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Strategic Performance Management with Focus on the Customer

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Abstract

This paper presents a view on issues of strategic performance management in the Czech business environment with focus on the customer by means of comparing results and partial conclusions from research carried out in selected companies. The results of the analysis are evaluated in the context of the theoretical background and the findings of similar studies. Based on these findings, a set of recommendations will be provided for Czech companies dealing with strategic performance management oriented towards the customer. The paper was prepared based on research of Czech and foreign literature, interviews with management and analyses of internal materials from selected companies.

Keywords: performance, measurement, management, customer, strategy

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1. Introduction

The basic prerequisite for the successful long-term operation of a business is finding competitive advantages for a company, linked primarily to the performance of this company but also to other areas of company operations. Gaining a competitive advantage by achieving a certain level of business performance is the primary prerequisite for the successful operation of a company in the long term (Marinic, 2005; Skodakova, 2009). One of the key factors of company performance and subsequently of the creation of value is competitiveness of the company and a competitive advantage. At the same time, company performance is considered to be the basic standard of its competitiveness.

A company’s performance, according to Porter (1985) shows, for example, a greater capacity to ensure profits, increased efficiency of production processes and their effectiveness in transforming input factors into a final product ensuring a profit. In a broader sense, the company's performance is reflected in greater stability of the company, an improved ability to learn, adapt to changes and respond to them. To achieve greater competitiveness in general it is

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necessary, in view of the close relationship of performance and competitiveness, to think in a broader context (systems thinking) and at the same time to have a sufficient level of knowledge of modern management theory. (Skodakova, 2009).

Performance can therefore, according to Mikolas (2012), be considered as a specific form of competitiveness - the company's potential to generate performance. A socially responsible company should understand performance comprehensively - not only as an economic view or description, but also in terms of social, environmental and other potential. In today's competitive environment, monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction plays a key role, therefore this article will pay close attention to strategic performance management with a focus on the customer.

The ability to find new customers and retain existing customers determines the degree of success of a company (Rosicky et al., 2010). In this, even just identifying and satisfying the customer is essential to their retention and loyalty (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000; Chan et al., 2010). According to surveys by Forrester, more than 72% of B2C companies consider retaining customers as one of its main priorities (Band, 2010). Gitomer (1998) characterises this state by saying that it is not enough to produce satisfied customers, but the new challenge is to produce loyal customers.

Most marketing theories and practices unfortunately still focus on the art of attracting customers instead of paying sufficient attention to retaining existing customers (Pribyl, 2012). Seldon & Colvin (2003) express the belief that a closer view of customer satisfaction will allow managers to understand more comprehensively the opportunities for improvement and this closer view of customer satisfaction is even more important if the company management is to understand customer profitability.

2. The Issue of Strategic Performance Management in Czech Companies

In recent years, more and more attention has been paid to the issue of performance measurement as a tool for the effective implementation of a strategy (Kaplan, Norton, 1996; Bourne et al., 2000; Simons, 2000; Schneier, 1991). Based on research conducted in Czech companies, it was found that, on average, 73% of companies in the Czech Republic base their performance measurements on their company strategies and objectives and 7% do not base their performance measurements on their company strategies and objectives, even though they are defined within the company. 20% of companies then have no strategy or objectives formulated and performance measurement is conducted only for specific activities and processes. This research also points to the fact that size has a major impact on whether a company bases its performance measurements on the company strategies and objectives. 57% of small businesses apply defined strategies and set goals; almost a third of these companies do not have a defined strategy and business objectives formulated. For medium-sized companies with applied strategies and objectives, nearly 75% of the companies and 16% of medium-size companies do not have a defined strategy or business objectives. Large companies fared best in the survey, where nearly 89% of large companies apply a company strategy and objectives, and only 7% do not have any formulated strategies or goals (Knapkova, et al., 2011). These results confirm, but also refute, research by Striteska and Svoboda (2012), which was conducted in 133 Czech companies from the most competitive industries. 87% of respondents said here that their performance measurement system is based on their vision and strategy, but subsequent analyses, however, showed that only 26% of these performance measures are actually used as a tool for implementing and revising strategies.

The set long term strategic concept including objectives and procedures must be analysed through strategic performance measures and thus its implementation in the company ensured. Marr & Schiuma (2003) present three basic reasons for measuring a company's performance: verifying the company's strategy, influencing the behaviour of employees and external communications and company performance management. According to research conducted in 2009-2010, in which 402 executives took part from companies in the Czech Republic, the most common reasons for measuring and managing company performance were identified, including strategic planning, the need for controlling and motivation and reward. Other important factors can be identified according to the survey, such as the need for communication, daily decision-making and verifying strategies. Less important factors are considered to be managing relations with stakeholders and obligations set by law (Knapkova, et al., 2011). In contrast, research by Marr (2003) showed the most important reasons to be: the needs of company management, strategic planning, daily decision-making and verifying strategies. Less significant reasons for performance measurement and management were communication, motivation and remuneration, managing relations with stakeholders and obligations set by law.

Performance is managed based on information obtained through performance measurement systems. Based on the results of investigations carried out by Marr (2004) in the largest American companies with different business activities, it was apparent that the most important areas of the companies where performance is monitored is, in 91% of the companies, the financial area, 69% said the customer area, for 63% it was the process areas and in 52 % the area of human resources. The vast majority of companies thus measure performance particularly in the financial area. A similar situation exists in Czech companies, where the greatest attention is paid to performance measurement in the financial sector, followed by the customer area (Striteska, Svoboda, 2012). The fact that, in practice, performance management in Czech companies is primarily based on absolute financial indicators is also confirmed by Fibirova (2007), Horova and Hrdy (2007), Kral et al. (2007) or Skodakova (2009). The results of the above studies, however, point to the fact that companies are increasingly beginning to realise how important it is to also monitor the process and customer areas. Awareness of the importance of monitoring and measuring performance in the customer area was also confirmed by the research of Horcicka and Jelinkova (2014) in Czech manufacturing companies, where managers indicated the ability to improve relations with customers as one of the advantages of performance measurement systems.

Contemporary middle and top managers in Czech companies, however, very often lack awareness of the components and characteristics of effective performance measurement systems (Striteska, Svoboda, 2012).

3. Monitoring and Measuring Customer Satisfaction

The area of monitoring customer satisfaction is becoming increasingly important. The basic reason for monitoring customer satisfaction and loyalty is, according to Nenadal, et al. (2004), to provide sufficient relevant information on the needs and expectations of customers and their level of satisfaction - in applying one of the basic principles of the quality management system such as feedback.

In this context, satisfaction can be defined according to Zithaml and Bitner (2000) as the customers' evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether that product or service has met their needs and expectations. Failure to meet their needs and expectations is assumed to result in dissatisfaction with the product or service. Customer satisfaction is also characterised as a very strong and apt indicator of the operating performance, as the measure of the market-oriented performance of the company, such as sales volumes or market share, are primarily benchmarks of success oriented back into the past (Blanchard et al., 2004). They show how successfully a company was in satisfying markets and customers in the past, but show almost nothing about how successful the company will be managed in the future. At this point it should be noted that a company may have excellent short-term financial results, even if their customers are disappointed. This is due to the fact that the majority of customers seek alternative solutions only later; their dissatisfaction may first be displayed through reduced purchases from the company and later by a cessation of purchases.

According to Nenadal et al. (2004), procedures for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction (internal and external) can be divided into two basic groups, for procedures using customer perception output indicators and for procedures using internal performance indicators. The first group includes procedures which work with indicators that directly show the level of perception of individual products among various customer groups and are derived from data collected through regular surveys. In contrast, the second group of procedures is based on analysing data acquired from internal databases of organisations supplying products to the customers; it is not acquired from customer feedback, but is a reflection of how the organisation develops processes which cause positive or negative perceptions from customers.

Bateson and Hoffman (1999) state that companies should develop a satisfaction information system which incorporates customer complaint measures, after-sales surveys, customer focus group interviews, mystery shopping scores, employee surveys and total market service satisfaction surveys. There is also a growing trend towards the use of concepts such as dashboards and Balanced Scorecards to bring these measures together and highlight the connections between them as well as their impact on the bottom line (Wilson, 2000). Companies using satisfaction surveys need to clearly define the linkage between satisfaction and corporate goals (Wilson, 2002).

This information is acquired systematically by a performance process which allows the current and anticipated requirements of the company's customers to be examined. A systems approach of ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty is an increasingly important process, as evidenced by the rapidly developing field of CRM (Customer Relationship Management) (Beldi et al., 2010; Johnson et al, 2012).

CRM is an integration of technologies, people and business processes that is used to satisfy the customers' needs and to improve the relations with them (Kincaid, 2003; Foss et al., 2008). Even though it is widely accepted in the marketing literature that CRM is an effective approach to collect and analyse useful customer information to increase customer satisfaction and ultimately improve company performance (Ernst et al., 2011), many academic and business reports have shown disappointing results.

A survey of 202 CRM projects has found that only 30.7% of the organisations recognised that they had achieved improvements in the way they sell to and serve customers (Dickie, 2000). The Giga survey (2001) or Gartner Group study (2003) estimates that 70% of companies will fail eventually and found that companies generally underestimate the complexity of CRM, lack clear business objectives, and tend to invest inadequately in the provision of CRM software. Therefore the emphasis on viewing CRM as a strategy is now evident in the literature (Keramati et al., 2010). Payne and Frow (2005) describe CRM as a continuum which, on the one hand, relates to the implementation of a specific technology solution, and on the other hand, is a strategy for managing customer relationships to create shareholder value. A better definition in our view is provided by Keith and Richards (2008) that define it as a set of business activities directed by strategy and designed to improve business performance in the area of customer management. CRM is not conceptualised as a strategy, but rather as a means to achieve desired strategic goals as well as to improve customer relationships.

4. Objectives and Methodology of the Investigation

The main objective of the investigation was to determine whether the companies surveyed had set a long-term strategic concept including objectives and processes focused on the customer and whether the strategy was implemented by means of the strategic performance measures. Attention was also paid to specific areas of performance which the companies monitor. Partial objectives of this investigation were also to identify the attitude of the companies to monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction, the use of customer satisfaction measurement as an input in the process of continuous improvement and identifying the ways in which the companies determine their competitive position. Consequently, an analysis was made of how the information gathered is used in the company. The results and partial results are then evaluated in the context of the theoretical background and results of similar studies.

This study was conducted in selected companies at the end of 2013 in the form of semi-structured interviews and analysis of internal company materials relating to the areas surveyed.

The data collection phase of the study began with a general examination of relevant literature and research studies, to provide researchers with a sufficient theoretical background. After that, the characteristics of the basic information on the companies (legal business form, branch of operations, annual turnover, number of employees, form of ownership, company headquarters), vision, values and strategy, performance management system and measurement of customer satisfaction in the selected companies were analysed on the basis of all available internal documents.

Interviewing was the second technique used for data collection. The semi-structured interview was based on the methodology and rules presented by Allhoff (2008) and Scharlau (2010). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 managers of selected companies. In total there were 6 basic questions that were discussed in detail with the company managers. These questions were focused on charting and analysing the current state of performance management in the context of strategy, measuring customer satisfaction and the use of information that the companies obtain from these activities.

The basic set included all top management and middle (line management) levels of management of all companies in the Czech Republic. Non-random selection was intentionally used to obtain a sample of respondents (Gavora, 2010; Surynek, et al., 1999).

The final sample for interviewing included a total of 20 managers, 11 of which were at the highest management level and 9 were at mid-level management of the companies, the activities of which were manufacturing, process manufacturing, chemical processing, energy, automotive, information technology, transportation, health, banking, insurance and other services. According to Commission Regulation (EC) No. 800/2008, the selected companies can be divided into 9 large companies (over 250 employees, over 50 million Euro), 7 medium companies (51 - 250 employees, over 10 to 50 million Euro) and 4 small companies (11-50 employees over 2-10 million Euro). In terms of the forms of ownership, the sample contains 14 domestic and 6 foreign companies. Of the companies studied, 17 have their headquarters in the Czech Republic, 1 in Sweden, 1 in Austria and 1 in Switzerland.

All of these companies have an assumed relation to the issue being investigated (the business activity, assumption of performance measurement, monitoring customer satisfaction, etc.). The relationship of the selected companies to the subject of the investigation was determined by a previously performed secondary analysis. A content analysis technique was used.

5. Findings and Discussion

The starting point of the strategic performance management of the companies is to define a strategy that expresses what the company wants to achieve in the future and through which activities. All the companies surveyed have a set long-term strategic concept including objectives and processes focused on the customer. A far more interesting finding is, however, that only three companies have a strategic concept set for a time period of 10 years and seven companies for a time period of 5 years. The other half of the respondents said that the time period set for their strategy is in the range of up to 3 years, of which six companies have defined a strategic concept only for 1 year. Here discussions arose with the managers as to whether it was not actually a question of tactics rather than strategy. Additional questions revealed that strategy in the longer term is defined only as a rough outline and is worked out in detail for a period of one year. Unfortunately, managers of two companies did not discuss the time limitations of their strategies in the interviews.

These results correspond to the modern concept of a strategy which is presented in current literature. This concept responds to several troubling facts which are discussed in relation to strategic management by the important representatives Mintzberg, Porter and others. The original concept presents strategy as a pathway to a clearly set objective. In today's rapidly changing environment a managerial approach to strategy must be dynamic, flexible and innovative. Meeting the strategic objectives then cannot be seen as a rigid and routine approach to stationary targets. In the new concept, therefore, strategy is rather a synthetic perception of the proper direction and must be created or modified comprehensively and continuously. Jirasek (2002) compares the modern strategy to shooting at a moving target, while also firing on the move. Dytrt (2006) adds to this that the length of the strategy is not generally given, but arises from the specific conditions of the environment in which the company is positioned and the managerial ability to analyse and predict the development of trends.

A positive finding is also that almost all companies, except one, have for their strategy, defined strategic performance measures which ensure its implementation. These results are confirmed by the trend when measuring performance is based on the strategic goals of the company. If we compare these results with research studies conducted among Czech companies in recent years (Knapkova, et al., 2011; Striteska, Svoboda, 2012; Striteska, 2012), it can be said that this trend is constantly growing. In practice, meeting with medium or large companies whose performance measurement is not based on strategy is beginning to be an exception.

The following graph (Fig. 1) shows how many companies monitor a given area by means of strategic performance measures. At this point it should be emphasised that only nine companies from the sample monitored were involved in manufacturing. All companies surveyed which link performance measurement with strategy use performance measures defined in the areas of finance and customers. The area of finance, in particular, deals with absolute indicators, cost-effectiveness indicators and financial analysis indicators. Only one of the companies surveyed measures their financial performance with the use of the modern indicator EVA “profitability”. Among the companies surveyed, the extent of the defined measures in the area of customers differs considerably. They mostly relate only to satisfaction or the market share in the relevant market. Only 4 companies from the sample analysed use measures defined also for maintaining and acquiring customers; an example is the Customer Loyalty Index (CLI), or the Net Promoters Score (NPS). In this, most authors (such as Best, 2005) recommend categorising customers according to their loyalty and profitability for effective customer relationship management in relation to their retention.

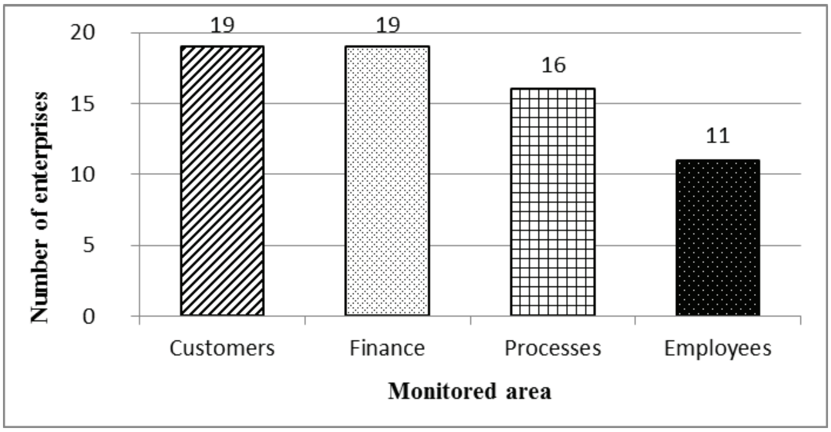

Fig. 1. Areas in which the companies surveyed have defined strategic performance criteria

Even greater differences are evident in the area of processes (Fig. 2), where most companies supplement their financial and customer measures, and sales, production, quality, and purchase measures. A somewhat surprising finding is that only three companies have defined performance measures in terms of innovation process.

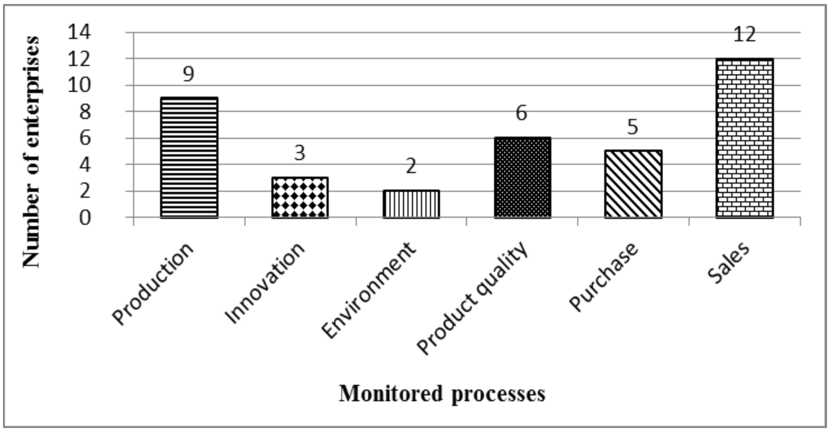

Fig. 2. Strategic criteria of process performance

In the field of purchasing and sales, it is primarily a question of optimising costs and evaluating suppliers. In the area of manufacturing, consumption is monitored primarily as to technical and economic standards, cost effectiveness, ensuring the flow of material, maintaining the principles of Lean Manufacturing (Lean Management) and continuous improvement of the production process. As part of the innovation process, the number of innovations and their costs are monitored. A more detailed analysis of internal company documents revealed that only five companies characterise and monitor all processes that are key to achieving customer and financial goals.

Few companies have defined measures in the area of employee performance. In the area of employees, the most commonly monitored indicators are average wage, number of workers, labour productivity and training costs.

Overall, therefore, the above findings can be summarised as follows. Only three companies have demonstrably defined strategic measures in terms of finance as well as customers, processes and employees; thus within the four perspectives of a Balanced Scorecard. 5 companies monitor the areas of finance, customers and employees, and 10 only finance and customers. These results show that the companies surveyed no longer primarily monitor the financial sector, as also shown in other similar research studies (Marr, 2004; Fibirova, 2007; Kral, et al., 2007), but monitoring the financial and customer areas is balanced. On the contrary, the fact is confirmed that defining the performance measures of employees for the companies surveyed remains problematic. Although many research studies have confirmed the strong relationship between human resources management and the attitude of the employees on the one hand and the performance of the organisation on the other hand (Armstrong, 2007 provides a number of relevant research surveys), HRM indicators are not yet the norm in examining the effectiveness of human resources management and its impact on company results (Guryn, 2006).

Despite the fact that all the companies stated that their performance measurement is based on their strategy, a more detailed analysis revealed that only two of them have demonstrably defined performance criteria for all strategic objectives and create a strategic plan. The analysis clearly shows that the current management of the companies surveyed do not pay sufficient attention to discovering logical links between the performance indicators used. No relationship was revealed between the skills and motivations of employees or key processes and the development of customer satisfaction, which we discuss again further. And if these relations are examined in a company, they usually remain at the level of apparent hypotheses.

All the companies analysed further stated that they monitor external customer satisfaction. The most commonly used techniques to determine customer satisfaction are survey questionnaires (13 companies) and discussions with customers (10 companies) either by telephone or personal meetings. Customer satisfaction based on the number of complaints or returns is carried out by nine companies. Other techniques and methods of measuring satisfaction were mentioned only very rarely in the interviews. Only three companies conduct internal surveys and two have customer satisfaction surveyed by independent specialised firms. Only three companies draw up a customer satisfaction index (CSI) based on customer satisfaction surveys and one uses the technique of mystery shopping. Other methods used for monitoring customer satisfaction are: a market share indicator, supplier evaluation, contact forms, service days, communicating through Facebook, letters from customers, organising various competitions with control questions related to satisfaction and complaint and suggestion books.

Research shows that only 3% of unsatisfied customers complain (Kotler, 2001). It is thus clear that companies cannot use complaints as a measure of their satisfaction. Forward-looking companies determine customer satisfaction through the use of regular surveys. None of the companies surveyed use only complaints to monitor customer satisfaction, but all of them use a combination of several techniques. A more detailed analysis of internal documents showed, however, that only 9 companies regularly and systematically analyse customer satisfaction. These results are consistent with the findings of similar research studies, where the online survey by GfK Prague concerning the current situation of determining and monitoring customer satisfaction in the Czech business environment indicates that only 43% of companies regularly analyse customer satisfaction. According to this survey, the most commonly used methods of monitoring satisfaction are: reporting from their own teams (65%), consumer survey (51%) and complaint and suggestion systems for “quick solutions and troubleshooting” (40%) (GfK Prague, 2004). If we analyse these results in the context of other measures which the companies surveyed use to measure the area of customers, we can identify the degree of excellence of performance measurement in relation to customers according to Nenadal, et al.

(2004)[a]. 16 companies can be classified into the second degree of Measurement of Customer Satisfaction and four companies into the fourth most advanced grade of measurement of Customer Loyalty.

Attention was also paid to the use of information obtained from the measurement of customer satisfaction. This is used in the company as an input in the process of continuous improvement, and in what specific ways. Eighteen managers were able to answer this question comprehensively and said that this information, whether it is about customer satisfaction or requirements, is used as input in the process of continuous improvement. 14 companies are doing so by improving relationships with customers and 12 companies use this information primarily to improve the quality of their products or services. Only 11 of them mentioned the above responses simultaneously. Surprisingly, only two companies use benchmarking in this context. Only one company mentioned the use of information as a basis for strategy and one for process improvement. Only once, increasing demands on suppliers was mentioned, as well as process improvement, creating innovation, remedying defects, kaizen, expanding the range of services, employee training, improving work organisation and improving communication with customers. Nenadal et al. (2004) suggests that measuring customer satisfaction is essentially a directed measurement on specific products. Therefore, past experience shows that if these measurements and the results obtained react at all, the improvement activities are exclusively towards the improvement of products. Improving the performance of various processes associated with it is simply ignored. This fact is confirmed by the above results.

For a more comprehensive evaluation of measuring the performance and competitiveness of the selected companies, tools and methods were found that are used for determining their competitive position. Most often, their competitive positions in their respective fields are found through financial analysis (13 companies) and benchmarking (7 companies). Among these comprehensive methods of measuring performance, one company also uses a Balanced Scorecard. Four companies reported, as methods for determining their competitive positions, methods used for strategic analysis, namely SWOT analysis (3 companies) and Porter analysis (1 company). Other methods mentioned were market research and feedback from sales representatives, by means of various information websites or specialised periodicals. An interesting finding is that the survey results are not much different from the findings of similar studies conducted among Czech companies in previous years (Trunecek, 2005; Horova, Hrdy, 2007). The Balanced Scorecard is still, despite its unprecedented boom in the world, very little used. An equally surprising finding was the relatively low use of benchmarking for measuring competitiveness, which, according to a study by Bain & Company (2013), has long been amongst the most commonly used tools supporting strategic management[b].

At the end of the interview, it was ascertained what information is obtained by applying the above mentioned tools and methods used in the company. At the same time space was given to the managers to assess whether this information provides them with a sufficient view of their company's performance and thus competitiveness, or whether there was some room for improvement. This question was answered only by seventeen managers. During the interview it was clear that the search for an answer to this question was difficult for the managers. At the same time, the managers differed greatly in their responses. Only four of them stated that this information was used for the revision of their strategies, and three for increasing awareness of the company among customers. As well, two managers considered this information to be important in increasing sales of their products and creating new innovations to strengthen their positions in the market and to improve communication with customers. It was further stated that the information is used for the continuous improvement of all company processes, for management and planning, learning from mistakes, improving the quality of the work, creating new offers, improving service quality and increasing customer satisfaction.

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[a] Nenadal, et al. (2004) identifies four levels of measurement excellence in relation to customers - data analysis for complaints, customer satisfaction measurement, customer value analysis and customer loyalty measurement. These steps must be understood such that each higher level in itself logically includes the previous level. Thus, for example, measuring loyalty should imply logically integrated work with complaints, customer satisfaction index calculations and mapping the analysis of customer value.

[b] Since 1993, Bain and Co. have been conducting regular research on the identification and evaluation of the 25 most popular management tools in terms of the extent of their use in business practice and in terms of managers' satisfaction with the application of these tools. The respondents come from more than 70 countries in North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Six managers said that the information ascertained was insufficient and that they see room for improvement in this area, especially in the use of modern methods and tools. However, the other managers (11) did not answer this question. The question remains whether the managers who did not answer consider the information obtained from the performance measurement to be sufficient or whether they do not concern themselves with the issue of improving the current system of performance management. Three managers were satisfied with the information obtained, which corresponds to the results of the previous analysis, as these companies create their performance management system in accordance with theoretical principles.

6. Conclusion

Increasing pressure on the companies' competitiveness in a globalising environment leads managers to try to continuously improve their company's performance and strengthen its market position. Performance especially in the context of customers is becoming a central issue for discussion. The results of this investigation make it apparent that the companies surveyed are realising that their strategic concept must be dynamic and flexible and must respond quickly to changes in today's competitive environment. The companies are also aware that the implementation of a strategic concept must be ensured by means of strategic measures defined in the key areas of performance measurement.

Monitoring performance in various fields is becoming more balanced. The area of finance is no longer dominant, but is supplemented by monitoring the areas of customers and processes. There remains however, the problematic question of defining performance measures in the area of employees, even though previous research has shown that one of the most common reasons for performance management is influencing the behaviour of employees, their motivation and their remuneration. This is closely related to finding logical relationships between key performance indicators. It is here that the greatest lack in performance measurement in the selected companies can be seen.

Development also occurred in measuring customer satisfaction, especially in the techniques that companies use in monitoring these areas. The companies surveyed focus not only on past results, but strive for a comprehensive understanding of the needs and attitudes of their customers. More than half of the companies studied, however, do not measure customer satisfaction regularly or systematically. Room for improvement can also be seen in the supplementary approaches to ensuring customer satisfaction on satisfaction indices, which allow a more detailed analysis of the relationship between the customer and the company. Moreover, it is important to realise that measuring customer satisfaction is only one of the steps towards customer orientation. In the future, it will be necessary to use more sophisticated methodologies that allow companies to analyse customer value and measure their loyalty. It will be suitable, for example, to introduce macro and micro models that can combine different parameters of the customer and organisation relationship in the so-called "Relationship Network" and a detailed analysis of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Nenadal et al., 2004).

This survey showed that a number of modern trends in the field of performance management and measuring competitiveness have appeared in the companies; the introduction of sophisticated approaches and complex methods, however, are still missing.

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