaujímavé, ako máte nastavené zdieľanie informácií?*

**Interviewee:** Tých systémov je viac. Ako sa vyvíjajú jednotlivé nástroje, tak podobne ideme aj my. Kedysi sme fungovali na špecifickom portáli pre obchodníkov, kde veľká sekcia bola venovaná marketingu. Dnes už ideme cez Sharepoint a rôzne sociálne siete. My už dlhodobo a teraz neviem koľko presne funguje na online systéme. Máme online stránku, druhá generácia. To je najdôležitejší zdroj informácii nielen pre zákazníkov, ale aj zamestnancov ako takých. On funguje na obidve strany a všetci majú k tomu prístup aj cez demo účet. Vedia to robiť aj sami pre seba ako nováčikovia aj pre zákazníkov.

**Interviewer:** *Ako by ste na škále od 1 do 10 vyhodnotili mieru integrácie marketingového a obchodného oddelenia?*

**Interviewee:** (Uhm.. uhm, thinking) Asi 9. Určite je vždy priestor na zlepšenie. A teraz, prečo som nepovedal 10 je to, že my sme úzko previazaný a, samozrejme, jeden bez druhého neviem si predstaviť, že by sme fungovali a stále je priestor na zlepšenie. Konkrétne je to ešte lepšie zdieľanie informácii, a to obojstranne. Zo salesu čím viac info prichádza z toho trhu, ale aj sales samotný, čo by uvítal aké nástroje alebo kde vidí priestor na zlepšenie, a potom aj opačne, tí marketingoví kolegovia by mohli byť rýchlejší v odovzdávaní informácii, čo sa chystá a kedy.



Ten roadmap noviniek, samozrejme, je daný a preberáme ho 2-krát do roka na mojej manažérskej úrovni, kde sa stretávame 6 krajín. Otázka je potom ako rýchlo a dokedy sa potom eskalujú tie informácie na nižšie levely. My máme na to proces tzv. train days, kde v rámci prípravy trénujeme tých trénerov, ktorí pripravujú ďalej celý sales. Proces máme, otázka je len to zdieľanie a možno tá vyššia frekvencia zdieľania informácií.

**Interviewer:** *Ked' sa zdieľajú tieto nové informácie, aké sú zvyčajne reakcie? Nevznikajú konflikty?*

**Interviewee:** Podľa toho, čo myslíte konfliktmi.

**Interviewer:** *Nemusí ísť o otvorené hádky, ale skôr prejavy nedôvery a pocit nesprávnosti informácií.*

**Interviewee:** Áno, rozumiem. Ale takýto konflikt je dobrý, ak je konštruktívny. Preto som sa pýtal, že aký druh konfliktu ste mysleli. Tam je potom dôležité, či to čo oslovuje ten sales je nejaká individuálna požiadavka z trhu, čo potrebuje od marketingu, alebo sa stretne tých individuálnych požiadaviek viac. A to práve máme priestor na zlepšenie. Lebo niekto zo Salesu si môže povedať, že mne to za to nestojí, nikto to nebude riešiť a možno takýchto požiadaviek je viac a už sme to mohli dávno mať. Je to veľmi všeobecné, ale pointa je v tom podať feedback a byť pripravený argumentovať. Z marketingu si potom každý kolega musí urobiť research, že či to čo hovorí, tá časť salesu ide ruka v ruke s ďalšou. Nemôžeme si dovoliť šiť riešenia na mieru len pre veľmi úzky okruh, aj keď áno, robíme aj subsegmentovane, pre úzko profilovaných kolegov, ale ten záber je potom široký.

**Interviewer:** *Rozumiem. Rada by som sa teraz spýtala na Váš tím obchodníkov, ako by ste ich charakterizovali, čo je identita Vášho tímu?*

**Interviewee:** (Thinking). Ja mám 5 tímov a každý je zameraný na iný segment. Myslíte, čo ich charakterizuje tak spoločne?

**Interviewer:** *Nemusí ísť priamo o produkty, skôr ma zaujíma, vďaka čomu sa cítia, že sú súčasťou obchodného tímu vašej spoločnosti.*

**Interviewee:** (Laughter) Chcem veriť, že to, čo poviem je pravda, a teda, že sú stotožnení so stratégiou, ktorá je nastavená a definovaná. Vieme, čo chceme robiť a ako to chceme robiť, a najdôležitejšie je prečo to chceme robiť. Stratégiu máme do roku 2023. To je najhlavnejšie.

**Interviewer:** *Ako je to s nastavením hodnôt?*

**Interviewee:** Hmm. Nastavenie hodnôt. V tomto sme v hĺbke s firemnou kultúrou a našimi 4 hlavnými hodnotami. Odvaha, tím, záväzok, a ešte jedna. (Laughter) A to je to dôležité, že tie 4 hodnoty vyznávajú. My to potom máme ešte rozdrobené na viacero vecí, a potom ešte máme priority. Na dopovedanie, tie priority a základný kameň sú ľudia. Čiže tí ľudia ako naši zamestnanci, jednak noví a ich nábor a potom rozvoj ľudí. A to neznamená, že len kariérny postup smerom hore, ale kariérny postup môže byť aj horizontálny, čiže presun z rôznych oddelení, čo sa u nás často deje. Celý ten dom priorít zastrešujú VIP zákazníci. Toto je taký ten náš hlavný cieľ. Samozrejme, ultimátny cieľ je profit celej firmy, ale to ako sa k tomu profitu dopracujeme to je práve to, že sa venujeme s našimi ľuďmi tým VIP zákazníkom.

**Interviewer:** *Keď spomínate hlavný cieľ spoločnosti, ktorým je profit, ako prebieha nastavenie cieľov pre marketingové a obchodné oddelenie? Sú nejako previazané?*

**Interviewee:** Toto je veľmi dobrá otázka. Toto je veľmi dobrá otázka. Sú previazané, ale dovysvetlím. Samozrejme, každý tím a väčšinou je to aj po jednotlivcoch, má svoje individuálne ciele, ktoré musí dosahovať. Ale áno, tieto naše ciele sú previazané a to znamená, že marketingoví kolegovia majú častokrát vo svojich cieľoch company target. Častokrát,

nehovorím, že je to vždy takto, sú tam aj individuálne ciele, kde to nie je. A to je práve tá odpoveď na tú vašu otázku.

**Interviewer:** *Super. Teraz by ma zaujímala spomínaná téma náboru a rozvoja zamestnancov. Vzdelávate marketérov a obchodníkov spolu alebo oddelene?*

**Interviewee:** Zvyklo to ísť spolu, teraz už máme novú generáciu tréningov a ide to oddelene. Ale dlhodobo historicky fungujeme tak, že aj ja keď som začínal vo firme na obchodníckej pozícii a postupne som sa prepracoval cez rôzne pozície až na sales directora, a vlastne keď som začínal, resp. Sme začínali spolu, sú to prvé 3 mesiace vo firme kedy každý jeden člen prejde základným školením. To pozostáva, resp. je základné produktové školenie prvé kolo, druhé kolo, potom školenie predajných zručností, potom boli rôzne nadstavbové tréningy a tak ďalej a tam sme vlastne sa stretávali väčšinou všetci spolu. To znamená, že tí salesáci a napríklad aj produkt manažéri, field inžinieri, technickí poradcovia, bolo nás viac a to základné produktové školenie sme začínali všetci spolu a bolo to ako úplne bez nejakej výnimky. Samozrejme, potom každý sa tam už uberá svojím smerom, ale je veľmi dobré, že všetky tie oddelenia majú aspoň tie základné vedomosti o tom, čo sú tie naše produkty a aplikácie, ktorým sa venujeme, softvérové riešenia, ktoré my už v dnešnej dobe vyvíjame. Ten základ majú všetci rovnaký. A keď som už spomínal tie train days, po starom sa to volalo marketingová vlna, niekedy naozaj práve tí produkt manažéri, hlavná časť strategického marketingu nám robila tréningy. To znamená, nás trénovala, to boli jedno až dvojdné stretnutia na celoslovenskej úrovni, kde nás zaúčali do novinek a produktov a opakovali sa staré. Dnes už tá generácia tréningov je nová a iná, produkt manažéri sú skôr tieňoví v pozadí a ťahúni sú regionálni riaditelia, ktorí trénujú členov svojho tímu. Títo regionálni riaditelia sú priamo napojení na produkt manažment a pripravujú spoločne všetky tieto train days pre novinky a opakovačky. Sú vytvorené rôzne tímy na prípravu týchto dní.

**Interviewer:** *Podľa vás, boli tie spoločné tréningy prospešné vzhľadom na aktuálnu spoluprácu obchodu a marketingu?*

**Interviewee:** Určite. Jednak sme sa poznali úplne od začiatku, tie väzby sa tam vytvorili, a potom to čo sa vraciame, či ide komunikácia a konflikty o to je to ľahšie. Potom, keď zdvihnem telefón alebo píšem mail viem kto to je a čo má na starosti, čo s ním viem vyriešiť. Bolo to dobré, ale teraz sme sa posunuli vyššie, kedy ownership tréningu preberá tím leader. Know-how odovzdáva a podporuje marketing. Vzdelávajú sa aj v tom ako podávať feedback a nielen prijímali to, čo už bolo vyprodukované, ale prispievali aj oni svojimi postrehmi. Sú tam na to, aby feedback z trhu prišiel z trhu, keďže sa tie trhy líšia - iné je Slovensko, iná Austrália. V týchto tímoch to veľmi dobre funguje, keďže sme subsegmentovaní. Napríklad konkrétne z elektra keď vidia návratnosť potrieb, ktorých príde viac, hneď to ide produktárom a tí to posúvajú ďalej na global a dokážeme rýchlo reagovať. Prípadne sa pozrieť inam, kde to už majú.

**Interviewer:** *Bolo toto jedna z primárnych motivácií rozdelenia vzdelávacieho procesu?*

**Interviewee:** Primárna motivácia bola tá, že sme subsegmentovali trh, to znamená, že z pôvodných teritórií obchodníkov, kde mal každý na starosti všetky typy firiem (napr. Stavebné firmy, ale i zákazníkov energetiky a aj priemysel železa a podobne) Toto sme rozsegmentovali a máme odborníkov na jednotlivé priemysle a drobíme to. Touto cestou sa uberáme aj v marketingu a v samotných tréningoch.

**Interviewer:** *Dochádza k podobnej segmentácii aj v marketingu?*

**Interviewee:** Marketéri su segmentovaní podľa business units, čiže jednotlivých okruhov - kotvy, chemické kotvy, ťažké a kombinované stroje, akumulátory, fire stop a podobne, kde ale sme investovali v rámci subsegmentácie ako firma sú trade manažéri - čiže okrem produktových manažérov máme trade manažérov, predtým to zastrešoval jeden - aktuálne sú 2 - a pravdepodobne sa posunieme časom až na 3 trade manažérov.

**Interviewer:** *Čo ovplyvňuje podľa vás vnímanie toho, že kolegovia sú kompetentní?*

**Interviewee:** Hmm. No keď poviem obchodníkov tak kompetencia na začiatku sú to merateľné ciele - základné v rámci segmentu, absolvuje tréningy a robí samoštúdium a získava kompetenciu z pohľadu znalosti produktov a musí rozumieť a demonštrovať aplikácie, učiť zákazníkov a šíriť povedomie o produktoch. Ďalej kompetencie meriame znalosťami regiónu z pohľadu kto sú najväčší hráči - VIP zákazníci, aké stavby sa robia, chystajú, dokončujú, asi to je základ a plus potom spolupráca s kolegami v rámci obchodného oddelenia a iný viacerých oddelení. Vie čo má a kde má robiť, aby dosiahol svoje ciele.

U marketéra záleží na oblasti, v ktorej robí, či to je strategický marketing, produkt manažment alebo analytik - väčšinou - napríklad produkt manažment - nepamätám sa, že by kolega nastúpil priamo bez predchádzajúcej skúsenosti vo firme. Buď si prešiel pozíciou obchodníka alebo field inžiniera. 90% ľudí prešli aj obchodníckou pozíciou. Inak je ťažké podporovať obchodníka. Na ostatných marketingových pozíciách je to funkčná kompetencia - analytik musí vedieť technicky vykonávať svoj job. Kolegyňa analytička absolvovala nielen produktové školenie ale aj na field rides, na spolujazdy s obchodníkmi. Aby mala aktuálnu predstavu o trhu - robili sme to na pravidelnej báze. Kolegovia z marketingu si dohodnú spolujazdy v rôznych tradeoch a segmentoch, a zároveň aj v rôznych regiónoch. V rámci Slovenska sa to tiež líši a potreby sú iné v meste a menších regiónoch. Toto je tá kompetencia v kombinácii s funkčnou expertízou. Prehľad, prehľad a aktuálny prehľad a úzka spolupráca medzi marketingom a salesom.

**Interviewer:** *Myslíte si, že istý stupeň odlišností môže byť prospešný pre spoločnosť?*

**Interviewee:** Neviem si úplne predstaviť odlišnosť z akého pohľadu. Viete mi to vysvetliť bližšie?

**Interviewer:** *Napríklad z pohľadu orientácie - časovej či produktovej, zručností a vedomostí. Prepojenie jednotlivých cieľov.*

**Interviewee:** Samozrejme, keď sa bavíme o dlhodobých cieľoch - keď pôjdeme ďalej - business manažéri v Prahe a ich komunikácia a roadmap na globálnej úrovni sú plánované na dlhšiu dobu.

Z môjho pohľadu sa bavíme nejaký 1 rok dopredu - máme odkryté karty na cca ďalšie 2-3 až 5 rokov. Najdôležitejší je 1 rok dopredu. To je dôležité pre obchodných riaditeľov a marketing, softvérových riešení a podobne - to sa bavíme v horizonte 1 až 2 roky. Ak ideme z tohto pohľadu tie dlhodobé ciele sú niekde inde. Bežný dobrý obchodník sa dokáže plánovať na max kvartál dopredu, key account to vidí 6-12 mesiacov dopredu. Energetika a priemysel, tam je to 3-5 rokov. Takže tá diferenciácia tam je dôležitá a je, integrácia to som dostatočne opísal spoluprácu - musí byť blízka a úzka, inak by to nefungovalo. Nebudem hovoriť, čo je lepšie, či horšie alebo že 50:50.

**Interviewer:** *Podľa vás ako samotná spoločnosť dokáže podporiť vzťah medzi marketingom a obchodným tímom?*

**Interviewee:** Podľa toho, na ktorej úrovni.

**Interviewer:** *Z vašej pozície riaditeľov a manažérov.*

**Interviewee:** Má to čo do seba, keď vieme, čo sú koho ciele. Každý sa pozerá na to, čo mám robiť, čo je môj plán, čo je môj cieľ. A robím to možno aj s nejakým predsudkom, že viem, čo je cieľom môjho kolegu na marketingu, a nemusí to byť iba to, ale aj niečo iné, čo on potrebuje dosiahnuť. Čiže, zasa je to, čo môže urobiť, najdôležitejšia je komunikácia. A rozmeniť to na drobné medzi sebou. Toto sú moje dlhodobé, krátkodobé ciele, toto chcem od teba preto a preto. Napríklad marketing robí prieskum, príde mail a chalani tomu nevenujú pozornosť - načo mu to je, neviem prečo to chce vedieť. Ale najdôležitejšie je šírenie toho povedomia na báze komunikácie a výmeny informácií, zdieľania cieľov. Asi najviac čo mne pomáha sú práve product board meeting, kde sa stretávame na subregionálnej úrovni - do pol roka - toto je to čo chceme do roka a potom tam prichádza - dôjde k zdieľaniu skúseností z trhov a pomoc. Nie je to len na úrovni obchodníkov, ale aj na úrovni marketingu. Ak príde nejaký návrh na základe týchto informácií - je dôležité sa rozhodnúť, či teda ideme a vytvoriť tím - zodpovedných ľudí, ktorí to potiahnu tým smerom. Inak je to celé zbytočné. Čiže to šírenie povedomia, zdieľanie

informácii, ale - urobiť rozhodnutie, urobíme takto takto a nastaviť roadmaps a očakávania čo sa týka času a follow-up a medzivyhodnocovaní a ďalších next steps k cieľu.

**Interviewer:** *To znie ako veľmi hodnotný insight. Posledná otázka - je niečo, čo by ste radi so mnou zdieľali a je špecifické pre Vašu spoločnosť v rámci Marketingového a Obchodného oddelenia?*

**Interviewee:** Hm. Asi najviac z môjho pohľadu je to, keď človek ide do toho trhu. Samozrejme, všetky analytické nástroje, to pomáha obchodníkom, lenže realita v regiónoch môže byť iná. Preto je dobré sa na to pozrieť a nič vám nedá viac ako priama skúsenosť s tým trhom. Analytik nemôže jazdiť 70 dní, ale musí urobiť prieskum a prehľad v teréne na stavbách, rozhovoroch s obchodníkmi. Toto je naša filozofia a viem, že veľmi dobre funguje. Ani ja by som nevedel svoj job robiť a vnímať, tak ako ho vnímam, keby som si na vlastnej koži nezažil, aké to je a na tých stavbách a obchodných rokovaníach a prezentáciách produktov. A to je jedno z akého pohľadu sa na to pozerám, logistika, it, marketing, tých oddelení je viacero a je veľmi málo kolegov, ktorí si to nezažili. Toto veľmi pomáha. Naplánovanie spolujazd a prejsť si to s obchodníkmi.

**Interviewer:** *A ako to vnímajú obchodníci?*

**Interviewee:** No, dnes už je to kultúra a je to bežné. Ja som to ako nováčik vnímal tak, že som sa spýtal staršieho kolegu, že má prísť ten a ten z Prahy a on mi poradil, že priprav si deň a stretnutia tak, aby to malo pre teba obchodne význam. No zisti si, čo má aj ten človek na starosti, čo sú jeho silné stránky a využij ten deň, aby si využil jeho znalosti a veľmi ti to pomôže. Hrozne dobre to vyšlo. Potom som stále takto fungoval a radil aj ďalším kolegom. Marketér sa zaujímal a zapájal na stretnutiach, ona mi pomohla technicky, bola technička, poznala produkty a detaily a išli sme na stavbu, kde vedela pomôcť s majiteľmi. Bolo to prínosné pre obe strany. Jej to dalo prehľad z trhu, ktorý potrebovala a mne to pomohlo na obchodných jednaniach a technických stretnutiach. Obchodníci to vnímajú pozitívne, nie je to len sales ale aj iné oddelenia, credit collection, financie. Minulý rok členovia executive board šli na field ride s VIP klientom. A malo to veľký prínos pre všetky strany. Dohodol sa ďalší business a prehĺbili sa vzťahy.

**Interviewer:** To znie naozaj veľmi zaujímavo. Vypršal nám už čas, tak by som Vám ešte raz veľmi rada poďakovala za Váš čas a ochotu sa stretnúť aj v tomto krízovom čase.

***Appendix 3: The interview with the Sales Director translated to English***

***Interviewer: Researcher***

***Interviewee: Sales Director***

***Interview Setting: Interview conducted online at 10:00 AM on Monday 6th April 2020.***

**Interviewer:** *Hi, thank you for your time and willingness to provide an interview. Firstly, I would like to introduce myself, I am a student at the International Marketing program at Aalborg University, Denmark. In my Master Thesis, I analyze the social worlds and functioning of the marketing and sales department in companies. Do you have any questions?*

**Interviewee:** Hello, No, I am fine.

**Interviewer:** *Do you agree that the interview will be recorded for data analysis? The recording will then be deleted and the interview will remain anonymous.*

**Interviewee:** All right.

**Interviewer:** *I would also like to note that there is no right or wrong answer to questions asked as I am interested in your personal perspectives. Can we begin?*

**Interviewee:** Sure.

**Interviewer:** *I would like to start with a very general question, how do you personally perceive the functioning of Marketing and Sales in your company?*



**Interviewee:** (Laughter) In general, very positively, but let me explain. We work as a “Marketing organization of the future”, which is very important. This means that several departments, and also Marketing, are at least partly shared with another business unit of our company, in our case it is Prague. This is very unique, of course, a colleague who is the marketing director in Slovakia has his own department and has his own colleagues who work in Slovakia. But also, we are very effective in sharing. For example, we share product managers. For each business unit, we have a product manager at the headquarters in Prague and cooperation is established in 6 countries. It is very unique and very effective in this respect.

**Interviewer:** *That sounds really interesting, how do you share the information?*

**Interviewee:** There are many various information sharing systems. As the tools evolve, so do we. We used to work on a specific sales portal where a large section was devoted to marketing. Today we are going through Sharepoint and various social networks. We have a long history of working with online systems. We have a website, the second generation. This is the most important source of information not only for customers but also for employees. It works for employees and also customers, and everyone has access to it through the demo account. So employees can try and work with our software by themselves as customers.

**Interviewer:** *How would you rate the integration of the marketing and sales department on a scale of 1 to 10?*

**Interviewee:** (Uhm .. Uhm, thinking) About 9. There is definitely room for improvement. And now, why I didn't say 10 is that we are closely linked, but of course, there is still room for improvement. Specifically, it could be even better to share information on both sides. From sales, the more feedback info that comes from that market, which customers would welcome, which kind of tools or where they see room for improvement, on the other hand, marketing colleagues could be faster in passing on what is going on and when. The roadmap of sharing the news is given and we review news twice a year at my managerial level. The question is then how

quickly and when the information escalates to lower levels. We have a process for this, Train days, where we train those field managers who are preparing their sales team members. So we have the process, the question now is just sharing, and perhaps the higher frequency of information sharing.

**Interviewer:** *When this new information is shared, what are the reactions usually? Do conflicts arise?*

**Interviewee:** Depending on what you mean by conflicts.

**Interviewer:** *It doesn't have to be open fights, but rather a feeling of misinformation or doubts about the quality.*

**Interviewee:** Yes, I see. But a conflict is good when it is constructive. That's why I asked you what kind of conflict you meant. There it is then important whether what appeals to the sales is an individual demand from the market, what marketing needs, or whether those individual sales requirements meet at some point. And this is where we have room for improvement. Because someone from Sales can say that it is not worth sharing, nobody will mind it, but maybe there are more such requests and we could have had it in the market long ago. It's very general, but the point is to give feedback and be ready to argue. From marketing, each colleague must do research if what sales say is accurate. We cannot afford to tailor solutions for a very narrow range, although we are sub-segmented, for closely profiled colleagues, the scope is then wide.

**Interviewer:** *Got it. I would now like to ask about your sales team, how you would characterize them, what is your team's identity?*

**Interviewee:** (Thinking.) I have 5 teams and each is focused on a different segment. You mean, what characterizes them together?

**Interviewer:** *I am more interested in what makes them feel a part of your company's sales team.*

**Interviewee:** (Laughter) I want to believe that what I say is true and that they are identified with a strategy that is set and defined. We know what we want to do and how we want to do it, and most importantly, why we want to do it. We have a strategy until 2023. This is the most important.

**Interviewer:** *How about setting values?*

**Interviewee:** Hmm. Setting values. Regarding this, we are deeply determined by the corporate culture and our 4 core values. Courage, team, commitment, and just one more. (Laughter) And it's important that the 4 values are applied. We then have it divided into several things, and then we have priorities. To tell you, the top priority is people. Meaning people like our employees, both new and their recruitment and development of people. And this does not mean only career advancement on vertical, but also on horizontal level, i.e. transfer from different departments, which often happens in our company. The whole priority house is covered by VIP customers. This is our main goal. Of course, the ultimate goal is the profit of the entire company, but the way we get to the profit is just that we work with our people to VIP customers.

**Interviewer:** *When you mention the main goal of a company, which is profit, how is setting goals for the marketing and sales department? Are they somehow linked?*

**Interviewee:** This is a very good question. This is a very good question. They are tied, but I will explain. Of course, each team, and mostly by the individual, has its own individual goals to achieve. But yes, these goals are related and this means that marketing colleagues often have a company target in their goals. Usually, I do not say it is always like this, there are individual goals too. And that's exactly the answer to your question.

**Interviewer:** *Great. I would now be interested in the topic of recruiting and developing employees. Do you educate marketers and salespeople together or separately?*

**Interviewee:** It used to go together, now we have a new generation of workshops and it goes separately. But in the long term, we have been working in such a way that even when I started in the company in a sales position and gradually worked through various positions to sales director. We started all newcomers together, it's the first 3 months in a company when every single member goes through basic training. This consists of the basic product training first round, second round, then sales skills training, then there were various post-workshops and so on and there we actually met mostly all together. This means that the salespeople and, for example, the product managers, field engineers, technical advisors, and some more of us, we started the basic product training together and it was without any exception. Of course, then everyone is already heading in their direction, but it is very good that all these departments have at least the basic knowledge of what our products and applications are, the software solutions we are developing. Everyone has the same foundation. And when I mentioned those train days, after the old one it was called the marketing wave, sometimes the product managers, sometimes the main part of strategic marketing did the training. That is, they trained us, it was one or two days meetings at the national level, where we were introduced to news and products and repeated old. Today, the new generation of training is different, product managers are rather shadowy in the background, and drivers are regional directors who train their team members. These regional directors are directly linked to product management and are preparing all these train days together. Different teams are set up to prepare these days.

**Interviewer:** *In your opinion, were these joint training beneficial given the current business and marketing cooperation?*

**Interviewee:** Sure. First, we knew each other from the beginning, the relationships were formed there, and then what we got back to everyday life, then the communication and conflict resolution is easier. Then when I pick up the phone or write mail I know who it is on the other

side and what he or she is in charge of, what I can do with it. It was good, but now we have moved up when the leader takes ownership of the training. Know-how transfers and is supported by marketing. Salespeople also learn how to give feedback and not only receive what has already been produced but also contribute, with their observations. They are there for market feedback to come from the market as these markets are different - Slovakia is different, Australia is different. It works very well in these teams, as we are sub-segmented. For example, specifically from the electricians, when they see the return on needs that come more, it goes right to the product managers and they push it further to a global level and we can respond quickly. Or look elsewhere (country) where they already have it.

**Interviewer:** *Was this system one of the primary motivations for dividing the education process?*

**Interviewee:** The primary motivation was that we sub-segmented the market, that is, from the original territories of traders, where everyone was in charge of all types of companies (eg construction companies, but also energy customers and the iron industry, etc.) we have industry experts and we're breaking it down. This is also the way we go into marketing and training.

**Interviewer:** *Is there a similar segmentation in marketing?*

**Interviewee:** Marketers are segmented according to business units, ie individual segments, chemical segment, heavy and combined machines, accumulators, fire stop and so on, but where we invested in sub-segmentation as a company - are trade managers - so we have trade managers in addition to product managers. This was previously covered by one - currently, there are 2 - and we are likely to move up to 3 trade managers over time.

**Interviewer:** *In your opinion, what influences the perception that colleagues are competent?*

**Interviewee:** Hmm. Regarding salespeople, competencies at the beginning are fulfillments of measurable goals - core within a segment, undergo training and self-study, and acquire

competence in terms of product knowledge and must understand and demonstrate applications, teach customers and promote product awareness. We also measure competencies by knowing the region from the point of view of who are the biggest players - VIP customers, what constructions are being made, under constructions, finalizing constructions, perhaps this is the basis and plus cooperation with colleagues within the sales department and other departments. He knows what to do and where to do to achieve his goals. Regarding a marketer it depends on the area in which he or she works, whether it is strategic marketing, product management or analyst - mostly - for example, product management - I do not remember that a colleague would enter directly without previous experience in the company. Either you have worked in the position of a salesperson or a field engineer. 90% of people have experienced being a salesperson. Otherwise, it is difficult to support the sales department. In other marketing positions, it is a functional competence - the analyst must be able to technically perform his job. Fellow analysts received product training as well as field rides with salesmen. To have an up-to-date idea of the market - we did it on a regular basis. Marketing colleagues agree on co-rides in different stores and segments, as well as in different regions. Within Slovakia, this also varies and needs are different in the city and smaller regions. This is the competence combined with functional expertise. Up-to-date overview and close cooperation between marketing and sales.

**Interviewer:** *Do you think that a certain degree of difference can be beneficial for the company?*

**Interviewee:** I can't imagine the difference from what point of view. Can you explain it to me?

**Interviewer:** *For example, in terms of orientation - time or product, skills, and knowledge.*

**Interviewee:** Of course, when we talk about the long-term goals - if I go further - business managers in Prague and their communication and roadmap on a global level are planned for a long time. From my point of view, we are talking from one year in advance - we have exposed cards for about another 2-3 to 5 years. The most important is 1 year in advance. This is important for business directors and marketing, software solutions and the like - we talk about it in 1-2

years. If we go from this perspective, the long-term goals are somewhere else. A regular good trader can plan for a max quarter in advance, the key account sees it 6-12 months in advance. Energy and industry, it's been 3-5 years. So the differentiation there is important and it is, integration I have described the cooperation sufficiently - it must be close and narrow, otherwise, it would not work. I won't say which is better, what is worse or that 50:50.

**Interviewer:** *In your opinion, how can the company itself support the relationship between marketing and the sales team?*

**Interviewee:** Depending on which level.

**Interviewer:** *From your position as directors and managers.*

**Interviewee:** It has a lot to do if we know what the goals are. Everyone sees what he is supposed to do, what is my plan, what is my goal. And maybe I do this with some assumption that I know what my colleague's marketing goal is, and it may not be just that, but also something else he needs to achieve. So, again, what he can do, communication is the most important thing. And into tiny details. These are my long-term, short-term goals, and this is what I want from you because and why. For example, when marketing is doing research, the mail comes in and guys in sales don't pay attention to it - why it is, I don't know why he wants to know. But the most important thing is spreading that awareness through communication and information exchange, sharing goals. Perhaps what helps me most is the product board meeting, where we meet at sub-regional level - within half a year - this is what we want in a year and then comes there - there will be sharing of market experiences and help. It is not only at the sales level but also at the marketing level. If there is any suggestion on the basis of this information - it is important to decide whether we are going there and to create a team - of responsible people who will pull it in that direction. Otherwise, it's all useless. That is to spread awareness, share information, but - to make a decision, we do it this way and set roadmaps and expectations in terms of time and follow-up and intermediate evaluation and other next steps to the goal.

**Interviewer:** *Sounds like a very valuable insight. The last question - is there something you would like to share with me and is specific to your company within the Marketing and Sales department?*

**Interviewee:** Hm. Probably the most from my point of view is when you go to that market. Of course, all the analytical tools help, but the reality in the regions may be different. Therefore, it is good to look at it and nothing will give you more than direct experience with the market. The analyst cannot drive for 70 days but has to do field research and survey on construction sites, interviews with salespeople. This is our philosophy and I know it works very well. I would not be able to do and perceive my job the way I perceive it if I hadn't experienced it for myself, what it was like and at the construction and business meetings and product presentations. And that's one way I look at it, logistics, it, marketing, there are several departments, and there are very few colleagues who haven't experienced it. This helps a lot. Schedule rides and go through it with salespeople.

**Interviewer:** *And how do salespeople perceive it?*

**Interviewee:** Well, today it's culture and it's normal. I perceived it as a newcomer by asking my older colleague, that somebody is coming from Prague to share rides with me, and he advised me to prepare the day and meetings so that it would be useful to me. Firstly, find out what the person is in charge of, what are his strengths and use that day to take advantage of his knowledge and it will help very much. It worked very well. Then I still did it like this and also advised this to other colleagues. The marketer was involved in meetings, she helped me technically, she was a technician, she knew the products and details and we went to the building where she could help with the owners. It was beneficial for both sides. It gave her an overview of the market she needed and it helped me at business meetings and technical meetings. Sales perceive it positively, it is not only sales but also other departments, credit collection, finance. Last year,



executive board members went on a field ride with a VIP client. And it was of great benefit to all parties. Another business was agreed and relations deepened.

**Interviewer:** *That sounds really interesting. We are out of time, so I would like to thank you once again for your time and willingness to meet even in this time of crisis.*

#### ***Appendix 4: The interview with the Marketing Director in Slovak***

***Interviewer: Researcher***

***Interviewee: Marketing Director***

***Interview Setting: Interview conducted online at 09:00 AM on Tuesday 7th April 2020.***

**Interviewer:** *Dobrý deň, ďakujem za Váš čas a ochotu poskytnúť interview. Rada by som sa na úvod predstavila, som študentkou na dánskej Aalborg University, odbor International Marketing. V mojej Master Thesis rozoberám vzťahy a fungovanie marketingového a obchodného oddelenia v spoločnostiach. Máte nejaké otázky?*

**Interviewee:** Dobré ráno, nie, rozumiem.

**Interviewer:** *Súhlasíte s tým, aby bolo interview nahrávané za účelom analýzy dát? Nahrávka bude následne zmazaná a interview zostane anonymné.*

**Interviewee:** Bez problémov.

**Interviewer:** *Ešte by som rada poznamenala, že neexistuje správna alebo nesprávna odpoveď na jednotlivé otázky a zaujíma ma Váš osobný pohľad a perspektíva na jednotlivé otázky. Môžeme začať?*

**Interviewee:** Poďme na to.

**Interviewer:** Vedeli by ste mi, prosím, priblížiť Vašu históriu v spoločnosti?

**Interviewee:** Začínal som v roku 2006 ako obchodník, po dlhšej pauze, keď už som mal rodinu. Rozhodol som sa, že sa idem zamestnať, našiel som inzerát a vybrali ma. Nastúpil som do Bratislavy ako obchodník, mal som isté predstavy na základe predchádzajúcich skúseností a nakoniec som zistil, že to je úplne iné, pretože ten direct sales je o tom akým spôsobom si vy dokážete vytvoriť vzťah s tým zákazníkom a akým spôsobom dokážete identifikovať potreby. Preto je extrémne dôležité sa sústrediť na vzdelávanie, a to je jedno v akej fáze. Na začiatku sú to úplne iné typy informácií, ktoré vyhľadávate ako neskôr. Dnes som tu 14 rokov a každý deň sa musím vzdelávať, inak by som to nezvládol, čo je super, lebo to vás posúva ďalej. Takže ja som tú obchodnícku pozíciu našiel ako zaujímavú, ale po pol roku prišiel šéf a prešiel som na pozíciu Key accounta v inej brandži. Vtedy som zistil, že vlastne nič neviem (Laughter). Pretože to sú veci, pri ktorých už musíte veľmi rozmýšľať ako technicky navrhnuť a čo použiť. Boli to dokonca najväčšie stavby a najväčší zákazníci, špecifické situácie na viacerých úrovniach. Po roku ďalšom sme sa ako firma začali uberať smerom subsegmentácie - špecializácie na rôzne brandže a pridávalo sa viacero regionálnych obchodných riaditeľov a ja som bol vybraný ako jeden z nich pre hlavné mesto. Začal som budovať tím od Bratislavy až po Banskú Bystricu, aby kolega, ktorý prichádzal ako druhý, aby sme to mohli rozdeliť na dve časti. Začínal som s 10 ľuďmi, končil som asi s 21 a už som sa po tých výberových konaniach cítil ako personálna agentúra. Bola to zaujímavá skúsenosť, našťastie, krátka a vybudovali sme dva tímy a začali sme robiť - 3 roky sme prežili veľmi silnú expanziu alebo nárast. Potom prišiel rok 2009, takže sme mali silný a rýchly pokles. Takže sme budovali od začiatku a od roku 2010 som sa stal Key Account pre kľúčových zákazníkov na Slovensku. Tu som zas pôsobil len rok alebo dva a odvtedy som Marketingový riaditeľ na Slovensku, čiže dovtedy som si prešiel rôznymi pozíciami v obchode a druhú polovicu som v Marketingu. A čo si myslím, že je veľmi zásadné je to, že my sme v podstate obchodná firma, ale do veľkej miery riadená Marketingom, keďže ten určuje tú stratégiu a smer. Obchodný tím by mal implementovať tú stratégiu, ktorú ten Marketingový tím vymýšľa. Dnes sa to trochu mení, ten Marketing sa so Salesom začína viac spájať v hľadaní

riešení od A po Z, aby sme neboli iba dodávateľia vítačky, ale aby sme boli partnerom pre toho nášho zákazníka a ponúkame komplexné riešenia. Čo je v tejto firme super, že za 14 rokov som si prešiel viacerými pozíciami, mohol som si vyskúšať viacero pozícií a prácu s rôznymi typmi ľudí, na rôznych projektoch - interných, externých, čiže je tu neustála možnosť vzdelávať sa, ak človek chce a je to na ňom ako to využije.

**Interviewer:** *Aké boli rozdiely, na Marketingovej a Sales pozíciách?*

**Interviewee:** Ešte, keď som bol na začiatku svojej kariéry team leadera, tak generálny riaditeľ Česko-Slovenska hovoril, že obchodník sa častokrát pozerá iba na úroveň svojho mesačného plánu, lepší obchodníci sa dokážu pozrieť na svoj kvartálny plán alebo trimestrálny plán, ale väčšina z nich žije zo dňa na deň, pretože hľadajú to číslo, ktoré majú v tabuľke naplniť a chcú dosiahnuť tie svoje výsledky. Team leader sa musí pozerieť minimálne rok dopredu, ako chce svoj tím formovať a kam by sa chcel dostať za ten rok, a ten generálny riaditeľ, resp. Sales director by sa mal vedieť pozerieť aspoň na horizont 2-3 rokov dopredu, kde je ten jeho cieľ. To neznamena, že si naplánujete aktivity na 3 roky dopredu, ale minimálne by ste mali vidieť pomyselnú cieľovú pásku a teraz je to iba na vás, akým spôsobom si zvolíte tú cestu. Ten rozdiel je v tom, že sales má na hlave tú ľarchu toho čísla a častokrát rozmýšľa v kontexte, že najprv musím splniť ten krátkodobý cieľ, a potom sa môžem pozrieť na strednodobé a nastaviť veci takto. Ako marketér sa pozerám na to, že dnes som tu a keby som sa pozeral iba na to, že máme koronavírus a čo budem robiť zajtra, samozrejme, to je krízový manažment a musíte sa rozhodnúť, rýchlo aplikovať, byť pripravený ho rýchlo zmeniť, keď to funguje, nefunguje, ale ja minimálne sa pozerám na to, čo bude potom. Čiže chcel by som vedieť, či ten krok, ktorý robím dnes mi ovplyvňuje to, čo bude zajtra. Počas krízy v 2008 som sa naučil rozmýšľať v tom kontexte a nerobiť zbrklé rozhodnutia, ktoré majú negatívny vplyv v dlhodobom horizonte. Čiže či zatvorím alebo otvorím región si treba veľmi dobre spočítať. Jeden kolega, ktorý bol veľmi šikovný mi povedal, že každý normálny marketér, ak má prostriedky, investuje v čase krízy a dá sa získať potom viac. Čiže, ak máte možnosť tú investíciu urobiť, to je jedno v akej forme - my teraz investujeme napríklad do vzdelávania ľudí, snažíme sa pozrieť na to, čo môžeme

zefektívniť. To neznamena, že ľudí neprepúšťame, už sme pár prepustili, ak v tom vidíme zmysel a potom to vieme relatívne rýchlo nahradiť. Ale ako marketér sa pozerám na veci z dlhodobejšieho horizontu a viem sa pozrieť na to z nadhľadu ako v tom salese som, možno som nebol dostatočne vyzretý. Ale keď chcete robiť pozíciu v manažmente, je to jediná cesta ako sa to dá zvládnuť, nemôžete ísť do detailu v každej jednotlivnej oblasti, lebo by ste sa zahrabali v exekutive.

**Interviewer:** *Ako funguje nastavovanie cieľov marketingového a obchodného oddelenia? Sú prepojené navzájom?*

**Interviewee:** My máme top-down, ciele sú na úrovni manažmentu, ktoré sa rozdeľujú do jednotlivých oddelení, ale nakonci ten súčet je jeden veľký. Čiže nastavujeme ich tak, aby sme ten veľký cieľ bol podložený a nastavujeme to spoločne - aj sales, aj marketing.

**Interviewer:** *Ako to následne komunikujete kolegom?*

**Interviewee:** Každý jeden cieľ/región nastavujeme individuálne a pripravujeme štruktúru podkladov, aby si ten obchodník vedel pozrieť vývoj v tom svojom regióne a porozumieť. Je to aj na team leaderovi viesť to vysvetliť, že ten región bol včera jeden a dneska sú dva, investovali sme jeden zdroj, ten zdroj má nejaký čas na to, aby sa vrátila tá investícia, na druhej strane sme ho neinvestovali len, aby sme získali viacero profitu, ale aj kvôli tomu, aby sme dokázali lepšie pokryť trh a získať viac zákazníkov a partnerov.

**Interviewer:** *Táto odpoveď ma privádza k myšlienke dôvery. Ako budujete u svojich ľudí v tíme dôveru?*

**Interviewee:** Využívam viacero vecí. Prvá je, čo najväčšie množstvo transparentnosti, čiže ak môžem komunikujem, čo najviac. Ak tá informácia je teda komunikovateľná. Komunikujem často a čo najtransparentnejšie. Pravidelne mám 1 on 1 session s kolegami, bavíme sa o

veciach, čo sme urobili, čo treba urobiť, ako to urobiť lepšie, nastavíme smerovanie. Aké sú očakávania. Čo si myslím, že je zásadné, resp. som toho názoru, že ľudia, ktorí pracujú v mojom tíme majú občiansky preukaz a sú to dospelí ľudia, ktorí by mali mať nejaký svoj názor a vyberám si a pracujem s ľuďmi, ktorí majú vyššie vzdelanie. Keď im dám úlohu, bavíme sa o tom, čo je našim cieľom, ale to už ako sa k tomu cieľu dostaneme, to už by som bol rád, aby si to prevzal člen tímu. Čiže, ja si tú dôveru budujem tým, že sa snažím ľudí nabádať k tomu, aby prišli s riešením a ja sa ešte možno aj niekedy niečo naučím. Tí ľudia, s ktorými robím, sú inžinieri, majú vysoké školy stavebné, niektoré zo zahraničia, majú oveľa viac skúseností. Ja som ekonóm, oni stavbári čiže ich vediem k tomu, aby som im poradil, ako tú situáciu riešiť, ale nerozhodujem to za nich. Ja sa potom bavím s nimi o tom, či to vidím správne, tak ako oni, alebo ich smerujem, aby sa ešte zamysleli a pozreli na situáciu inak.

**Interviewer:** *Čo charakterizuje členov vášho tímu?*

**Interviewee:** Budem sa teraz pozerat' na priamych podriadených. Je to určite samostatnosť, v prípade tých úspešných. V podstate sú schopní pracovať bez toho, aby som im každý deň diktoval, čo majú robiť. Ďalšia vec je schopnosť rozhodnúť sa, pýtajú sa na rozhodnutie, či je to správne, ale dokážu sa rozhodnúť bez toho, aby som im povedal áno alebo nie. Čo si na tých ľuďoch vážim najviac je, že väčšina z nich je prirodzene pracovitá? Vedia, čo je ich job description, čo sa od nich očakáva a nečakajú teraz, nie sú lazy winneri a schovaní za rohom, a keď príde nejaká sláva tak vykuknú, že veď aj ja som na tom pracoval. Makajú od rána do večera, rozumejú, čo chceme dosiahnuť a robia všetko preto, aby sme boli úspešní. A ešte taká ľudskosť, to je tiež veľmi dôležité, snažíme sa vyberať ľudí, ktorí sú ľudskí. Tá spoločnosť je špecifická v tom, že je to rodinná firma a všetko je podložené kultúrou. Jedna vec je na papieri, ktorú chceme žiť alebo žijeme a druhá sú to naozaj tí ľudia. Väčšina tým aj žije. Nájdú sa aj takí, ktorí tým nežijú, ale ten človek, ktorý sa nestotožní, tak zlyhá a časom sa vytlačí sám a povie, že toto nie je to čo som chcel alebo povie, že spoločnosť ho prirodzene vytlačí. Toto je veľmi zásadné - integrita, courage, tím a záväzok je to, čo chceme a aj reálne žijeme. Akonáhle to začne byť, že robím to len preto a preto, a som vyslovene zisťný a možno až zákerný, tak ten

system ho vyplaví. Ľudia sú tu podobného zmýšľania - slušnosť, zodpovednosť, ambicióznosť, dravosť na konci dňa. Veľa ľudí má aj ego, a je to prirodzená vlastnosť, u obchodníkov by som ešte povedal, že viac, ale spojil by som to ešte možno aj s egoizmom, že častokrát som mal v tíme ľudí, ktorí sa pozerali na to iba zo svojho pohľadu, čo ja z toho budem mať, čo ja budem robiť, čo mne to prinesie a až potom sa zamýšľali nad tým, prečo to my ideme robiť. A títo ľudia veľmi rýchlo skončili, pretože nedá sa všetko zmerať peniazmi a nejakým číslom. Je to proste potrebné urobiť a potom sa ten výsledok nejak dostaví. My to voláme, že treba robiť aktivity - keď robíte správne aktivity, na konci dňa ten výsledok príde. Niekomu to trvá rýchlejšie, niekomu pomalšie, ale treba byť vytrvalý.

**Interviewer:** *Ako vnímate samotné vzťahy marketingového a obchodného oddelenia u vás vo firme?*

**Interviewee:** Nás ako marketing, vzťahu sú super, lebo väčšina ľudí sme vzišli z toho obchodu a vieme sa pozerat' na veci očami obchodníka. Čiže nie je to len o tom, že takto je to správne a teória, ale všetci si prešli tou pozíciou. Marketing je navyše aj to technické podporné oddelenie inžinierov, ale to je iný typ marketingu-podpora. Vzťahy sú super. Keby som šiel do hĺbky, tak našou spoločnou výzvou je dostať sa bližšie k tomu salesu, čo sa týka pravidelných spoločných tour a pozrieť sa do toho trhu pravidelne. Pýtať sa tých ľudí, čo im funguje, čo nefunguje, čo im chýba a čo môžeme zlepšiť. Lebo keď im to napíšete, a keď sa ich to opýtate vo veľkých fórach určite to nikto nemá úplne top of mind, čo si myslí, že by sme potrebovali urobiť. Lepšiu spätnú väzbu a podnety z trhu.

**Interviewer:** *Ako momentálne zdieľate tieto informácie medzi marketingom a obchodom?*

**Interviewee:** Máme ich viacero. Od osobných aplikácii priamo na osobu, druhá vec je verejná a microsoft aplikácie na to, aby si shareovali informácie - a robia to. Napríklad máme úspešný deň inovácii, tak to tí chalani nafotia a urobia z toho video, zavesia to tam a napíšu, čo sa podarilo, čo

fungovalo a čo nefungovalo. Máme veľa možností, každá skupina má svoje chaty a nástroje na komunikáciu, takže je to tom, čo chce využívať.

**Interviewer:** *Rozumiem. Čo ovplyvňuje to, že považujete obchodníkov u vás vo firme za kompetentných?*

**Interviewee:** My ich rozdeľujeme do rôznych brandží, a teraz keby som išiel do tých technických zručností spojených s každodennou prácou, v každej brandži sme mali vybraných 5 top aplikácii, ktoré tvoria 80% biznisu, ktorý môžeme spolu s tým zákazníkom robiť. Čiže kompetencia je, že poznám tieto aplikácie, viem ich vysvetliť, aké sú rozdiely medzi tradičnou, našou a konkurenčnou metódou, potom viem a poznám nástroje, ktoré ponúkame a využívame - databázy, CRM a podobne. To ako obchodník musíte vedieť vysvetliť tomu zákazníkovi a zistiť či to používa. Úplne top kompetentný dokáže viesť rezort na úrovni manažmentu firiem.

**Interviewer:** *Posledná otázka. Je niečo, čo by ste radi so mnou zdieľali a je špecifické pre Vašu spoločnosť v rámci Marketingového a Obchodného oddelenia?*

**Interviewee:** Definovať si stratégiu a lepšie ju rozdrobiť, kto je za čo zodpovedný. Čiže najprv sa bavíme o tom, čo treba urobiť a ako to urobíme. Je to ťažké, keď ja vám poviem, že choďte do mesta, nafoťte mi 20 stavieb a pošlite mi ich. Aký význam v tom uvidíte, keď nevíete, prečo a ako to máte urobiť. Keby som vám povedal, že potrebujeme zmapovať v rámci starého mesta 20 najväčších stavieb na to, aby sme si vedeli definovať potenciál a potrebujeme informačnú tabuľu - urobiť fotku a zavolať s projektantom a zistiť informácie, je to úplne iné. Toto je to, čo ja vidím, že veľa ľudí om chýba, že im rozprávajú zamestnávateľia, že sprav obrat, alebo choď tam a spýtaj sa, či nepotrebujú rukavice. A potom sú prekvapení z toho, že nie sú úspešní. Ale možno, keby ste zavolali 20 firmám a zisti, ako pracujú, aké robia aplikácie a či rukavice potrebuje - potom ponúknuť riešenie. Treba identifikovať potrebu, to je najdôležitejšie.

**Interviewer:** To znie naozaj veľmi zaujímavo. Vypršal nám už čas, tak by som Vám ešte raz veľmi rada poďakovala za Váš čas a ochotu sa stretnúť aj v tomto krízovom čase.

***Appendix 5: The interview with the Marketing Director translated to English***

***Interviewer: Researcher***

***Interviewee: Marketing Director***

***Interview Setting: Interview conducted online at 09:00 AM on Tuesday 7th April 2020.***

**Interviewer:** *Hi, thank you for your time and willingness to provide an interview. Firstly, I would like to introduce myself, I am a student at the International Marketing program at Aalborg University, Denmark. In my Master Thesis I analyze the social worlds and functioning of the marketing and sales department in companies. Do you have any questions?*

**Interviewee:** Good morning, I am fine.

**Interviewer:** *Do you agree that the interview should be recorded for data analysis? The recording will then be deleted and the interview will remain anonymous.*

**Interviewee:** No problem.

**Interviewer:** *I would also like to note that there is no right or wrong answer to questions asked as I am interested in your personal perspectives. Can we begin?*



**Interviewee:** Let's do it.

**Interviewer:** *Could you please tell me something about your career path in the company?*

**Interviewee:** I started in 2006 as a sales representative, after a longer break, when I already had a family. I decided to find a job, found an opening on the internet and they hired me. I started in Bratislava as a sales rep. I had some expectations based on my previous experiences, but at the end, I found out that it was totally different here because the direct sales are about how you can build a relationship with that customer and how you can identify needs. Therefore, it is extremely important to focus on education, and it does not matter at what stage. In the beginning, you seek completely different types of information than later. I have been here for 14 years and I have to educate myself every day, otherwise I wouldn't be able to do it, which is great because it takes you further. So that's why I found the sales position interesting, but after six months the manager came and moved me to the position of Key Account in another team. At that time I found out that I didn't know anything (Laughter). Because the knowledge required is that you have to think very hard about how to technically design and what products to use. I was responsible for the largest constructions and the largest customers, experiencing very specific situations at multiple levels. A year later, as a company, we began to move towards sub-segmentation - specializing in various directions, and several regional sales managers were appointed and I was selected as one of them for the capital city. I started to build a team from Bratislava to Banská Bystrica, so that my colleague, who came second, has also a team. I started with 10 people, I ended up with about 21, and after those times I felt like a recruitment agency. It was an interesting experience, fortunately, short and we built up two teams and started working - 3 years of very strong expansion or growth. Then 2009 came, so we had a strong and fast decline. So we started from the beginning and since 2010 I became a Key Account for key customers in Slovakia. I have been working on the position for only a year or two and since then I have been Marketing Director in Slovakia, so until then I have passed various positions in sales and the other half I am in Marketing. And what I think is very crucial is that we are strongly sales-oriented, but largely driven by Marketing, as it determines the strategy and direction. The

sales team should implement the strategy that the marketing team is devising. Today it is changing a bit, Marketing is starting to become more connected with Sales in search of solutions from A to Z, so that we are not only a drill supplier, but to be a partner for our customer and offer comprehensive solutions. What is great about this company is that in 14 years I could try several positions and work with different types of people, on different projects - internally or externally, so there is a constant opportunity to educate if one wants and it's up to him how he uses it.

**Interviewer:** *What were the differences in Marketing and Sales positions?*

**Interviewee:** Even when I was a team leader at the beginning of my career, the CEO of Czecho-Slovakia said that a sales rep often looks only at the level of his monthly plan, better salespeople can look at their quarterly plan or trimester plan, but most of them live from day to day because they are aiming to meet number in the table and want to achieve their results. The team leader must look at least a year ahead of how he wants to form his team and where he would like to go in that year, and the CEO, respectively. Sales director should be able to look at least at the horizon 2-3 years ahead, where his goal is. This does not mean that you plan activities for 3 years in advance, but at least you should see an imaginary target and now it is up to you how you choose the path. The difference is that sales bear the burden of that number and often think in the context that I have to meet that short-term goal first, and then I can look at the medium-term and set things up like this. As a marketer, I look at the fact that I am here today and if I only looked at having a situation with coronavirus and what I will do tomorrow, of course, this is crisis management and you have to decide to act quickly, be ready to change decisions quickly when they don't work, but I minimally look at what happens afterward. So I would like to know if the move I take today affects what will happen tomorrow. During the 2008 crisis, I learned to think in the context and not to make hasty decisions that have a negative impact in the long term. So whether I close or open a region has to be calculated very well. One colleague who was very skilled at marketing told me that every normal marketer if he has the resources, invests in times of crisis and can get more then. So, if you have the opportunity to make that investment,

it doesn't matter in what form - we are now investing, for example, in educating people, trying to look at what we can make more effective. This does not mean that we are not letting people go, we have already released a couple of them if we see the point and then we can later replace the gaps relatively quickly. But as a marketer, I look at things in the longer run, on the opposite to when I was in Sales, maybe I wasn't mature enough. But if you want to do a position in management, it's the only way you can do it, you can't go into detail in every single area because you would be buried in the executive.

**Interviewer:** *How does marketing and sales goal setting work? Are they linked to each other?*

**Interviewee:** We have top-down goals which are at the management level, then break down into individual departments, but in the end the sum is one big goal. And we set it together - both sales and marketing.

**Interviewer:** *How do you then communicate with your colleagues?*

**Interviewee:** We set each goal / region individually and prepare the background structure so that the sales rep can see and understand the developments in their region. It is also up to the team leader to explain that the region was here yesterday and there are two new regions today, we invested one resource, the resource has some time to return the investment, on the other hand we did not just invest it to gain more profit, but also to better cover the market and attract more customers and partners.

**Interviewer:** *This answer brings me to the idea of trust. How do you build trust in your team?*

**Interviewee:** I use several things. The first is as much transparency as possible, that is, if I can I communicate as much as possible. Naturally, if the information is communicable. I communicate often and as transparently as possible. I regularly have a 1 on 1 session with colleagues, we talk about things we did, what we need to do, how to do better, we set the routines. What are the

expectations. What I think is essential, respectively. I am of the opinion that the people who work on my team have an identity card and are adult people who should have some opinion and I choose and work with people who have a higher education. When I give them a task, we talk about what our goal is, but as soon as we get to that goal, I'd like it to be taken over by a team member. So, I build that confidence by trying to encourage people to come up with a solution, and maybe I will learn something. Those people I work with are engineers, have high schools of construction, some from abroad, and have a lot more experience. I am an economist, they are engineers, so I lead them to advise them on how to deal with the situation, but I do not decide for them. I then talk to them about whether I see it right as they do, or I direct them to think again and look at the situation differently.

**Interviewer:** *What characterizes your team members?*

**Interviewee:** I will now look at my closest team. It is definitely autonomy. Basically, they are able to work without dictating to them every day what to do. The next thing is the ability to make decisions, they ask to decide if it's right, but they can make decisions without telling them yes or no. What I value most about these people is that most of them are naturally hardworking? They know what their job description is, what is expected of them and they are not expecting them now, they are not lazy winners and hidden around the corner, and when some fame comes up, they look like I worked on it. They work from all day, understand what we want to achieve, and do everything so we can become successful. And yet such humanity, it is also very important, we try to choose people who are human. The company is specific in that it is a family business and everything is based on culture. One thing is on the paper we want to live or live and the other is really the people. Most live by this. There will also be those who do not live by it, but the person who does not identify himself fails and over time he will print himself and say that this is not what I wanted or he will say that society will naturally push him. This is crucial - integrity, courage, team and commitment is what we want and live. As soon as it starts to be that I do it just because and why, and if somebody is expressly selfish and perhaps insidious, the system will push them out. There are people of similar minds - decency, responsibility, ambition, ferocity at

the end of the day. A lot of people also have an ego, and it's natural, I'd say even more to sales reps, but I would associate it even with egoism that many times I had people in the team who only looked at it from their perspective what I get out of it, what I'm going to do, what it brings to me, and then they wondered why we're going to do it. And these people ended up very quickly because everything can't be measured with money and some numbers. It just needs to be done and then the result somehow occurs. We call it that we need to do activities - if you do the right activities, the result will come at the end of the day. Some take it faster, some take slower, but you need to be persistent.

**Interviewer:** *How do you perceive the relationship between the marketing and sales departments in your company?*

**Interviewee:** We as marketing, relationships are great because most people came out from sales positions and we can look at things through the eyes of the salespeople. So it's not just that this is right and theory, but they all have gone through that position. Marketing is also a technical support department of engineers, but that's another type of marketing-support. Relationships are great. If I went deep, our common challenge is to get closer to the sales in terms of regular joint tours and to look into that market regularly. To ask those people who work, what doesn't work, what they miss and what we can improve. Because when you write them down, and when you ask them in big forums, no one really has the top of mind of what we think we need to do. Better feedback and market incentives.

**Interviewer:** *How do you currently share this information between marketing and sales?*

**Interviewee:** We have several systems. From personal applications, the second thing is public and microsoft applications to share information. For example, we have a successful day of innovations, so those guys shoot it and make a video of it, hang it there and write what went well, what worked and what didn't work. We have many options, each group has their own chats and communication tools, so that's what they want to use.

**Interviewer:** *Got it. What influences the fact that you consider the salespeople in your company competent?*

**Interviewee:** We divide them into different industries, and now if I go to the technical skills of everyday work, we've selected 5 top applications in each industry that make up 80% of the business we can do with that customer. So the competence is that I know these applications, I can explain them, what are the differences between traditional and our competitor, then I know and know the tools we offer and use - databases, CRM and so on. As a sales rep, you have to be able to explain to the customer and see if he uses it. The very top competent can manage the department at the level of regional management.

**Interviewer:** *Last question. Is there something you would like to share with me and is specific to your company within the Marketing and Sales department?*

**Interviewee:** Define strategy and better break down who is responsible for what. So first we talk about what needs to be done and how we do it. It's hard to tell you to go to town, shoot 20 buildings and send them to me. What importance you will see when you do not know why and how to do it. If I told you that we need to map the 20 largest buildings within the old town to be able to define potential and we need information - take a photo and call with the designer and find out the information, it's completely different. This is what I see that many people are missing, that employers are telling them to do a turnover, or go there and ask if they need gloves. And then they are surprised that they are not successful. But maybe if you tell him to call 20 companies and find out how they worked, what applications they were doing and whether gloves needed - then offer a solution. The need to be identified, this is the most important.

**Interviewer:** *That sounds really interesting. Time has passed, so I would like to thank you once again for your time and willingness to meet even during this crisis time.*

