



PROVIDING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: THE MODEL OF BUSINESS STRATEGY

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Abstract

The key strategic objective of a company should be achieving and understanding the optimum level of customers' satisfaction. This allegation is, conceptually, the objective of a wider analyses in this paper, as well as the model for providing customers' satisfaction in the form of business strategy. This theoretically-based model is harmonized with the following important concepts: quality management, business excellence and relationship marketing. The research (survey) which was carried out in companies and among the experts, on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, indicated justifiability of this model and its structure.

Totally 600 organizations (all sizes; all ISO 9001 standard certified) and about 100 experts (from the field of interest) were included in the research – the call for participation accepted 84 companies and 37 experts.

Key Words: business strategy, customer satisfaction, quality management system, business excellence, relationship marketing

INTRODUCTION

Achieving business excellence and creating world class products and services, as a basic precondition for company's growth and development in modern economy, are not functions of one organizational unit within the company, but they are the result of synchronized activities of all company's functions, according to precisely defined objectives of the company. The objective of an organisation should be achieving and understanding the optimum level of customers' satisfaction. This field represents a base of, at least, three concepts: quality management, total quality management and business excellence, as well as relationship marketing, which is conceptually, the subject of a wider analyses of this paper.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Customer satisfaction as a strategic objective

Customer satisfaction (CS) can be defined in different ways. According to Kotler (1996), satisfaction is "the level of a person's felt state resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to the person's expectations." Briefly, satisfaction level is a function of the difference between perceived performance and expectation.

In the contemporary global economy and highly competitive business environment, it might be fatal for a business organization to be non-customer oriented. In fact, only those customer-centered organizations that can deliver value to their customers will survive in the modern business arena. To "make" highly satisfied and loyal customers, organizations throughout the world are striving to produce world class products and services of high quality. For a long time, CS is considered to be the key success factor for every profit-oriented organization as it affects companies' market share and customer retention. In addition, satisfied customers tend to be less influenced by competitors, less price sensitive, and stay loyal longer (Dimitriades, 2006).

Many executives seem to trust their intuitive sense that high customer satisfaction will eventually translate into higher loyalty and with it ultimately into improved company performance (Paulssen and Mirk, 2007). Thus achieving high customer satisfaction has become a central focus of corporate strategy for most firms (Homburg et al., 2005). However, "despite the claim that satisfaction ratings are linked to repurchase behavior, few attempts can be found that relate satisfaction ratings to actual repurchase behavior" (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). That the validity of this assumption is all but given is nicely illustrated by Reichheld (1996), who reports that while around 90% of industry customers report to be satisfied or even very satisfied, only between 30% and 40% actually do repurchase. Apparently, current knowledge doesn't fully explain the prevalence of satisfied customers who defect and dissatisfied customers who do not (Bendapudi and Berry, 1997; Ganesh et al., 2000). One of the reasons is that the relationship between satisfaction and retention is not a linear one, but moderated by several different variables. Oliva, Oliver, and MacMillan

(1992) stated that "the response function linking (...) satisfaction to customer response may not operate as is frequently assumed because the complexity of the relationship may be underestimated".

Leading companies make customer focus a key element of the company's overall strategy to differentiate themselves from competitors. Satisfaction becomes a primary theme for top management in communications with a broad range of stakeholders. Focusing on satisfying high-value customers can be powerful part of the company fabric because it is meaningful to a broad set of stakeholders including employees, financial analysts, suppliers, and other allies. Putting the customer first becomes part of the corporate positioning and differentiation in the market. The lack of management in CS strategies could be one of the many factors leading to an enterprise's downfall. To effectively draft CS strategies, one must respect customer value and collect customer demands and then compare the importance and performance (satisfaction) between the collected customers demands (Naumann et al., 2001). Concurrently, customer demands are not stagnant and cannot be manipulated by enterprises. Therefore enterprises must periodically diagnose and filter these demands to set reasonable strategies to insure the survival of CS activities (Te-King and Chao-Ton, 2003).

For example Knox (1998) used product/service content and the ability to satisfy customer demands as the basis for CS strategies analysis. Barsky and Labagh (1992) believed in analyzing CS strategies and that one must consider three factors: expectation and past experiences, product and service performance and the factors affecting actual perception.

Concepts related to customers' satisfaction

Quality components, such as solving complains, cooperation of company's representatives with customers, availability of products and services, cost and price policy and activities related to making contracts, have a great influence on customers' satisfaction (Saraph et al., 1989; Conca et al., 2004). On the other hand, customers' satisfaction influences the company's characteristics, such as spreading positive information about the company and its services and products (Evans and Burns, 2007).

The term "relationship marketing" (RM) was first introduced by Berry (1983) in a services marketing context. Many entrepreneurs do business by building and managing relationships without using the term relationship marketing. Relationship marketing, defined as marketing activities that attract, develop, maintain, and enhance customer relationships (Berry, 1983; Grönroos, 1994), has changed the focus of a marketing orientation from attracting short-term, discrete transactional customers to retaining long-lasting, intimate customer relationships. As existing literature suggests business can build customer relationships by initiating one or several types of "bonds", including financial, social, and structural (Peltier and Westfall, 2000; Lin et al., 2003). However, much should be learned about the relationship between "bonds" initiated by a company and customer perceptions and behavior.

Evans, J. and Laskin, R. (1994) present a model of effective marketing process which, in some way, shape everything said before in a coherent whole. The model is in a cyclic form with three sub-processes: (1) inputs (understanding customer expectations, building service partnerships, empowering employees and TQM); (2) positive outputs (customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, quality of products/services and increased profitability); (3) checking phase (customer feedback and integration). The authors define relationship marketing as a "process by which a company builds a long-lasting relationship with possible and the existing customers in such a way that both sides (sellers and buyers) are focused on commonly defined objectives, which is in harmony with previously mentioned definitions". Efficiently

positioned relationship marketing will lead towards the following positive outputs: (1) high percentage of satisfied customers, (2) higher loyalty of customers, (3) customers' perception on products/services higher quality and (4) increasing profit of a seller company. Relationship marketing is a continual process which demands the following from companies: (1) continual communication with customers (provides correct definition of requirements) and (2) to integrate relationship marketing process into strategic planning (enables better resource management and anticipation of future customers' needs). Brookes and Little (1997) enhance the explanation of the effective marketing process by saying that this concept is based on data base management, interactive market communication and web marketing.

The concept of "total quality" extends well beyond the marketing customer-perceived view of quality (Garvin, 1988) to include all key requirements that contribute to customer-perceived quality and customer satisfaction. Total quality broadens prior notions of quality in that it includes consideration of business processes for providing complete customer satisfaction on the full range of product and service needs. Essentially, the total quality concept is a general philosophy of management (Mohr-Jackson, 1998).

Business excellence presents a business strategy which demands from management complete commitment and acceptance of concept (Terziovski and Samson, 1999; Irani et al., 2004). The EFQM model of business excellence is based on eight principles. The belonging criteria are: leadership, policy and strategy, people – management of employees, partnership and resources, processes, customer results – customer satisfaction, people results – employees' satisfaction, society results – the influence on society and key performance results (EFQM ed., 2002). All of them are the basis for self-evaluation whose purpose is to evaluate the "maturity phase" of the organization and to focus on the problems of further business improvement (Dale and Ritchie, 2000; Motwani, 2001; Rusjan, 2005; Teo and Dale, 2007).

METHODOLOGY SETTINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The companies coming from transitional countries, like those from the West Balkans (Serbia is among them), have problems with quality of their business and production productivity. Inherited inefficient production system, as well as transitional recession common for all countries in transition, influence these companies and may be blamed for their insufficient competitive capacity. The problem is especially obvious in the companies dominated by autochthonous private capital. The reason for relatively small number of Serbian companies that implemented quality system can be found in difficult financial situation of domestic economy and the implementation of QMS asks for considerable business efforts on the side of companies. What concerns most is the fact that almost all big companies have already implemented QMS. On the other hand, the majority of all companies in Serbia are made from small and medium size companies (SME). Taking into account all the mentioned facts it is not surprising that the concept of integrated management systems is mostly applied on Serbian market while the elements of business excellence serve more as theoretic-methodological base. The concept of relationship marketing exists but only on the basic level and in small number of companies (those in foreign ownership). There are, however, no clear indicators concerning this.

The research starts from, at least, two key pre-conditions:

In the given conditions the very incorporating of principles and criteria of business excellence, in other words – input and output elements of relationship marketing in defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization (the sphere of planning quality in the future)

shows strategic determination of certified Serbian companies to satisfy the requirements of customers and other stakeholders.

Wide involvement of organizational and management structure in the processes of expectations identification and monitoring, measuring and analyses would mean making stronger bonds between current activities and strategic decisions, where a satisfied customer is in focus.

Argumentation, even an indirect one, of these pre-conditions would be enough to show justifiability and acceptance of the model of business strategy which, in the centre (including subprocesses defined by the standard and supported –cyclic expanded- in the sphere of planning and reconsidering quality in the future, exclusively by strategically oriented concepts of business excellence and relationship marketing) puts satisfaction of customers and other stakeholders. In order to provide stable bonds between the rings it is necessary to incorporate wider organizational and management structures especially in the processes directly oriented towards the customers.

Target groups in the research were:

companies (production and/or services) which are certified according to the ISO 9000 standards and which work and/or have residence in Republic of Serbia; managers in quality and/or marketing sector in these companies, as primary group,

experts, in the sphere of quality and/or marketing (with reference to the subject sphere, published works and/or cited), as a control group. They were to confirm the companies' attitudes. It was interesting to see whether considerable differences would appear in the companies' answers and the answers of those who were dealing with this matter from academic (university professors) or some other standpoint (ex. consultants).

Surveying of available companies and experts was primarily realized by e-mail survey. The survey included about 600 companies and 100 experts. Data base of Serbian Chamber of Commerce was primarily used during the selection of companies and at selecting the sample of experts it was used data base and contacts in JUSK – United Association of Serbia for Quality, as independent and sufficiently representative body for Serbia. Totally 84 companies accepted the call to participate in the research (which was between 4.5 and 5.5% out of all certified companies in Serbia) and 37 experts from the subject sphere. For the sake of survey it was created a special questionnaire (taking care of methodology of the research); communication principle was: one questionnaire – one company/expert. The survey was mainly realized at the first quarter of 2008.

The structure of the surveyed companies was: according to ownership structure the companies were mainly private (61 (72.6%)) and public (10 (11.9%)); according to the field of work: agriculture, hunting, forestry and water management 3 (3.4%), ore and stone mining 1 (1.1%), manufacturing industry 46 (52.3%), electrical, gas and water generation and supply 5 (5.7%), building construction 9 (10.2%) wholesale and retail trade ; motor vehicles, motorcycles and house-ware/personal repair 8 (9.1%), traffic, warehousing and connection 3 (3.4%), administration and defence ; compulsory social insurance 2 (2.3%), education 3 (3.4%), health and social care 3 (3.4%), other communal, social and individual services 5 (5.7%); according to the size: micro and small 14 (16.7%), medium 38 (45.2%) and big 32 (38.1%); position of the interviewed: mainly directors 10 (11.9%), leading managers 49 (58.3%), and consultants 3 (3.6%).

The structure of the interviewed experts was: the majority of the interviewed were male (31 (83.8%)); the greatest number of the interviewed were over 50 years of age 13 (41.9%) and between 30 and 40 11 (35.5%); level of education: the majority were PhD (15

(40.6%)), Master's degree and Bachelors (10 (27%)); occupation (answered 22 (59.5%)): the majority (11) were university professors/college professors and 5 experts were employed as consultants; work position of the interviewed in their organizations (answered 36 (97.3%)): directors and/or owners and leading managers.

During checking phase of statistically relevant differences in the answers of different- size-companies (types of companies: 1 – micro and small, 2 – medium and 3 – big, in the following tables, as well), the data types which appeared in the survey caused the application of two different methods of statistic analyses: Kruskal Wallis and One way ANOVA. ANOVA was also used in comparison of companies (total) and experts' data. It was taken that evaluation limit of reliability results, t.i, probability which enabled claiming that the data were error consequences or random variations was $p = 0.05$. This means that for $p \leq 0.05$ exists statistically significant difference in results. It was determined that significant statistic exception in the answers of companies and experts (in generally) didn't exist, therefore, there is no discussion on this matter.

THE MODEL OF BUSINESS STRATEGY

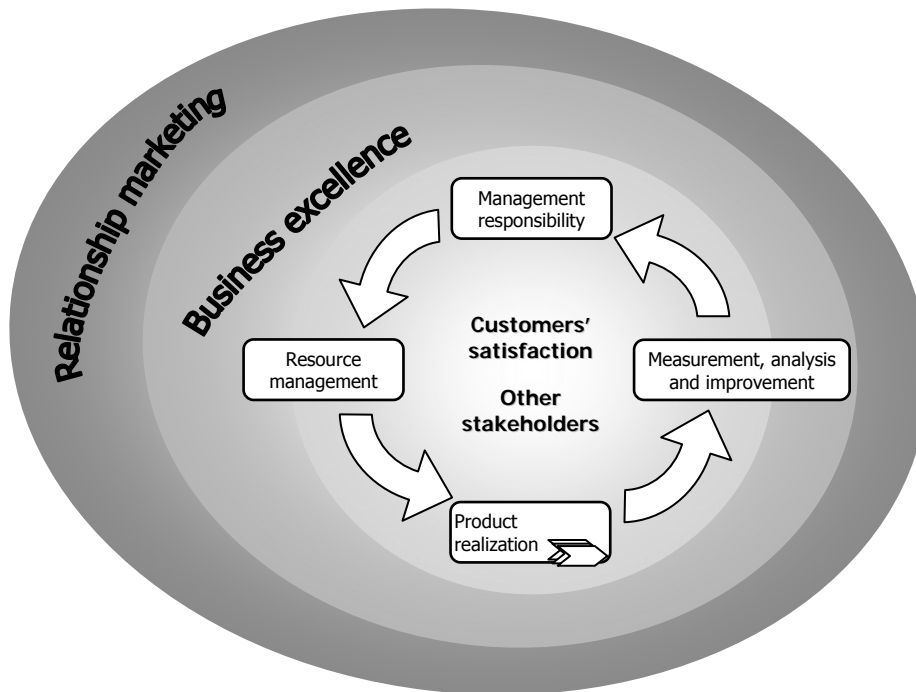
In accordance to the previously said, modeling of the acceptable concept that would satisfy customers' requirements, integrate QMS, business excellence and relationship marketing seems possible and transitional solution. Therefore, the objective of the research was to create and present a qualitative theoretic model of a system for providing satisfaction of a company's (firm's) customers needs. This model assumes a process approach, appropriate marketing research in the beginning and corresponding evaluation in the end. The model is created to enable easier managing of these processes with the aim to achieve business excellence. Acceptance and justifiability of this mixture of concepts and the model should be proved in the future.

In the part of the research presented here, the framework of the business strategy for satisfaction of customers' requirements acceptable for Serbian companies is given, supported by statistic analyses of the answers provided by surveying the target groups. The attitude on justifiability and acceptance of the model will be created later on the ground of some quantitative indicators related to the mentioned qualitative theoretic model. The part of planning or incorporating the principles and criteria of business excellence and relationship marketing into the standard (ISO 9000) defined framework is the subject of a separate analyses. This serves to show justifiability and acceptance of strategically oriented form presented in the following picture.

Presentation of the model

Figure 1 presents a model in a form of cycle, in order to describe the model as business strategy which puts the focused modules (sub-processes) in the environment of customers and other stakeholders, whose objective is progress of the whole organization. Such a business strategy is supported by business excellence and relationship. It can be the matter of dispute which "ring" of support is "older" and/or more important. The author of this paper thinks that it is the matter of attitude, but their existence or the need for it has been shown in this research.

Figure 1: The model for providing satisfaction of customer's requirements as a business strategy



Analyses of research results concerning strategic components of the model

Asked to evaluate the importance (in the research (survey) was used the Likert 5-point scale) that should be paid to the principles of business excellence while defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization, 66 (85.7%) (out of 77 (91.7%) of the interviewed in companies, or 33 (91.7%) (out of 36 (97.3%)) experts gave the answers which are showed, comparably, in the Table 1. All the principles were evaluated as significant or particularly significant (the lowest grade was given to corporative social responsibility by the experts 3.39).

Table 1: Comparative survey of average significance grade that should be paid to the principles of business excellence at defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization

PRINCIPLES of business excellence	Average grade of the interviewed in companies	Average grade of the experts
Results Orientation	4.17	4.39
Customer Focus	4.42	4.61
Leadership	3.82	4.18
Management by Processes and Facts	3.80	4.06
People Development and Involvement	3.76	3.88
Continuous Learning, Innovation and Improvement	3.68	3.79
Partnership Development	3.94	3.94
Corporate Social Responsibility	3.58	3.39

Having been asked to evaluate significance paid, or the one which should be paid, to criteria of business excellence at defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization, the interviewed (63 (85.1%) out of 74 (88.1%)) in companies, and experts (33 (91.7%) out of 36 (97.3%)) evaluated the criteria and their application as significant (table 2).

Table 2: Comparative survey of average significance grade which should be paid to the criteria of business excellence at defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization

CRITERIA of business excellence	Average grade of the interviewed in companies	Average grade of the experts
Leadership	3.73	4.00
Policy and Strategy	3.87	4.24
People	3.68	4.21
Partnership and Resources	3.65	3.97
Processes	3.90	4.15
Customer Results	4.47	4.48
People Results	3.58	4.15
Society Results	3.52	3.70
Key Performance Results	4.23	4.27

Table 3, included the companies and experts' grades, shows how important it is to take care about the criteria of business excellence by the leading management in management review. Affirmative answer was given by 65 (83.3%) out of 78 (92.9%) companies and 33 (91.7%) out of 36 (97.3%) experts. Here, statistically significant difference was noticed in the answers of the different-type companies ($p = 0.043 < 0.05$) and the grades are showed separately. High average grade of significance, paid to the criteria of business excellence, was noticed. In other words, they were evaluated as significant and particularly significant – the lowest grade was 3.50.

Table 3: Comparative survey of the average significance grade paid, and which should be paid to the criteria of business excellence at management review

CRITERIA of business excellence	Average grade of the interviewed in companies			Average grade of the experts
	1	2	3	
Leadership	3.67	3.54	3.73	4.00
Policy and Strategy	4.08	4.04	3.88	4.24
People	4.33	3.69	3.50	4.21
Partnership and Resources	4.17	3.69	3.62	3.97
Processes	4.17	3.73	4.04	4.15
Customer Results	4.67	4.42	4.23	4.48
People Results	3.92	3.81	3.50	4.15
Society Results	3.92	3.46	3.62	3.70
Key Performance Results	4.67	4.35	4.12	4.27
ANOVA significance test Group: companies F=3.584; Sig.= 0.043<0.05				

It is interesting that a particular significance is paid to the principles and criteria which are directly oriented towards customers (the lowest average grade is 4.23); that shows readiness of the organizations to devote themselves to their customers, as well as importance which the experts give to this question.

Both companies and experts consider significant or satisfying input elements of relationship marketing concept, especially in the sphere of planning (table 4).

Table 4: Comparative survey of the average significance grade of input elements in relationship marketing concept

Input Elements of Relationship Marketing Concept	Average grade of the interviewed in companies	Average grade of the experts
Understanding Customers Expectations	4.31	3.88
Building Service Partnerships	3.92	3.42
Empowering Employees	3.66	3.71
Total Quality Management	3.76	3.26

Comparative survey of the average grades which the interviewed used to evaluate the significance of output elements of relationship marketing, especially in the sphere of planning, is given in the table 5. It should be emphasized that all the elements were evaluated as significant, both by companies (81 (96.4%) answered the question) and by experts (35 (94.6%) of the interviewed).

Table 5: Comparative survey of average significance grade of output elements in relationship marketing concept

Output Elements in Relationship Marketing Concept	Average grades of the interviewed in companies	Average grades of experts
Quality Product	4.64	4.06
Customer Satisfaction	4.44	4.26
Customer Loyalty	4.04	4.09
Increased Profitability	4.19	3.91

Considering the question which demands definition of management and responsibility over processes, identification of expectations, monitoring, measuring and analyses, a certain generalization can be noticed in the answers, given by experts, when they are compared to those obtained in companies. No matter, we can find some similarities which are presented in the Table 6a for process identification of expectations and Table 6b for proces monitoring, measuring and analyses. Statistically significant difference in the answers of different types of companies is noticed considering the question about management/responsibility over processes – identification of expectations ($p = 0.005$) and the answers are given separately. Totally, 68 (80.9%) companies and 35 (94.6%) experts answered the question about the process of identification of expectations and the question related to the process of monitoring, measuring and analyses 71 (84.5%) companies gave the answer.

Table 6a: Comparative review of management and responsibility over processes identification of expectations

Given answers		Process identification of expectations			
		Companies			Experts
		1	2	3	
(a)	Top manager and/or owner	1 (5.6%)	15 (14%)	6 (9.2%)	13 (17.6%)
(b)	Executive management	-	10 (9.3%)	3 (4.6%)	
(c)	Development unit manager	1 (5.6%)	12 (11.2%)	4 (6.2%)	7 (9.5%)
(d)	Marketing unit manager	3 (16.7%)	4 (3.7%)	15 (23.2%)	25 (33.8%)
(e)	Trade/sale unit manager	5 (27.8%)	18 (16.8%)	14 (21.5%)	13 (17.6%)
(f)	Quality unit manager (or QMS manager)	3 (16.7%)	9 (8.4%)	9 (13.8%)	10 (13.5%)
(g)	Unit managers (generally)	3 (16.7%)	9 (8.4%)	6 (9.2%)	-
(h)	Staff in direct contact with services customers or those directly involved in services realization.	-	10 (9.3%)	6 (9.2%)	4 (5.4%)
Kruskal Wallis Test Grouping Variable: firms (companies) Chi-Square=10.740; Asymp. Sig.= 0.005<0.05					

It is interesting to notice the moving of responsibility (both companies and experts agree in this) from marketing top manager, for the process identification of expectations, towards sale top manager, for the process of monitoring, measuring and analyses. Especially expressed significance of organizational units (sectors) can be noticed: trade/sale, marketing, development sector and quality sector.

Table 6b: Comparative review of management and responsibility over processes monitoring, measuring and analyses

Process monitoring, measuring and analyses		Given answers
Companies	Experts	
12 (6.9%)	10 (12.7%)	Top management and/or executive management (a)
10 (5.7%)		
4 (2.3%)	7 (8.9%)	Development unit manager (b)
25 (14.3%)	24 (30.4%)	Marketing unit manager (c)
41 (23.5%)	13 (16.5%)	Trade/sale unit manager (d)

36 (20.6%)	21 (26.6%)	Quality unit manager (or QMS manager)	(e)
17 (9.7%)	2 (2.4%)	Employees in sale network	(f)

DISCUSSION

There are certain problems concerning the acceptance of business excellence and relationship marketing in Serbian economy and they have been briefly explained in the text. The consequences of these problems are the following: the concept of integrated management systems is mainly applied on Serbian market which base is ISO 9000 series of standards while the elements of business excellence concept are mostly used as its theoretic- methodological base. However, it is obvious that strategic orientation towards satisfaction of customers and other stakeholders' requirements is present in certified domestic companies. Confirmation is directly got by accepting the incorporation of the principles and criteria of business excellence (input and output elements of relationship marketing) concerning defining policy, objectives and tasks in the organization, in other words, in the sphere of planning quality in the future. According to the research results, the criteria of business excellence should also be incorporated in the reconsidering phase at the side of management (management review). Taking all into account, it is not surprising that considerable significance is paid to customers' satisfaction. Namely, a particular significance is paid to the principles and criteria which are directly oriented towards customers (the lowest average grade is 4.23); that shows readiness of the organizations to devote themselves to their customers, as well as importance which the experts give to this question.

Wide incorporation of organizational and management structure, from top to executive management, in other words, employees in direct contact with customers, in processes of identification of expectations and monitoring, measuring and analyses, according to the model, means making stronger bonds between current activities and strategic decisions where a satisfied customer is in the focus. The analyzed results indirectly confirm this aspect of the model, emphasizing the functions of top manager and/or owner, marketing unit manager, quality unit manager and trade/sale unit manager which are especially incorporated in the mentioned processes, while moving management and responsibility over processes respectively can be noticed, going from marketing and top management towards sale top manager. As expected, special attention is paid to organizational units (sectors) like trade/sale, marketing, development sector and quality sector and their management.

Although it was to be expected, given the strategic orientation of the business model and organisational set-up, there is no statistical difference between the answers given by micro, small, medium-sized and large enterprises except in two cases:

The level of significance given to the criteria of business excellence at management review; two of the three criteria given the greatest attention are the same (Key Performance Results, Customer Results). The third, key criterion, however, varies significantly; People with micro and small enterprises; Policy and Strategy with medium-sized and Processes with large enterprises.

management and responsibility over processes identification of expectations of customers. Here one of the three most significant answers is the same for all types of company; Trade/sale unit manager. However, as company size increases, answers orient more towards organisational functions: Development, Quality and Marketing.

Finally, it can be noticed from the results' analyses and discussion that theoretic, strategic business model for providing satisfaction of customers' requirements proved to be acceptable and justifiable for Serbian companies in relation to the context presented here.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The company's objective should be achieving and understanding the optimum level of customer satisfaction. The important step in achieving customer satisfaction is to make research of customers' requirements in order to make good business decisions. The model of business strategy for providing customer satisfaction, presented in this work, is harmonized with the requirements of ISO 9001:2000 series of standards, as well as with relevant proposals and criteria of business excellence, marketing requirements and specific characteristics and requirements of Republic of Serbia's economy. The presented quality model can be considered acceptable and justifiable which has been supported indirectly by statistic indicators concerning planning and management, in other words, by incorporating the principles and criteria of business excellence and relationship marketing defined by the standard (ISO 9000).

The model itself has not been applied in practice or tested but, in our opinion, its usage would contribute to more complete and wider acceptance of the concept of business excellence and/or relationship marketing in the part of certified companies (standards ISO 9000 series) on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. In relation to some limits, we think that the model's validity would be more complete if the research included a greater number of domestic companies, as a sample, even better if this research could cross the borders of Serbian territory and transfer to the countries of the Western Balkans.

Finally, the research presented here, bearing in mind the limitations mentioned has at least three implications:

The strategic orientation of companies towards customer satisfaction means that, in addition to the concept of QMS in organisation and management processes, the concepts of marketing relations and business excellence should also be included. This above all in the planning and verification phases, i.e. the management of key processes.

Companies which are ISO 9000 certified generally accept the strategic model of providing customer satisfaction;

There are differences in the level of acceptance of the strategic model depending on size and organisational structure which are a direct consequence of these factors.

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