# A Customer Satisfaction Analysis of Aukro Company

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Zpracujte teoretické poznatky o spokojenosti zákazníků na základě průzkumu literárních

Analyzujte spokojenost zákazníků se službami firmy pomocí dotazníkového šetření. Pomocí výsledků z provedené analýzy sestavte doporučení se zaměřením na zvýšení spokojenosti zákazníků.

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#### **ABSTRAKT**

V mé bakalářské práci se zaměřím na analýzu spokojenosti zákazníků společnosti Aukro, která patří k nejúspěšnějším firmám ve Zlíně. Tuto práce jsem rozdělila na dvě části: na teoretickou a praktickou část. V teorii se zaměřím na význam zákazníka a vliv jeho spokojenosti na prosperující podnikání. Popíšu také proces marketingového výzkumu, který tvořil důležitou část mé práce. Vytvořila jsem dotazník určený pro zákazníky společnosti Aukro, který zahrnoval otázky týkající se kvality poskytovaných služeb. Výsledky uvedu v praktické části a také přidám několik doporučení ke zvýšení spokojenosti zákazníků, které budou vycházet z dosažených dat.

#### Klíčová slova:

spokojenost zákazníka, moderní marketing, marketingový výzkum, konkurence, dotazník, SWOT analýza.

#### **ABSTRACT**

In my bachelor thesis I will focus on customer satisfaction of company Aukro which is one of the most successful companies in Zlín. I divided my thesis into two parts: theoretical and practical one. In theory I will describe an importance of the customers and influence of their satisfaction on a good business. I will also describe the process of marketing research which makes an essential part of my thesis. I set up a questionnaire dedicated to the customers of Aukro comprising questions about qualities of Aukro services. I will introduce all results in the practical part and also add some recommendation for the company.

#### Keywords:

customer satisfaction, modern marketing, marketing research, competition, questionnaire, SWOT analysis.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Imagine that the only thing you have is a red paperclip. The question is: what will you do to get the house you dream about? The answer is very simple and surprisingly costs almost nothing.

I heard a story of a young man who was in love with his girlfriend so they agreed to live together. They wanted to buy a house but they didn't had enough money to get one. The only thing that he had was one red paperclip. He was sad and desperate but he was smart and started to think... "Hey this is only a cheap red paperclip but someone may need it so much that he could give me something for exchange. It can be something useless for him but useful for me." He posted his advert on the Internet and in few days there was a response. Some girl wanted his paperclip so she offered him a pen in a shape of fish. He agreed, exchanged those things and kept on dealing. He got a generator, a ski trip, a track, one day with a famous rock star...and after 14 exchanges he finally got what he wanted the most, their new house.

We can say that he did a great deal, trade or even business. It's unbelievable but it's very simple. The whole idea is based on satisfying customers' needs. The good businessman needs to focus on customer's wishes and does everything possible to realize them because satisfied customer makes money and good reputation of the company. And that is the best advertisement.

In my bachelor thesis I will focus on customer satisfaction of company Aukro which is one of the most successful companies in Zlín. I divided my thesis into two parts: theoretical and practical one. In theory I will describe an importance of the customers and influence of their satisfaction on a good business. I will also describe the process of marketing research which makes an essential part of my thesis. I set up a questionnaire dedicated to the customers of Aukro comprising questions about qualities of Aukro services. I will introduce all results in the practical part and also add some recommendation for the company.

# I. THEORY

#### 1 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

One of the most important factors, which is essential in successful business, is customer satisfaction. Nowadays the competition of the companies is increasing so it's necessary to provide high-quality customer care, leading to his satisfaction. The mail goal is to keep his loyalty to the company he cooperated with. It's important to pay the same amount of time not just to get new customers but also to put an effort in keeping the current ones. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 132)

#### 1.1 Definition of the customer

First of all we need to realize who the customer is. It seems to be a very easy task but if we think it through we find out that the customer is primarily a dictator. The existence of the companies depends only on him so it's necessary that every employee will be familiar with this fact. (Spáčil 2003, 17)

During the purchase the customer plays the main role and the company should do its best for satisfying his needs. The company can be proud of their excellent skills or capacity nevertheless if it fails in getting a customer those qualities would be useless. The motto "Our customer is our master" is a time-tested rule in creating a competitive business. (Filipová 2006, 66-67)

- Customer is independent on a company a company relies on him.
- Customer is a part of a company.
- Customer perceives the behavior of a company.
- Customer has his own requests and imagination. It's important that a company fulfill them to double-faced satisfaction. (Foster 2002, 1)

Nowadays we can see two types of the companies according to the access to their customers and their importance. The first type are companies with a tradition structure, so at the top of an imaginary pyramid belongs a top management, below there is a middle management, next step down there are people in the front line who mediate public relation and customer, and at the very bottom there are customers. Nevertheless the managers of the successful marketing companies turn this structure up-side-down. Moreover the customers cover the whole pyramid even along the both sides in such a structure. It point is that managers on each level should have personal approach with every customer, meet them and try to satisfy their wishes. To push ahead the clients' interests is a strategy and

even competitive advantage of eBay auction company which is based on the modern marketing accesses to a customer. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 178-179)

#### a) Traditional structure of a company b) Modern customer-oriented structure

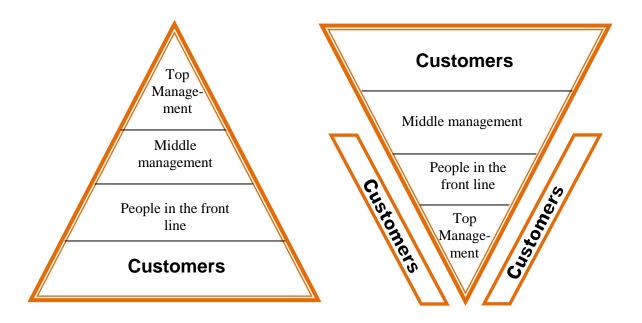


Figure 1. Traditional company organization in comparison to modern structure oriented to the customers. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 178)

Traditional marketing gives to the customer just one role of a passive recipient - a consumer. In contrast of modern marketing when a customer has more than one role:

- Consumer
- Source of cash flow
- Productive co-worker
- Marketing co-worker
- Controller
- Consultant
- Instructor (Lehtinen and Storbacka 2002, 71)

# 1.2 Customer fulfillment and expectations

Kozel: "Satisfaction can be defined as a subjective feeling of a person with fulfillment of his needs and wishes. They depend not just on the experience and expectations but also on personality and environment." (Kozel 2006, 190)

Kotler gives a similar definition in which he says that degree of customer satisfaction can be found in a relationship between a realization of supply and his expectation. Customer is not satisfied if his expectations are not met. In comparison with a satisfied customer whose service or product meet or fulfill his expectations. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 182-183)

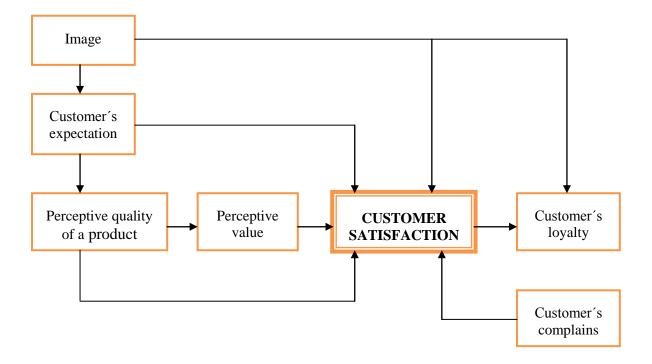


Figure 2. Model of customer satisfaction. (Kozel 2006, 191)

# 1.3 Principles of customer care

The principles of customer care are important during creating new standards and policy unlike the rules of customer care which are changing constantly. The practice has proved that costs spent on getting new customers are approximately 13times higher then costs spent on keeping the current ones. Therefore to secure customer satisfaction and loyalty and to take part in preservation of stable business contacts is much more strategically convenient then to afford finds new customers. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 133)

#### 1.4 Standards in customer care

Not to loose their customers, the companies have created customer care programmes which are based on certain standards. Nevertheless some firms underestimated their competition or their programmes don't work in a way how they expected and customers will notice that very quickly. They will find out that firms don't have such approach as the other ones. The

worst situation happens when such a company has a monopoly power in the market. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 133-135)

Among the important factors belong the observation and the evaluation of customer's attitudes. The companies can improve their programmes according to results leading from those factors. If customer's attitudes are not followed, the standards won't be fulfilled and deviations can appeared in the customer care programmes. The mistakes can be found in underestimated training of employees or in a weak leadership of management. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 133-135)

## 1.5 Importance of customer care

The companies often forget a fact that customers make them profit. Not their products which the companies are mainly focused on. Therefore the companies should change those priorities and try to focus on satisfying customers' needs. It's because only satisfied customers will cooperate with the firm and they will also create new demand. In nowadays business we can see that the companies, which are preferred by customers, have higher prices and faster rate of sale growth along with the higher market share. This indicates high level of qualities during satisfying customers' needs. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 132)

# 1.6 Customer psychology

If we look closer at dissatisfied customers we find out that they don't share their negative experience with the company but to potential clients, relatives and family instead. It is either by oral expression or in a form of references on the Internet shops or forums. This behavior also works vice versa. Satisfied customers share their positive experience with quality and providing services. That is why the companies are grateful for free of charge advertisement and spreading a good name of the company which leads to efficient obtaining of new clients. Moreover for the competition is more difficult to get those customers back on their side. I consider that this fact is a significant feature of satisfied customers. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 132)

More reasons why to be interested in a customer.

#### • The best client is the current one.

Both sides have already met and they know each other. The customer has experience with the services which company could offer him. He doesn't feel distrust to a familiar seller and seller knows what can expect, he knows his needs and what strategy is the best to use.

## The client won't forget the seller

If the client was satisfied with the seller, he doesn't need to find another one and he will use again the services of a known seller. It is a good strategy for the seller to stay in touch with the client just to make sure that he has his address and contact for an opportunity of making future business.

#### • The client can provide information of potential customers to the seller

The seller can ask a satisfied client for contacts of potential future customers. It could be family members, friends or colleagues for the work. It is also important not to push on the customer but to choose nonviolent strategy e.g. informal interview. It is a good point to ask for a permission of using his name during the contacting those persons.

#### • The client can provide references

To further develop the future business activities of a company it is necessary to ask customer for the references. Those references should be prepared in a written form in advance with the permission of the customer.

#### • An activity of the seller could attracted customer from the competition

The seller should not forget his customers although he doesn't make business with a client who prefers to trade with a competition. If he chooses the strategy to remember himself with an interesting supply it is possible to attract this client back or he recommend the seller to the relatives etc. The client would definitely appreciate the fact how the seller builds up the relations with the customers. (Filipová 2006, 154-156)

#### 1.7 Methods of customer maintenance

It takes a lot of energy and time to get a new customer. Sometimes a little misunderstanding causes that all efforts are in vain. If the company successes in getting a new customer, it's important to make such steps which will lead to the maintenance of positive relation between both participants. Those methods could be helpful:

## Regular foreknowledge of client in advance

If we inform the customer about planned news in advance, he will notice that he belongs among considerable business partners. Especially regular customer feels certain advantage over the others.

#### Foreknowledge of the changed prices in advance

The faster we inform our customer about the changed prices, the more effectively he can set the time and amount of the future purchase.

#### • Guarantee of service and warranty

Customers will highly appreciate the speed of warranty claim or an opportunity of seller's service.

#### Promotional materials

The gift items or materials which are given to the customer can be helpful during establishing new business relations. Company can strengthen sympathies by offering a small free gift. (Bureš 1995, 140-142)

#### 1.8 Control of customer care

The last step in the process of customer care is a control. It helps to check if everything works according to the plan. The company can see deviations from the standards and fix them.

#### 1.8.1 Customer's feedback

During this form of control, the company gets information from the customers via a written questionnaire, personal interview or interview by telephone.

#### 1.8.2 Imaginary customers

This specific form is often called as "mystery shopping". It's based on hiring persons for the purpose of the control. They provide auditing in the workplace or shop, trying to check the provided services, communication with the customer etc. This form of control is typical for the hotels, banks, restaurants and retail stores.

#### 1.8.3 Evaluation of the complains

It is an important source of information. The check focused on the total number of complains, their structure, time and manner of the evaluation. (Cooper and Lane 1997, 139)

#### 2 MARKETING RESEARCH

# 2.1 Marketing in general

The main goal of marketing is based on the security and fulfillment of human and social needs in a purpose of making profit. To secure those needs, the marketing methods and tools are used such as marketing research, marketing mix, marketing plan etc. (Foret 2008, 5)

# 2.2 Marketing of the company

Marketing play an important role in today's world of business. We often deal with the fact that a product of the similar quality as the competition's one becomes the number one in the market thanks to the marketing promotion. Costs spent on the promotion will appear in the higher price of the product, but if the advertisement is quality, the product becomes popular and the customers will be willing to pay more. They don't know that they buy just a marketing image instead of a quality product. Nevertheless the producer has a profit and that's the main reason to use marketing in a business strategy. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 75)

# 2.3 Marketing research

Now we know that marketing is essential for the company therefore it's necessary to be interested in it and to analyze its impact. It's a systematic process by which the company obtains concrete information which evaluates and the results applies to the marketing plan or to solve problems or situations in the enterprise. Basically the marketing research connects consumers, clients and public to the company via these data. (Kotler 2007, 406) (Malý 2008, 34)

Marketing research is a discipline which contains many findings from several science disciplines – mathematics, statistics, econometrics, psychology, sociology, informatics and more. By the time this discipline created a specific system of the methods used in data processing which is developing all the time in dependence of innovation of those science disciplines. (Příbová 1996, 11-13)

# 2.4 Process of marketing research

Marketing research is influenced by other factors every time so that it becomes unique. Nevertheless there are two basic phases in a process of every research which are connected together. They are the phase of preparation and the phase of realization of the research. (Kozel 2006, 70)

#### Preparatory stage

- 1. problem definition and research goal stipulation
- 2. approximate analysis of the situation
- 3. project investigative plan compilation

#### Implementation stage

- 4. data and information collection
- 5. processing the collected data
- 6. data analysis
- 7. research results interpretation
- 8. final report and its presentation (Kozel 2006, 70-71)

#### 1. problem definition and research goal stipulation

Defining the problem should not be underestimated, since it is the most important and often most difficult step in the marketing research. Mutual cooperation between the contracting authority (managers) and providers (researchers) is necessary, since it can easily lead to misunderstanding of the research task. This misunderstanding can undermine/ menace or distort the research and its results. If the problem is properly identified, researchers have access to the next point that is the objective research. It is necessary to accurately determine the goal or find the main factor that will help us to identify the direction of further research. To find these objectives, there are three types of research approaches:

- Descriptive research the aim is to describe certain characteristics
- exploratory research to provide preliminary data for understanding the nature of the question under consideration and to identify hypotheses
- Causal research to explore the consequences, causes and relationships (Foret 2003, 72) (Kozel 2006, 71-76)

As soon as we accurately define problems and goals, another step is the formulation of hypotheses that help us to solve the potential problem. Hypotheses save us time and financial resources by accurately indicate the direction in search of needed information resources. Also, we will facilitate such work in developing the questionnaire. The purpose

of the hypotheses is their confirmation or refutation on the basis of data obtained. (Kozel 2006, 74-76)

#### 2) approximate analysis of the situation

In the next step we should realize so called analysis of the situation, thanks to which we will see whether the information to solve our problem is available. We can verify the working hypotheses that we set before by collecting opinions and facts, which focus on our problem. It is good to go through literature, consult with experts or competitors. If we find out that our task has been investigated and solved, we can easily obtain the amount of information that will help us in finding solutions. It's believed that it's not necessary to provide primary information, but more effective is to look for secondary ones. (Foret 2008, 25) (Kozel 2006, 76-77)

#### 3. project investigative plan compilation

At this point we are getting from the preparatory stage to implementation stage. This is a defining moment, because by setting up a project plan it will be determined whether the research will be realized or canceled. It is necessary to lay down the following:

- types of data to be examined
- method of data collection (methods, techniques, sample)
- methods of data analysis
- budget of the research
- distribution of precise tasks to workers
- processing time work schedule
- monitoring compliance with the plan (Janečková and Vaštíková 2001, 47-48)
   (Kozel 2006, 79-84)

It is also necessary to select the method of data collection. The most common is one of observation, survey and experiment. The selected method can be further divided e.g. the interview can select from the following types: personal, written, telephone or electronic survey.

Processed plan of research also serves as the basis for an agreement between two parties (contracting authority/submitter, researchers). The process of preparation is over. Now the research is moving to the implementation stage. (Kozel 2006, 80-84)

#### 4. data and information collection

Now we are getting to the realization of the research process itself. The first step is to gather the required information and data which we obtain a basis for our results. This phase belongs to the most expensive research process and it can often lead to many errors. It is necessary to ensure the proper conduct of all activities associated with data collection and also conduct their review. (Kozel 2006, 85)

#### 5. processing the collected data

Before we process and analyze collected data, we need to examine the two important properties - validity or accuracy and reliability of data or the integrity and reliability. To do this we used two operations. The first inspection is to identify the readability and completeness. We have to decide whether we choose to investigate only some questionnaires, or whether we will check them all. Generally it is better to make the questionnaire, which exceeds many thousands of samples, from checking all the data for unbiased research results. The second inspection we find that the interviewer conducted the data collection and honestly polled answered truthfully. The most common mistakes committed by the respondent include partial and incomplete or illegible answers to the first impression of acting illogically. If you throw them in the processing of data, we cannot do without computers, which are much easier job. Can store data, make changes and organize them. (Kozel 2006, 88-95)

#### 6. data analysis

To get the high-quality conclusions from collected data which will assist in deciding on further marketing strategy, we need to analyze those data. Firstly, we examine the results of each question and then on their basis we continue deeper. Bit by bit we get an overall picture of the value of research. We find the following indicators:

- 1. frequency of indentified response
- 2. level, variability and course of examined characters
- 3. dependence between variables

Researchers determine the level of the examined characters by some mathematical operations. The most common are:

- average
- mode the most frequently occurring value
- median mean value in ascending arrangement (Kozel 2006, 95-101)

It may seem that the main relevance of the analysis is to examine the results of research. However, far more important is the search from dependence between quantitative eventually qualitative variables. The following techniques will help us to find that dependence:

- regression analysis to find a curve which describes the answers
- correlation analysis to determine the intensity of relationships among variables
- factor analysis the purpose is to reduce the number of the main factors that influence the behavior of the respondents
- cluster analysis to find similar characteristics and differences between respondents and sort them into groups (Kozel 2006, 95-101)

There are many reasons why search for dependence. We often see that women have different preferences and needs than men, or for example the fact that seniors are taking the goods from other aspects than the students. If we find these differences, we better understand the market situation. This will assist us in compiling an appropriate marketing mix that will be targeted to identified customers' needs. (Kozel 2006, 95-101)

#### Ad 7.) research results interpretation

We analyzed all collected information and data, and we found out some conclusions which will be published to contracting authority. Before we submit conclusions, we need to evaluate the validity or accuracy of the information we have learned from the analysis. We check whether the conclusions of the analysis correspond to the research objectives and tasks examined. Furthermore, we make sure whether we have confirmed the stated hypotheses, or whether they were overturned. After that the final recommendations can be submitted to the contracting authority. The aim of these recommendations is to devise procedures for further marketing decisions and to solve problems encountered. The recommendations mustn't lack logic and should be based on input and research goals. The form final recommendations should be in the form of continuous text, not in the form of bullets, because the text is easier to understand the context. (Kozel 2006, 103-104)

#### Ad 8.) final report and its presentation

The presentation of results is the last point of the implementation stage of marketing research. It is the only manifestation of the results achieved, that the contracting authority can see. Moreover the contracting authority will build an overall evaluation of the project

based on this presentation. It is therefore important to look at this point responsibly and conscientiously. The achieved results can be presented both in written or oral form. We should bear in mind that the purpose of final report does not consist of presenting all figures or results achieved to the contracting authority. We should show him the key indicators and findings helpful in solving problems. Great emphasis is placed on the maximum objectivity and we must never alter the results. The presentation is interesting and professional, as we use graphs and tables and figures are expressed in percentage, so they are more imaginable. Visibility and clarity of presentation is crucial. (Kozel 2006, 103-109)

# 2.5 Methods of primary data collection

Before the researcher starts collecting primary data, he should determine which of the research methods he will use. There are several types of example, observation, experiment or survey. In my work I will discuss the last-mentioned method. (Kotler 2007, 113)

#### 2.5.1 Techniques of survey

With questioning, we are able to obtain information that is largely descriptive. It means information on attitudes, preferences, knowledge, and shopping behavior. These techniques include a personal interview, written survey by mail, telephone interviews and online questionnaires on the Internet. These techniques can be also combined. Survey can be divided into two types: structured and unstructured interviews. The first named, thus structured, the researcher uses the questions that all respondents are treated the same way. Everyone has the same questions and answer options. Unstructured interviews are different because questions depend on previous responses. The list of asked questions is free, only serves as a load-bearing column. (Marshall, Solomon and Stuart 2006, 114-116)

#### 2.5.1.1 Personal interview

Personal interviews are among the techniques that provide a comprehensive, unified view of the respondent. The main advantage is the direct feedback or respondent and researcher. The researcher can ask more questions to clarify the issue, change their order but also to write additional notes (on his clothing or body language). However, it belongs among the most expensive method. Also, there is threat of misrepresentation by the interviewer bias caused by the respondent. Personal interviews can be arranged at the meetings or by contacting people passing by such as shopping malls or on the street. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 149)

Personal interview				
Advantages	Disadvantages			
Flexibility				
The option to use long questionnaires  It is possible, to determine whether respondents have difficulty understanding questions	High costs  Bias of the questioner  Time-consuming			
Can use visual and graphic materials				

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of personal interviews. (Marshall, Solomon and Stuart 2006, 115)

#### 2.5.1.2 Postal questionnaires

These questionnaires will be sent to the respondent either by mail or it's included to the product. Answers mostly get back by mail. Respondent has enough time to think through the answers and he is not influenced by the interviewer. Another advantage is the low costs of such exploration. The main problem is the low return of the questionnaires back, and also the fact that in reality we know nothing about who actually completed the questionnaire. To avoid this, it's good motivation to write a cover letter that will explain the objective of our survey, who gave us the contact to the person, to promise anonymity, thank you for his cooperation and we must not forget to sign. A good tactic is to offer incentives in the form of a gift or a participation in the prize draw. Respondent does not want to have financial costs due to our survey therefore it is necessary to enclose a stamped envelope, in which he sends back a completed questionnaire. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 149)

Postal questionnaires				
Advantages	Disadvantages			
Respondents have a feeling of anonymity	Return of questionnaires may take a long time			
Low cost	The low rate of return			
Advantageous for long-term research	Inflexible interview			

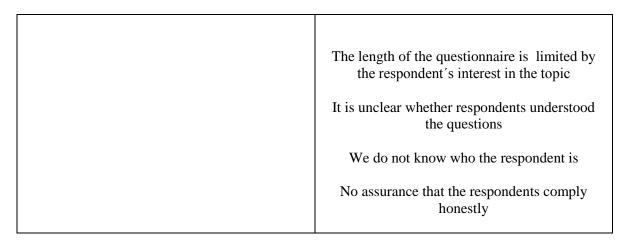


Table 2. Advantages and disadvantages of postal questionnaires. (Marshall, Solomon and Stuart 2006, 115)

#### 2.5.1.3 Telephone Interview

Using this method is useful mainly because we gain the necessary information very quickly. The researcher can explain the questions that respondent does not understand very well the respondent response rate is higher compared to questionnaires sent by mail. However, the major disadvantage is impersonal and short communications. In addition, in the society, there is more prevalent antipathy to telemarketing and invasions of privacy by telephone bids, etc. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 149)

Telephone interview			
Advantages	Disadvantages		
	The limited length of the questionnaire		
Speed	High probability of misunderstanding on the part of respondent		
High flexibility of survey	Respondent cannot look at any material		
Low cost  Restrictions researcher bias	Inability to reach a customer without the phone		
	Consumers unfamiliar filter calls with answering machines or caller ID		
	Secret numbers provide an opportunity for many consumers to opt out of survey		

Table 3. Advantages and disadvantages of telephone interviewing. (Marshall, Solomon and Stuart 2006, 115)

#### 2.5.1.4 On-line research

In today's multimedia world we often encounter with questionnaires that respondents can fill in online on the Internet. Their widespread popularity is still growing. In addition, there are several ways to persuade the respondent to fill out the required questionnaire. Company questionnaires can be placed directly on their site, create eye-catching banner to frequently visited sites (e.g. Seznam.cz, Centrum.cz, etc.) or it may offer participation in a contest. However, on-line research also has its weaknesses and drawbacks which are mentioned below. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 149)

On-line research		
Advantages	Disadvantages	
Instant data collection and analysis		
Great flexibility in questioning	It is not clear who the respondent is	
Low costs	No certainty whether respondents are honest	
No bias of the questioner	It is unclear whether respondents understood the questions	
No geographical restrictions	Participants in "sample" were selected by	
The possibility of using video, multimedia and other materials.	themselves	

Table 4. Advantages and disadvantages of on-line research. (Marshall, Solomon and Stuart, 2006, 115)

#### 2.5.2 Types of questions in the questionnaire and their formulation

During the compilation of questions we should consider the expected response. Therefore, the question can be divided into two categories - open and closed questions.

#### 2.5.2.1 Open questions

Open questions are the same for all respondents (they are standardized), but the answers will vary, since the respondents have the opportunity to answer questions at their discretion. Open questions are mainly used in qualitative research. The advantage is that it is possible to get different answers to a greater range. Disadvantages are difficult questioning, evaluating and analyzing. (Chovancová, Pilík and Podaná 2008, 112)

#### 2.5.2.2 Closed questions

In this case, both questions and answers are standardized. All respondents answer the same questions, which have the same answer choices from which they select one or more options. The advantage of those question is the speed and simplicity.

Closed questions are further divided into:

- Questions with two answers
  - Simple question, respondent chooses one of two possibilities such as Yes-No.
- Questions with three answers
  - As the name suggests, respondents selected from three different answers such as Yes No I do not know.
- Questions with multiple answers
  - In this type of questions respondent chooses from multiple response options. He can select one or more of the offered answers (questions enumeration) or may select only one option offered in response (sample questions). (Chovancová, Pilík and Podaná 2008, 115)

#### 3 SWOT ANALYSIS

The goal of this simple analysis is to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of the company, based on internal and external audit. The results of this analysis will help us to determine an effective strategy for the next period. The company should try to limit their weaknesses, promote their strengths, exploit the opportunities and to anticipate and insure against potential threats.

# 3.1 Analysis of Internal Environment

Area of interest: the strengths and weaknesses

Analysis of internal environment of the company is focused on its strengths and weaknesses. It must be said that these indicators are relative, not absolute. This means that the company can influence and change them. The company should know what's better than the competition, what has the upper hand. It must also find a great deal about the shortcomings that may hinder the firm's ability to achieve its goals. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 91-92)

# 3.2 Analysis of External Environment

Area of interest: opportunities and threats

To the analysis of the external environment, we classify the facts of the opportunities and potential threats. However, these factors can't be affected by the company. It's essential to analyze micro and macro environment in order to identify these factors.

We analyze the demographic, economic, natural, technological, political-legal and sociocultural sphere of macro environment, and competitors, customers, suppliers, distributors or dealers in the microenvironment.

The opportunities express needs and desires of buyers and can be divided into three areas. The first area is the opportunity to provide product or service that is in short supply. The second is to upgrade an existing product, respectively service, which would be better and more interesting for the customers. The last third the type of opportunity is a new product or service which is still missing in the market. (Keller and Kotler 2007, 90)

Threats are created by adverse trends or economic development environment. They can lead to a decline in profit and turnover. Threats can be classified according to the importance and likelihood. The management must establish a defensive plan that will mitigate potential losses and negative consequences during a significant danger of threats. (Kotler and Keller 2007, 91)

# II. ANALYSIS

#### 4 INTRODUCTION TO ANALYTICAL PART

For the analysis of customer influence on business, I have chosen one of the biggest and the most successful companies in Zlin – the company Aukro. In the beginning, I will introduce this company, its history, the services for the customers and the strategy. I have made a complex questionnaire which I spread via the Internet. I will analyze collected data, put them into the tables and graphs and I will describe them further. According to the results of the questionnaire, I will confirm or refute the stipulated hypotheses.

In the end, I will make several recommendations and suggestions for the company which should lead to higher number of satisfied clients.

#### 5 INTRODUCTION OF COMPANY AUKRO

#### 5.1 Basic information

Name of subject: Aukro s.r.o.

Location: Zlin, T.G. Masaryk square, 1280, Postal Code 760 01

Date of entry: 9th June 2006

Legal form: Limited Liability Company

Registered capital: 200 000 CZK (Justice.cz)

Logo:



Figure 3. Logo of Aukro s.r.o. (Aukro.cz)

# 5.2 History

Aukro was founded in 2003, as a member of the Allegro Group, by Václav Liška who was a student of Tomas Bata University in Zlín at that time. During his studies he went to an internship to the biggest Polish company dealing with online trading. He has been tasked to get the service to the Czech Republic and after several months of effort he managed to run the server Aukro. At the beginning, the system was manipulated by himself but later on he asked a friend who is still working with him. Nowadays, Liška leads similar companies in Eastern Europe as well as Aukro.

Aukro was developing very fast. After a year, it had seven thousand registered users. From March 2007 to November 2009, the company was located in so called Business Incubator which was set from start up of new ambitious companies. During that time, the number of employees was doubled. Throughout its existence, Aukro was closely related to Zlin. The headquarter in Zlin was chosen on Liška's intention because he had a personal relationship to that city. Liška said that thanks to the university it is not difficult to get skilled workers. (Kvasnička, 5.10. 2010)

**Business partners:** Atlas.cz, Centrum.cz, Heuréka.cz, Hotel.cz, Bezrealitky.cz, otoMoto.cz, Spa.cz, Turistik.cz, WikiReality.cz, iDeveloper.cz.

Allegro International Services Group operates in the following countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Ukraine. (Aukro.cz)

#### 5.3 Aukro in the numbers

- 21 million items were sold in total amount over 8 billion (as of November 2010)
- Number of items sold in 2010: 12 438 419
- 72% of items were sold at a fixed price (Buy Now)
- 4 million items are exposed every day
- circa 2 100 000 registered users (valid to December 2010)
- circa 100 employees
- Three times won the price called Crystal Zoom in the years 2008, 2009 and 2010. (Aukro.cz)

# 5.4 Company strategy

The company strategy goes hand in hand with the vision and strategy of the holding. The company wants to offer users quality services and also the most extensive range of goods on the Internet. Aukro provides the access for general public and companies to growing market of online trading. Platform of Aukro allows the purchase and sale of goods or services through the auction, or buy at a fixed price. The needs of a constantly evolving industry are responded by creating new tools that facilitate safe, fast and simple buying and selling. The experienced and professional trained administrators from the customer service provide their services to the users seven days a week. The employees from the customer service department replied more than 150,000 queries via e-mail in 2010. (Aukro.cz)

#### 5.4.1 Basic goals of Aukro

- improving the quality of services
- increasing the number of users,
- creation and community support of Aukro,
- improving the quality of products and services offered by Aukro,
- increasing the security of transactions and all Aukro portal. (Aukro.cz)

#### 5.5 Services of Aukro

#### 5.5.1 Services for Buyers

#### • Buyer Protection Program

If the buyer did not receive the auctioned object, or received the object, which is significantly different from the description in the auction, Aukro will pay the financial compensation under this program up to 20 000 CZK.

#### • Protection of Rights Program

 The program for the protection of rights is a joint program of Aukro and other companies focused on the removal of such offers to sell, which violate intellectual property rights.

#### • Loyalty Program

Buyer collects points for an active trading on Aukro and after that he can choose an attractive remuneration.

#### • Junior Account

Developed especially for young users of the age of fifteen. Users can buy or sell and discuss with others in the forum. After 18th birthday, the account will be converted to common. Acquired comments and ratings will be maintained.

#### • Contact to the Customer Care

If the user did not find an answer to his question in the Help section, he can contact customer service. (Aukro.cz)

#### 5.5.2 Services for sellers

#### • Sales Manager

A tool for rapid administration of medium or large number of transactions. Facilitate and streamline the work of exhibiting objects.

#### Aukro Shops

Aukro shops enable significantly cheaper sale at fixed prices according to the preferential price list, longer exhibition of items and the possibility to highlight the label. Aukro Shops user can create custom categories, logo or design of his shop page.

#### • Program The Super Seller

The program Super Seller honors users who have high sales and very good quality service.

#### Program Aloader

The program is used to describe items offline. The user doesn't have to be connected and can still work on improving the descriptions of all the auctions.

#### • Loyalty Program

Buyer collects points for an active trading on Aukro and after that he can choose an attractive remuneration.

#### • Business Account

For users who run business on Aukro. The icon of "entrepreneur" next to the user name will be sign of seller's trustworthiness and reliability.

#### • Transportation Center

Aukro also offers services of courier companies on convenient conditions.

#### • Junior Account

It has been developed especially for young users of 15 years. Users can buy or sell and discuss with others in the forum. After 18th birthday, the account will be converted to common. Acquired comments and ratings will be maintained.

#### • Aukro University

The pages are not only for users who are interested in learning more about trading on Aukro. They also have an opportunity to participate in one of the teaching online courses.

#### • Contact to the Customer Care

If the user did not find an answer to his question in the Help section, he can contact customer service. (Aukro.cz)

#### 6 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ANALYSIS

The most important part of my bachelor thesis is customer satisfaction analysis of Aukro. As it has been said, Aukro is one of the best companies in its field, due to the quantity and quality of services as well as attendance and number of sales. However, to retain its leadership and quality, it is necessary to analyze customer satisfaction, because the future and further development of the company rely on them. It is necessary to find out whether the system is suitable for them, or what changes they would suggest. It would be appropriate if the analysis results will be also reflected in the company's strategy, since the whole system is designed primarily for the users, and should respond to their needs.

# **6.1** Definition of the problem

The purchase of goods via Internet auctions has seen a huge boom in the beginning of the new millennium. It's not only the online stores where you could buy brand new goods. New servers which were aimed at selling new and used goods at affordable prices started to rise very quickly. Setting up the auction system was another step in the extension of purchases via the Internet. It gave the opportunity to the people to set the price at which they would be willing to buy goods by the initial price bids. Customers are actively involved in the selling process, they have fun and take auctions like adrenaline. Until the last time it's not clear whether they will success or fail due to the fact that someone else bit at the very last time. However, nowadays the proportion of auctions is decreasing and more auctions are sold at a fixed price. This happens not only to the professional dealers and distributors, but also to private sellers. There are several reasons for this behavior. Buying thing through auction may take a long time (average week), people want to make sure that their bid would not be jeopardize by another bidder. It is the reason why Aukro has responded well to this trend and offers the service "Buy Now", which help to guarantee those properties. It is important to continuously monitor the developments and trends in Internet sales to provide that customers will get exactly what they want. For this reason, I decided to carry out marketing research focused on customer satisfaction, which would help to improve services of this auction site in order to better satisfied customers who would have no reason to switch to competitors after all.

# **6.2** Determination of research objectives

The main objective of this research is to find out how customers are satisfied with the system of Aukro, if they are using available services and what changes they would suggest.

Other objectives of the research are determination of the causes of customer dissatisfaction and suggestion solutions which would lead to overcoming these problems.

#### **6.2.1** Determination of hypotheses

Hypothesis No.1 - 60% of sellers are satisfied with the amount of commission.

Hypothesis No.2 - 70% of buyers use the service "Buy Now".

Hypothesis No.3 - 70% of customers are satisfied with overall services of company Aukro.

# **6.3** Approximate analysis of the situation

I found preliminary information that could be helpful in the research, on the Internet and also in the official materials of Aukro. Then a questionnaire was developed, which was then exposed on the Internet server www.vyplnto.cz, which deals with the processing of surveys and questionnaires.

# 6.4 Research Project Plan

#### 6.4.1 Types and sources of data

The research included both primary and secondary data, for the best and objective judgments of the selected issues. As primary data, were used such information which were obtained from the research itself. The research was implemented throughout the country via an Internet among the users who actively use the services of Aukro. Secondary data were used from official information and materials of the company, drawn up on their official website and also from professional web portals which enabled to obtain further information about the issue.

#### 6.4.2 Method of data collection

For the customer satisfaction survey of Aukro, I have chosen the method of data collection using on-line questionnaire, located on the server www.vyplnto.cz. It was the best option for data collection, since the Internet is the main domain of this company. Customers often use the system as an anonymous user under the nicknames, which guarantee them certain anonymity, because personal information over the Internet can sometimes be easy to exploit. People are more sensitive to the usage of their data for marketing or research purposes, and that's why I chose the method of online survey. This is an inexpensive and relatively fast method, by which it is possible to obtain a broad sample of data. Moreover, the anonymity was provided to the respondents.

# 6.5 The implementation phase of the research

The research involved 238 respondents and lasted from 21<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, each included questions from a particular group of users - for buyers, sellers, and users who both sold and purchased. This division helped me get information from specific groups of users and better understand their needs and interests. Questions related to satisfaction with Aukro services and their evaluation. Further, I wonder how often they log into the system, how many goods bought or sold, what changes they would suggest, and how they are generally satisfied with Aukro. I primarily selected questions with a 'yes-no-I do not know (or do not use) pattern. I also included questions with the scale of answers from 1 to 5 (1 for the best, 5 the worst). In the questionnaire, I put a couple of optional open-ended questions in which respondents could write their own comments or suggestions to the system. In the end I added a list of questions relating directly to the person of the respondent in order to get the image and characteristics of the respondents (gender, age category and size of city where they live). The whole questionnaire is attached in the appendix.

# **6.6** Evaluation of the questionnaires

As I already mentioned, the questionnaire contained three parts specifically designed for the division of users on the buyers, sellers and both users. I gradually evaluate the questions from all three sections of the questionnaire. For certain issues, this division is not essential, and therefore the results of these same questions from each section are added together to show the overall outcome of the investigation. Some results contained a percentage to two decimal places. Therefore, these values were rounded to the nearest whole percent.

#### **6.6.1** Description of research group

As I have mentioned, I included the questions which were aimed to get more information about the respondents. There were three questions concerning the gender, age and size of the city where they are living. This information is essential for recognition of customers who were involved in the research. I have put the results of all these questions into the graphs below.

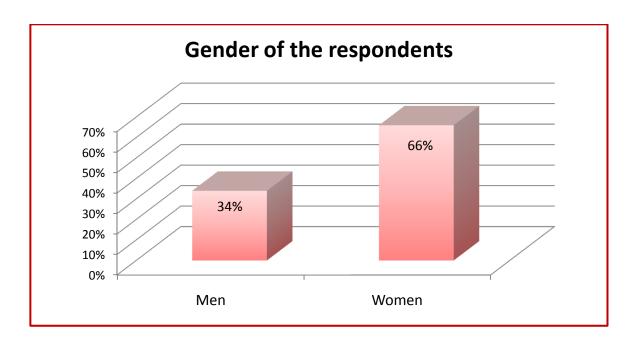


Figure 4. The gender of the respondents. (self-created)

According to the data, women create the major share in this survey with 66%, minor belongs to men with 34%.

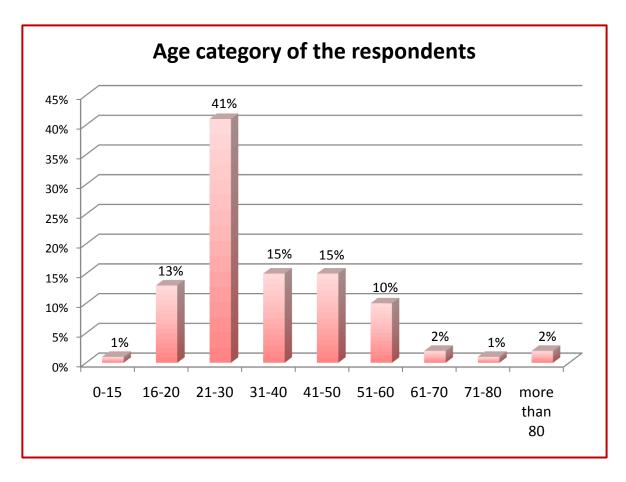


Figure 5. The age category of the respondents. (self- created)

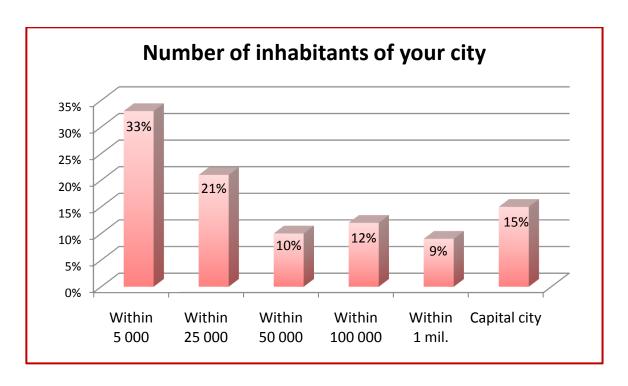


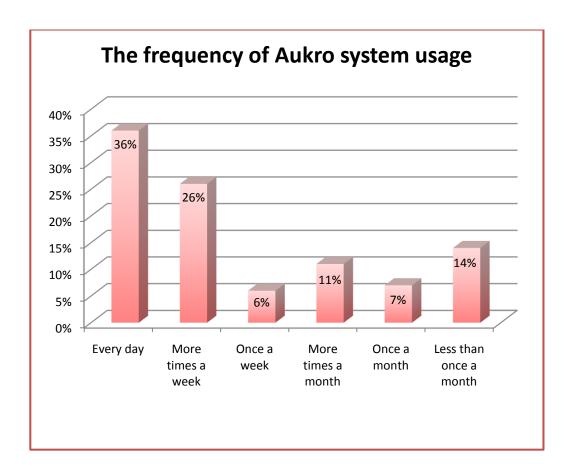
Figure 6. The number of inhabitants of the city they are living in. (self-created)

Respondents also covered the whole scale of age categories and size of their residents. The major part belongs to the age category from 21 to 30 years. Especially young people were willing to answer the questionnaire. They either use the services of Aukro more frequently or they are more often connected to the Internet and have more opportunities to find this questionnaire and answer given questions. The most of the respondents (33%) answered that they live in a residence within 5 000 inhabitants (villages or the smallest towns). Maybe those users are not satisfied with the supply of a local markets or shops, so they use Aukro to buy things which are missing. Or they just don't have enough money to buy the brand new goods so they use Aukro where they can buy those thing for an attractive price.

#### 6.6.2 Use of Aukro system

The total 238 respondents participated in the research and 75% of them use the services of Aukro. It is 34% of buyers, sellers of 9% and 57% of buyers and sellers together. Furthermore, I found that 36% of users are logging into the system each day, 26% more times a week and 14% less than once a month, 6% once a week, 7% once a month and 11% more than once a month. For the company is very important a customer satisfaction of those users, who are using the system frequently, in this case it was 36% of customers interviewed. If these customers begin to be dissatisfied, they could switch to competitors, which would mean a significant loss of profits. Of course, the company cannot ignore

satisfaction of customers who use the system once a week, or month. If these customers were very satisfied with the services, it is likely that they will use Aukro more frequently than before.



*Figure 7. The frequency of Aukro system usage.* (self-created)

## **6.6.3** Question related to the sellers

From the responses received from selling user, I found that 59% of respondents have sold more than 50 pieces of goods, 22% of one to ten units, 15% of eleven to twenty pieces. It can be determined that more than half the respondents were very successful in their sales. Unfortunately we do not know for how long period of time they sold their goods. If we think about it, we can deduce that either the goods were sold for a longer period of time, which shows loyalty of the sellers, or goods were sold in a very short time, and that means that the sellers were very successful. At this point it would be very illogical to switch to competitors, as they have achieved such a success on Aukro. They could also have a good rating from the buyers, so they could repeat the purchase.

Another question was related to satisfaction with established categories. 81% of users were satisfied with existing categories, and only 19% of them expressed their disagreement. Those who disagreed had a chance to write, what categories they would add. Most of the proposals occurred only once (e.g. XXXL fashion, decoration, further distribution of books in the Collectibles, etc.). Only one proposed category (Cottage-recreation) occurred four times. In addition, users have reported that some sub-categories could be further divided (such as those tunics, blouses and shirts, communication equipment, cosmetics).

The following question should determine how the users are satisfied with the amount of sales commission. 52% of respondents were satisfied and 48% were dissatisfied with the current level. Again, these users had the ability to write the commission, which could be reasonable. The responses were very different again. Most users would suggest a value of the commission of two percent or less. Also they would also cancel the fees for placing their adverts.

The first hypothesis, that 60% of sellers are satisfied with the amount of sales commission, has been refuted.

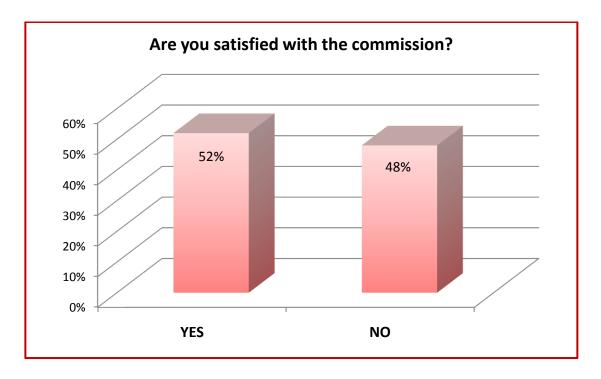


Figure 8. Satisfaction with the commission. (self-created)

Another task of the questionnaire was to determine how often sellers use the opportunity of highlighting goods. The results showed that only 15% of users use this opportunity. The reason for such a low number could be the price of highlighting. For 5 CZK, you can buy

subtitles in bold. On the contrary, the most expensive is placement on the main page, for which the dealer will pay 500 CZK. However, if the goods are not sold, the company doesn't pay back the money. When the goods are supplied unsuccessful, the costs of the seller can get high due to the advert visibility. Therefore they often or never use this service.

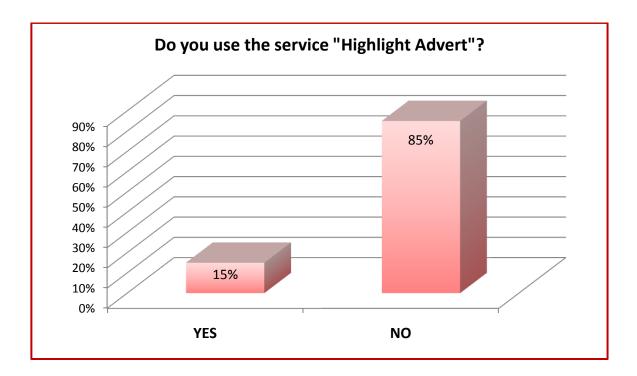


Figure 9. Use of the service "Highlight Advert". (self-created)

#### **6.6.4** Questions related to the buyer

In this set of questions I was interested in how much product the buyers have purchased via Aukro. I will mention here the three most common answers. More than fifty pieces of goods bought 38% of buyers, one to ten pieces of 34%, eleven to twenty units 12% of respondents. These data again suggest that the first third of users can be considered as loyal and satisfied customers. Again in the second third, we do not know for how long period of time they bought the goods. Nevertheless we can assume that they express the potential of growing interest in buying more things, and therefore the company should try to interest them in the next purchase.

The previous question is related to the following one concerning the satisfaction with the range of displayed goods. Satisfaction reported 86% of respondents, which is very satisfactory figure. I wonder how many users use the service "Buy Now". The results revealed that 80% of buyers use the service regularly. On this issue, we can clearly see the

trend of receding demand for auctions and preference in purchase at fixed prices. The company Aukro is trying to encourage this trend and attract buyers who prefer this option. The second hypothesis, that 70% of buyers use the service "Buy Now", has been confirmed.

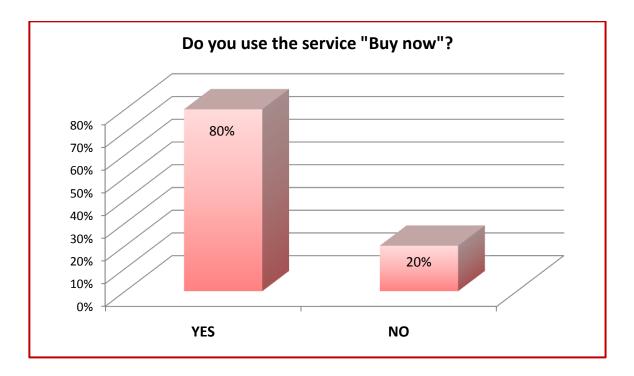


Figure 10. Use of the service "Buy Now". (self-created)

Buyers should also evaluate the following features of the system. They give school marks (1 - excellent, 5 - insufficient) for these properties in the table.

	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity of system	19%	39%	34%	5%	3%
Information, advice, instructions, procedures	7%	33%	43%	13%	4%
Precision of Search	11%	39%	41%	7%	2%
Clarity of card catalog	11%	41%	33%	10%	0%
Rating of the seller / buyer	25%	20%	19%	19%	13%

*Table 5. Evaluation of the system properties.* (self-created)

The highest value is in the orange field, the lowest in the grey field. We can see in the table that users evaluate the properties rather positive from 2 to 3. For the last question (Rating of the seller / buyer) 4% of respondents replied that they does not use this service.

#### 6.6.5 Questions related to the services of Aukro

In this part of the research I focused on services provided by Aukro. Questions were submitted to the sellers because these services are mainly destined for them. I put the responds into the table.

	YES	NO	I DON'T KNOW IT
Loyalty Rewards Program	19%	81%	-
Aukro Forum	67%	27%	6%
Superseller	19%	75%	6%
Aukro Blog	6%	74%	20%
Aloader Program	4%	61%	35%
Sales Manager Tool	16%	69%	15%
Aukro Shops	24%	66%	10%

*Table 6. Use of Aukro services.* (self-created)

The highest and lowest value are highlighted as well. As it can be seen from the table the most used service is the Aukro forum, which is used by 67% of sellers. The least used service is surprisingly the Loyalty Reward Program. The company should be deeply concerned about this problem to determine the cause of such indifference. More than one third of sellers do not know Aloader program. It would be appropriate for a company to give more encouragement to promote this service. This would probably increase the use of the program.

I was also interested in how retailers perceive security system and thus the safety of their personal data. According to 20% of the sellers system is safe, while 37% of them expressed disapproval and 43% failed to answer the question and chose the option "I don't

know." In this case it would be more beneficial to inform about the security system and measures which prevent misuse of data.

Into the research, I have also included a question related to marketing: whether sending marketing e-mails bother users. This method of advertising does not bother more than half of users, precisely 52%, disapproval of such a promotion expressed 39%, and the option "I don't know" chose 9%. It seems that users are willing to know any news about event and news of Aukro, and this method of advertising is suitable for them. The company could really use this example for the visibility of little-used services such as program Aloader. The last and also the main task determined a level of customer satisfaction with Aukro. Respondents had the opportunity to choose from five answers, I agree, I partially agree, I don't know, I partially disagree, and I disagree. The obtained data can be seen in the graph below. It shows that customer satisfaction is rather positive. If I sum up all the positive reviews I get the number of 72%. That is the overall percentage of satisfied customers in the survey.

The last third hypothesis that 70% of users are satisfied with the overall services of the company Aukro, has been confirmed.

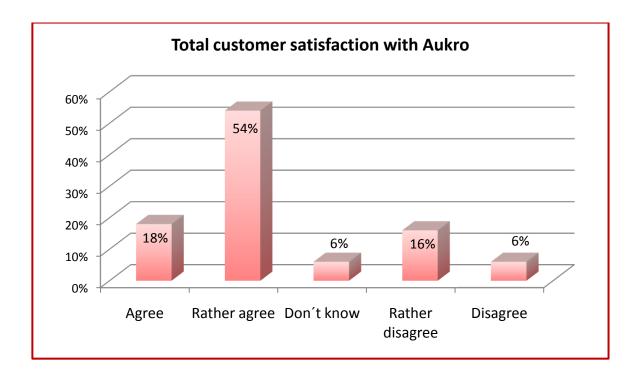


Figure 11. Total customer satisfaction with Aukro. (self-created)

## 7 SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT analysis determines the current position of the company, analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. An effective strategy will be achieved by analysis of individual factors in order to create the potential for further business growth and expansion. During the SWOT analysis, I used information from the Internet and websites of company Aukro. Furthermore, I relied on the newspaper articles concerning Aukro and the current situation of economy. Individual factors are listed in the table and then are separately detailed in the text.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES			
Strong corporate image				
8 years on the Czech market				
Leader in its field	Higher commissions on sales in comparison			
Weak competition	with competitors			
Continuous development and innovation of	More charges than the competition			
the system	Confusion due to the large quantity of			
Cooperation with leading Czech domains	goods			
A broad base of clients (more than 2 mil.)				
Wide range of categories				

Table 7. Strengths and weaknesses of Aukro (self-created)

# 7.1 Strengths

Thanks to the eight-year existence on the market, the company Aukro has established a strong image to the customers. Since it is a leader in its field, the company escapes the competition very quickly. Corporate strategy provides ongoing system development, innovation of service and products and expansion of its influence. It works with major Internet domains such as Centrum.cz, Atlas.cz, Heuréka.cz etc. Location of promotional banner on the main pages of these servers provides great visibility of Aukro among the Internet users who will get to the home page Aukro by a single click on this advert. At present, Aukro has more than 2.1 million users and the company is trying to satisfy them by a wide range of goods in dozens of categories, which are further divided into detailed subcategories.

## 7.2 Weaknesses

Aukro charges a fee (for issuing auction, for more than 2 pictures of goods, for the auction which lasts more than 10 days), and for an additional fee the system allows users to highlight their auctions (place on the first page, highlighting the title, etc.) Nevertheless the competition has most of these services free of charge and can attract customers. The commission on successful sales, which Aukro also charges, can be demotivating for further sales of the users. The amount of commission is connected to the sales price and the category in which the goods were placed. The commission can be in the amount of cents to a few crowns, but the users may be dissatisfied with the required commission.

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS		
Increasing customer awareness of Aukro	New competition (eBay)		
services  Strengthening market share	Changes in the economic situation in the Czech Republic or European countries		
Extension services for customers	Rogue sellers		
Introduction of the payment system PayU	High prices of postal or shipping services		

*Table 8. Opportunities and threats of Aukro* (self-created)

# 7.3 Opportunities

Among the opportunities, I have included a further expansion of the brand awareness and customer service of Aukro, leading to the strengthening of market share. Additionally, if Aukro gets enough users before new competition comes, it is more than likely that customers will not move to the competition and re-establish a second account. Probably they would lose existing customers. The strategy of maintaining users can contribute to the expansion of services for customers which can be distinguished from the competition. Another great occasion how to attract customers could be establishing a new payment system PayU. This system will make simpler transaction between buyers and sellers, providing the high level of security.

#### 7.4 Threats

The biggest threat to the company may be coming of a new auction site eBay. The international auction giant launched in 2010 its site in Czech, but it still doesn't have those quality as Czech Aukro. Another threat may be an increase of the VAT rate, which can raise the price of fees in Aukro, but also the prices of goods. Next threat to the company can also be unfair sellers who would fail to provide goods which were sold or they would supplied them damaged. If such retailers are not quickly eliminated from the system, their behavior can damage the good name and reputation of the company. Another factor which can threaten Aukro could be high prices of postal or shipping services. This would lead to the rise of goods prices and customers could reduce future purchase.

## 8 EVALUATION OF HYPOTHESES

According to the results of the questionnaire, the stipulated hypotheses have been confirmed or refuted.

The first hypothesis, that assumed that 60% of sellers are satisfied with the amount of commission, has been refuted.

The second hypothesis, which stipulated that 70% of buyers use the service "Buy Now", has been confirmed.

The last third hypothesis, which presumed that 70% of customers are satisfied with overall services of company Aukro, has been confirmed.

52% of the sellers were satisfied with the commission, 48% of the dissatisfied sellers had an opportunity to write the amount of commission which would be sufficient for them. Most users would suggest a value of the commission of two percent or less. Also they would also cancel the fees for placing their adverts.

The results also revealed that 80% of buyers use the service "Buy now". We can clearly see the trend of receding demand for auctions and preference in purchase at fixed prices. The company Aukro is trying to encourage this trend and attract buyers who prefer this option.

The high percentage (72%) of all satisfied customers of Aukro indicates major content with its services.

#### 9 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the results of the questionnaire, customers are satisfied with Aukro. Nevertheless, in this chapter, I will propose several recommendations that come from the results of the survey and correspond with the wishes of customers.

The supply of advertised goods is very broad so it is important to divide them precisely into the categories which ensure the clarity of the supply. Some subcategories need to be subdivided, and some existing categories need new subcategories which are now missing. Sending marketing e-mails doesn't bother more than half of the users, so it can be used for the visibility of little-used services such as Aloader Program, Loyalty Rewards Program, some special offers or news on Aukro.

I would also suggest to divide the whole system Aukro into two parts – the part where the goods are supplied by the professional sellers and the other part for amateur sellers. Nowadays, Aukro is full of adverts from professionals with highlighted adverts which are shown in the beginning of each category. It takes some time to get to the amateur's adverts. Some users prefer buying things from non-professional sellers and they could be annoyed by the amount of the highlighted adverts from professionals. Furthermore, such a division could help to clarify the supplied goods.

The cheaters on Aukro belong to the most problematical issues. The company should support the honest users and make such steps to eliminate the unfair ones who could take revenge on the others by writing untrue comments. After that it is complicated to identify the dishonest users. Aukro should check personal data and addresses of the new users with the users from the black list where the dishonest users are written down, to protect the fair trade on Aukro.

At the end of the questionnaire respondents had the opportunity to write a message or suggestion for the company. The most answers included the three topics. The first of them is based on fees on the adverts. The users would appreciate the most the abolishment of those fees. In addition, competition offers this service completely for free and therefore it may cause the decline of customers, or reduction of exhibited items. Aukro has a privileged position and there is no comparable competition, but I think that this charge is unnecessary. Publication of an ordinary advertisement would not be paid.

The second issue covers system failures which are more frequent with the setting up of new software. Updating and modernization of the system should be effective and should not limit operations on Aukro. Respondents said that during the system blackout they are not able to bid into the auctions, place an advert or log in. Because of the blackout, sellers could not the sell their goods and they don't get any compensation from Aukro. I would highly recommend to focus on the system software to avoid these troubles which lead to dissatisfied users.

The third and the last topic express the dissatisfaction of the users towards the feedback of Aukro team who deals with the suggestions of the users. The customers have an opportunity to write down their ideas how to improve the system but they are disappointed that they don't get any answer. The communication with the customer should be the essential part of quality and loyal company. This should be the very first thing that Aukro should change in order to keep their strong position and customers.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Customer satisfaction plays an important role in effective business. To be successful and to maintain market position requires loyal and satisfied customers who will come back and create profit to the company. Nowadays the customers are surrounded by many offers from new competitors and it may happen that they will succumb and deal with competition, so it's important to focus on quality of service and earn customer appreciation. Doing so can also earn valuable recommendations to friends and relatives, a great form of advertisement that companies don't even need to pay for. Clearly then, fulfilling the customers' needs at the highest possible level should be an essential part of any marketing strategy.

I have divided my bachelor thesis into two parts.

In the theoretical I have focused on definition of the basic knowledge connected with customer satisfaction and marketing. I have mentioned the process of marketing research and the advantages and disadvantages of each research techniques. I have also described SWOT analysis which evaluates current and future situation in the company and its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

In the practical part I have introduced the company Aukro, its services a strategy. I have made a complex questionnaire which I spread via the Internet.

According to the results of the questionnaire I have confirmed or refuted stipulated hypotheses.

The first hypothesis, that assumed that 60% of sellers are satisfied with the amount of commission, has been refuted.

The second hypothesis, which stipulated that 70% of buyers use the service "Buy Now", has been confirmed.

The last third hypothesis, which presumed that 70% of customers are satisfied with overall services of company Aukro, has been confirmed.

In the final part of thesis I have made several recommendations and suggestions for the company which should lead to higher number of satisfied clients.

I would be pleased to know that my suggestions will help to make reliable company and to increase the number of loyal clients who would cooperate with Aukro and spread its good name.

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# **APPENDICES**

P I The questionnaire for the customers of Aukro

# APPENDIX P I: THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CUSTOMERS OF AUKRO

1. Do you	use the se	rvices of	Aukro	cz?			
Yes	No						
2. You are	the seller,	, buyer o	r both?	?			
Seller	Buyer	Both					
Questions	for sellers	<u>:</u>					
3. How oft	en do you	log into	Aukro	?			
Every	day	Moreti	mes a	week	Once a week	Moret	imes a month
Once a	a month	Less th	nan onc	e a mor	nth		
4. How ma	ınv goods	have vo	u sold	vet?			
	10	10-20	•		30-40	more than 50	more than 100
5. Are you	satisfied	with the	created	d catego	ries?		
Yes	No						
6. If not, w	hich cates	oory woi	ıld vou	add?			
	(sh	-	-		var)		
	(811	ort text,	volulit	ary ansv	vei)		
7. Are you	satisfied	with amo	ount of	commi	ssion?		
Yes	No						
8. If not, pl	lease, writ	te the am	ount o	f comm	ission suitable	for you.	
<u> </u>	(sho	rt text, v	olunta	ry answ	er)		
9. Please, r	ate the fo	llowing	charact	eristics	with an approp	priate mark (as	in the school):
Clarity	of system	n.					
1	2	3	4	5			

10. Help, i	nformati	on.				
1	2	3	4	5	I don't use it	
11. Contac	t with th	e suppo	ort.			
1	2	3	4	5	I don't use it	
12. Rating	of the se	eller / b	uyer.			
1	2	3	4	5	I don't use it	
13. Do you	ı use "H	ighlight	Advert	" servi	ce?	
Yes	No					
14. Do you	ı think th	nat the p	protection	on of pe	ersonal data is sufficie	nt?
Yes	No	I do	n't knov	V		
15. Do you	ı mind se	ending	marketii	ng e-ma	ails from Aukro?	
Yes	No	I do	n't knov	V		
16. Do you	use the	Loyalt	y Rewar	ds Prog	gram?	
Yes	No					
17. Do you	ı know a	charity	project	called	"Aukro over obstacle	s?
Yes	No					
18. What d	lo you th	ink abo	out this p	project?	)	
I like i	t	I do	n't like i	it	I don't know it	I don't care
19. Do you	use the	follow	ing serv	ices:		
Aukro foru	ım					
Yes	No		I dor	ı't knov	w it	
20. Supers	eller					
Yes	No		I dor	ı't knov	w it	

21. Aukro	Blog					
Yes	No	I don't know	it			
22. Aloade	r Program					
Yes	No	I don't know	it			
23. Sales M	Ianager Tool					
Yes	No	I don't know	it			
24. Aukro S	Shops					
Yes	No	I don't know	it			
25. Are you	ı generally satis	fied with the se	rvices of Auk	ro?		
Agree	Rather agree	e I don	't know	Rather dis	sagree ]	Disagree
		or comments of voluntary answ		ystem, please	write it here	
27. Are you						
Man	Woman					
28. Your ag	ges.					
0-15	15-20 21-3	31-4	0 41-5	50 51	-60	61-70
71-80	80 and more					
29. How bi	g is the city you	re living in?				
Within	5 000 inhabitar	nts Withi	n 25 000 inh	abitants With	in 50 000 inh	abitants
Within	100 000 inhabi	tants Over	100 000 inha	bitants Ca	pital city	
Questions f	for buyers:					
3. How ofte	en do you log in	to Aukro?				
Every	day More	etimes a week	Once a wee	ek Me	oretimes a m	onth

Once a month Less than once a month

4 Hov	v mai	าง ๑๐๐๐	ls have v	ou bou	ight yet?			
0	1-1					30-40	more than 50 more	e than 100
5. Are	you s	satisfie	d with th	e supp	ly?			
	es	No		11				
6. Plea	ase, ra	ate the f	following	g chara	acteristics w	rith an appr	opriate mark (as in the	school):
C	larity	of syst	em.					
1		2	3	4	5			
7. Hel	p, inf	ormatic	on.					
1		2	3	4	5			
8. Pred	cision	of the	search					
1		2	3	4	5			
9. Cla	rity of	f card c	atalog					
1		2	3	4	5			
10. Do	you	use "bı	ıy Now"	Servi	ce?			
Y	es	No						
11. Ar	e you	genera	ally satis	fied wi	ith the servi	ces of Auk	ro?	
A	gree	Ratl	ner agree	<b>;</b>	I don't l	know	Rather disagree	Disagree
12. If	you h	ave any	y advice	or con	nments on the	ne Aukro sy	ystem, please write it h	ere.
		(sł	nort text,	volun	tary answer	)		
13. Ar	e you	1?						
	lan	Wom	an					
14. Yo	our ag	ges.						

0-15 15-20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70

71-80 80 and more

15. How big is the city you're living in?

Within 5 000 inhabitants Within 25 000 inhabitants Within 50 000 inhabitants

Within 100 000 inhabitants Over 100 000 inhabitants Capital city

Thank you for your time and answers.