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## CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND MARKET SEGMENTATION FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY CONSULTANTS OF SMALL BUSINESS

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### ABSTRACT

The research aims to use marketing principles to address the proper techniques that can be usefully applied by security consultant's work for small businesses. This research can be classified as qualitative, descriptive where were analyzed information's contained the Work Accident Statistical Year book also can be characterized how descriptive, since it describes the marketing activities to be used with small businesses, and is a cross-sectional study involving several cases in which data were collected in a single chronological step. The literature was developed using marketing authors and Work safety. Data were analyzed using the factors that influence consumer behavior proposed by Chisnall (1995), the model of process of purchasing decision described by Kotler (1967), the stages of growth proposed by Churchill and Lewis (1983) and the definitions of specific strategic to small business enterprises described by Rodrigues (2012). It was identified that small businesses have characteristics that are centered around the owner. As a marketing strategy, personal selling can be effective.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Consultants, Small business.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

There is growing recognition among researchers and practitioners that successful organizations actively manage all aspects of their business, including job security (BOUYER; BARBOSA, 2010; COSTELLA, 2009; FREITAS; SOUZA, 2009; OLIVEIRA SALLES, 2012; WEBER, 2012), thus, there is evidence to show that small businesses cannot as effectively as the large security companies. So it is not surprising that it has been shown that there are higher rates of accidents (at least in some categories) in small businesses (BRAZIL, 2012).

The influence of external groups and organizations on the performance of the safety of small businesses is a current topic of debate and research (ZILLI *et al.*, 2012). A group that has been overlooked in this debate are the consultants for job security, as few studies in this area have shown. However, evidence suggests that consultants work safety is perceived by small businesses as being expensive and often provide insufficient methodologies and solutions (CLARO, 2011). As a result, they are not widely used.

Consultants could perhaps make a greater contribution to the health system and worker safety, addressing small businesses with more alternative forms. Management techniques could usefully be applied to develop these approaches. A more systematic use of marketing could, for example, increase the effectiveness of security consultant's work in dealing with small businesses. Starting from the point that they do not have much access to them, this research aims to use marketing principles to address the appropriate techniques can be usefully applied by security consultants to work with small businesses.

Marketing techniques that are supported by economic, psychological and sociological studies were in regular use for many decades in a variety of marketing situations. Work safety, such techniques are routinely used by large organizations in Brazil (WEBER, 2012).

Marketing is concerned with a process of exchange between two parties. These parts can, in many circumstances, be a vendor and a buyer, but in others they may be, for example, doctor and patient, lawyer and client, teacher and student or consultant and company. Chisnall (1995) proposed a definition of marketing that covers this wide range of situations: marketing is the management process



responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements in accordance with the organization's goals.

The shift from a product-oriented approach to the management of an organization, in which attention was focused primarily on product quality and price, to the latest customer oriented approach, took first place in marketing. Industrial and service organizations have been slow with regard to the ability to execute changes. Service companies have become increasingly important to the national economy in recent years and as a result, much attention has been focused on marketing for the service sector (CHISNALL, 1975).

Experiences in managing the marketing for workplace safety in small businesses are a clear example of marketing services. Thus this study will also examine how the marketing services can be combined with the demands of the small business manager.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Consumer behavior**

Before discussing the general marketing and job security in particular, some information is provided about consumer behavior and on some of the factors that influence it.

### **2.2. Factors influencing the buying behavior of the consumer**

A number of factors influence the buying behavior of the consumer. Some of these are internal to the individual consumer, e.g. attitude and motivation, while others are external. External factors derive from cultural, sociological, and economic influences that are exerted on the individual. Some of these factors will enter into discussions in later sections of this article.

Chisnall (1995) illustrated this situation. The cultural factors (cultural beliefs and values, and lifestyle), sociological factors (social class, family influence, lobbying groups, and opinion leaders) and economic factors (price, payment method, delivery, and services) influence the psychological factors individual (cognition, perception, learning, attitude, motivation, and personality) and they influence the consumer behavior. This summarizes the various internal and external factors that influence the behavior of the potential buyer.



### **2.3. Consumer behavior - a simple model**

In order to gain an understanding of this behavior, a model of the buying decision process is also necessary. The model adopted for the present discussion is to Kotler (1967) that part of the felt need, then the activity of pre-purchase, then the purchase decision, later the “use”, to reach the post-purchase feelings.

The consultants need to develop a sense of need for their services towards small business managers. When this happens, the potential buyer begins to pre-purchase activity. The objective is to identify and evaluate assets or services that can meet the perceived need. The effort expended in the activity of pre-purchase and in making purchasing decision varies greatly. In some cases, great care is taken, while in others the buyer simply chooses a known brand, or even makes an impulse purchase (NASCIMENTO; TEIXEIRA, 2012).

The pre-purchase activity has the function of reducing the perceived risks involved in making a purchase. The place of the risk reduction strategy pre-purchase behavior has been studied by several authors (REIS, 2011). The type of financial risk may be related to the performance related to chance, psychological (inconsistency with the self-image of the person) or social (open to criticism or ridicule from others) (KOTLER, 1967).

Post-purchase feelings can be significant. The buyer may feel concern that if the choice made was correct and that the purchase amounted to previous expectations. This interest may be decreased by using guarantee techniques (AFONSO, 2010). Worry can also be due to real disappointment with the purchase. In these circumstances, repeat purchase is less likely, unless effective measures are taken. Moreover, such repetition is more likely if the buyer is completely satisfied with the purchase. This very general description will be valid in a wide range of marketing situations. On the other hand, the systematic differences in behavior can be recognized depending on the nature of purchase.

### **2.4. Marketing of services**

The distinction between goods and services is not always as clear as it might at first be thought. Many artifacts are accompanied by after-sales services, while



service delivery can often contain a well. However, Payne (1993) showed that it is possible to identify service elements by means of certain characteristics.

They are immaterial and variables typically produced and consumed at the same time. Furthermore, the potential buyer can not usually prove. These features have the potential buyer a number of problems during pre-sale, especially as regards the perception of risk (PAYNE, 1993).

Financial risk is a particular problem. Losses can go far beyond the cost of the service, as there may be all sorts of consequential losses if the service is defective. These losses can often be recovered by means of expensive and time consuming actions with legal disputes in courts. Consumers will often accept an offer, although not the cheapest, if they think this will ensure higher standards. In many cases, the consumer will have personal recommendation to make your choice. Personal selling techniques are also of particular importance in the marketing services (PAYNE, 1993).

A series of measures are taken by service providers to reduce the perceived risks. They make use of staff with formal qualifications and can offer a service that complies with the standard set by an external professional or trade association. Care is taken to give a detailed description of what is and is not included as part of the service offered. In some cases, the service level targets are specified, for example, to highs of service.

After a positive decision to purchase, production and consumption often occur simultaneously, so a guarantee can be provided at this stage, periodically checking if the service is satisfactory. Where dissatisfaction not, the post-purchase concerns should be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Answers to personal grievances will depend on the market situation (AFONSO, 2010). In some cases, a free service may be appropriate, in others only the cash back can be enough, because in certain circumstances a more complete compensation is required. Thus, a satisfactory result is important in services marketing, where personal recommendation to other potential customers can then happen.

When consumers are satisfied with a service they are likely to submit a high degree of brand loyalty, they are very likely to return to the same service when they have other requirements. This led to a shift in emphasis from marketing services out



of the trade marketing (focusing on single sale) for relationship marketing, where a long-term high quality is the goal (NASCIMENTO; TEIXEIRA, 2012).

## **2.5. Market segmentation**

The previous section focused on the consumer behavior of certain categories of services. Moreover, it is necessary to categorize groups of people for whom marketing efforts are targeted specifically. This market segmentation allows a connection between the product being produced and the demands of their consumers (MUNHOZ; KIRINUS, 2012). For example, the style of goods, the style of presentation, content of advertising and will be located where the company becomes different when the marketing is directed to correct the consumer's age or gender, income, marital status, and others.

This simple example uses consumer characteristics as a basis for segmentation. There are many of these bases, relating both consumers and the type of market. Some segmentation bases uses are: geographic, demographic, cultural and social. In a particular situation, marketing, more than one base may be employed. Chisnall (1995) pointed out that targeting can be effective when the sub is clearly identifiable, of known size, affordable to the target market and commercially viable.

## **2.6. Marketing of job security for small business: a market segment**

In this section, this study discusses the marketing of safety can be successfully targeted in order to provide better service to the small business manager. The segmentation is based, in this case, the size of the company. Other bases could be added because the marketing strategy can be taken depending on the nature of the activities undertaken by small business or geographical area in which small businesses are located.

The bases of consumer segmentation adopted are geographical (location, population size, population density) and demographic (age, income, education, occupation, size of the organization) and cultural/social (culture, subculture, lifestyle, social class, and others).

For simplicity, attention is restricted to the size of the company only in the present study. Criteria Chisnall (1995) for effective market segmentation were



applied. To make the judgment, it is necessary to look carefully at both small businesses as their own managers.

**2.7. Small businesses**

Table 1 illustrates the contribution made by micro and small enterprises to the Brazilian economy in 2012, both in terms of employment and in terms of economic importance (RODRIGUES, 2012).

*Table 1 – Small enterprises in Brazilian Economy*

	Company Size			
	Micro	Small	Average	Large
Percentage of enterprises	94.8	4.2	0.7	0.3
Percentage of total employment accounted for	40.2	24.5	7.4	27.9
Percentage of total business generated represented	13.1	6.4	32.4	48.1

Micro and small businesses operating in all sectors, however, over 15% are in manufacturing, more than 32% in business services and 43% in retail and wholesale operations (RODRIGUES, 2012). Significantly, many small businesses are contracted to perform dangerous or specific risks that have already been performed tasks within large organizations. However, the size of the company clearly cannot be correlated with the degree of risk or danger.

**2.8. Managers of small enterprises**

Managers of small enterprises, as well as any other group of individuals, present a wide range of attitudes, beliefs and motivations. Within this broad range, significant sub-groupings can be discerned when specific aspects of the management of small enterprises are studied.

For example, Santos and Silva (2012) analyzed the motivation to create small businesses. They suggest that employees make up a business employing their expertise to achieve a satisfactory way to make a living; managers looking to build a successful organization in order to obtain recognition for the high quality management, and the classic entrepreneur is driven by desire for financial success.

Rodrigues (2012) suggested that the situation is somewhat more complex, since the motivation stems from a mixture of factors. These may include the need for approval, need for independence, need for personal development and desire to create wealth both for themselves and for the community.



Have the further development of the business has been modeled by a number of authors in the area of marketing, including Churchill and Lewis (1983) who identified five stages of growth. The first stage is the “existence” which consists of the initial period after the company is formed. The main task of the manager is to keep the company alive. Little or no planning will be evident and the manager will need to spend much time looking for clients and producing goods and services. Finances are a consequence of managing cash flow.

The second stage is “survival” in the organization within the company is still at a basic level and is not yet recommended a high level delegation of activities. Attention will be focused on the control of costs and revenues. Marketing focuses on obtaining a niche market and constancy in repeat sales. The third stage is the “success” in that there is a stable customer base. Employees can be recruited to undertake particular functions and management system shall have a degree of formalization. Efforts to develop a competitive market position and external financing may still be necessary are made.

The fourth stage is the “expansion” in which the company is now able to grow rapidly from a funding availability. The professional management system is evolving. The marketing effort is directed to the search for new markets and beat the competition. The fifth stage is the “maturity” in which the company operates an increasingly formalized management system. The return on investment becomes important in financial management.

This model described above is widely accepted as being necessary to study the development of the company. However, many organizations are only limited through the five stages before weakening growth progress. Other, so-called business “lifestyle”, are specifically designed to provide a comfortable life for the owner - manager, whose company growth will stop once this is achieved, and it seems the third stage. Others, again due to their individual circumstances, may have little or no experience in the early stages before moving quickly to the rear. The true entrepreneur, in general, want to reach stages 4 and 5, as soon as possible.

The relevance of Churchill and Lewis (1983) model for the present study, it is evident when attention is focused on the role of manager. This individual is absolutely essential for the growth and development of the company, especially in





the early stages. The management style is usually informal, but it must adapt to new circumstances and new problems while the company develops.

Indeed, Santos and Silva (2012) suggested that the inability of the manager to adapt is an important factor that may cause business failure. Important decisions must often be made within a short period of time and under conditions where the risk is present. The risk environment makes external financing from banks and other sources become expensive. All these factors have a direct effect on the marketing strategy to be adopted by the security consultants for small businesses.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

For the implementation of the research qualitative research approach was used in small businesses based in a national study conducted by these organizations Rodrigues (2012). The research literature is using marketing authors and safety; document through AEAT – Workplace Accident Statistical Yearbook (BRAZIL, 2012), also has descriptive character by describing the marketing activities to be used with small businesses, and is a cross-sectional study involving multiple cases in which data were collected in a single chronological step, for example, it is like a photograph of that scene at that time (GIL, 2010; RODRIGUES, 2012; SUAREZ; CASOTTI 2013; VERGARA, 2013).

Regarding data collection, for the number of accidents faced by small businesses in Brazil, as well as accident rates, the Ministry of Labor in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Security publishes the Statistical Yearbook of Accidents (BRAZIL, 2012). It is noteworthy that this study collected data in the first quarter of 2013 and until that time the latest AEAT was referring to the year 2011, published in 2012.

Data were analyzed using the factors that influence consumer behavior Chisnall (1995), the model of buying decision process described by Kotler (1967), the stages of business growth proposed by Churchill and Lewis (1983), and the specific strategic definitions for small businesses described by Rodrigues (2012).

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1. Marketing strategies for security consultants work for small businesses**



- **The market segment**

Turning now to the criteria of Chisnall (1995) for effective market segmentation is evident that the small business segment can be clearly identified in terms of specific marketing requirements Churchill and Lewis (1983) in stages 1-3 , where most small businesses is. The segment size is huge and, according to AEAT (2012), a considerable part of these small businesses had no contact with security consultants work to improve their management processes concerning the theme.

Small businesses are certainly accessible in principle. Many are located in industrial areas, business or facilities provided by the drive for economic development of the municipality and could easily be contacted directly parks. Directories such as the Yellow, a brief query in Google, at the site Telelistas.net, dial 102 or the local trade directories, Pages (phonebook companies) would provide contact information for a large number of small businesses.

Intermediary organizations such as trade associations, trade relations, training and enterprise councils can also provide a route of indirection. Usually it is relatively simple in a small business identify the right person for this approach. If the segment is commercially viable, will require greater care at first contact.

- **Creating a necessity**

Considering the evolution of the last three years of work accidents liquidated, for example, those whose administrative proceedings the National Social Security Institute (INSS) has already closed, note the stability in the number of accidents during this period with a decline of 3% between 2009 and 2010 and an increase of 0.16% between 2010 and 2011. However, despite the stability in number during this period, it is still quite high, because divided as the 730,585 accidents of 2011 by the number of companies 4,530,583, given for the same year according to IBGE (2012), the result of 16% means that 100 companies every 16 accidents occur.

Table 2 – Number of accidents at work settled therefore in Brazil - 2009/2011

Consequence	2009	2010	2011
Health care	103.029	97.698	101.314
Less than 15 days	306.900	303.193	309.631
Over 15 days	325.027	309.827	301.945
Permanent disability	14.605	15.942	14.811
Death	2.560	2.753	2.884
Total	752.121	729.413	730.585



In these circumstances, the need to address the issues of safety must be frequently stimulated. Other managers will perceive a degree of necessity, but will repeatedly postpone a decision regarding safety at work by understanding other issues as priorities. So it is important to create a need.

Therefore it is necessary to find an approach that is likely to create a clear need and thus motivate the manager of the small business create an effective system of safety management work. With the relative rarity of accidents small business manager and familiarity with taking risks in a more general context, the negative appeals as the threat of dire consequences of accidents at some future time is unlikely to be effective. In any case negative appeals must be used very carefully.

The process of human perception tends to filter and distort information input, which is perceived as dissonant or unacceptable. Pereira Filho (2011) discusses ways in which an unwanted message may then be neutralized or at least attenuated at the recipient's mind. The credibility of the bearer of the message can also be questioned, thus negating the whole approach. In some situations, the negative approach may be the only viable means of achieving the action, but in general, a positive approach to be most effective may be expected. Chisnall (1995) provided an overview of this complex subject.

Managers of small companies tend to be wary of outside interference. They operate with informal management systems and some start their own company specifically to obtain a high level of independence. In those circumstances, the obligation to comply with the rules of safety of the work itself is not likely to generate motivation. On the other hand, several factors can be discerned can help create the necessary awareness of need. Melo (2012) reports the results of several studies of small scales of management attitudes to safety in small businesses. The study identified that there are several factors that motivate managers of small businesses to manage safety at work, although the subject is not understood, generating a need for more research.

Moral considerations and a desire to care for their workforce were identified as particularly important motivators. Caring for employees includes caring for the health and well-being, reducing absenteeism due to illness and injury. These types of motivators reflect an appreciation of the dependence of small firms on individual



workers, where factors such as absenteeism, low morale, conflict and staff turnover have much more impact than in a large organization. Promoting motivation is something that drives the business commercially. Small businesses are tied to laws or often need to maintain a reputation for high standards of safety and health in order to get contracts with large companies with demands linked to the theme (WEBER, 2012).

In addition, large organizations are now placing requirements on safety supply companies. In these situations, the manager of the small business will be highly motivated to ensure high standards of safety management at work. Thus, the cost of accidents not appear as a key motivating factor (COSTELLA et al., 2009). This is understandable in the context of the rarity of accidents in most small businesses. Moreover, these companies, in some cases, lose significant amounts of money through incidents of faults of workplace safety (AEAT, 2012).

Safety standards in work management, loss control and quality control are interconnected through their demand for adequate standards of training and supervision. A simple explanation of this link and the commercial advantages to be obtained with the best global standards can prove to be an effective motivating aspect for small business managers. The importance of the link is already clearly recognized by many large Brazilian companies (MELO, 2012). The marketing makes extensive use of promotional methods, depending on personal contact. This is likely to be productive in the work of the security services marketing, both in terms of personal recommendation as a private consultant in personal selling.

- **Encouraging the purchase decision**

The previous section focused a lot on the marketing approach for small firms, while this section attention turns to marketing service. Thus, as discussed above, the purchase of services is perceived by the potential buyer as a risky venture. To minimize the perceived risk be careful to offer appropriate service and to give a comprehensive and understandable description of what is proposed.

In the above description of how the typical small enterprise operates, it is suggested that it offered them a low-cost service, tailored to the needs of those managers who manage their business so not so formal, so to some extent because their resources are scarce. Instructions should therefore be simple and



documentation that accompany should be brief and to the point, because these managers will be reluctant to find time and money to conduct trainings for themselves, so the service offered should be designed to provide if possible, a management system of job security that the manager can easily understand and operate without special training.

Oliveira and Salles (2012) note that managers are not willing to offer training to their employees. Interviewing staff in small organizations, they report that many small business managers seem to be unaware of the need for training, or if they are aware, they consider it very expensive or time consuming. The main motivator for the formation to be taken is a visit or other contact with enforcement authority.

Carvalhais and Campos (2012) did an extensive review of training provision in small businesses. They concluded that market factors, instead of ignorance is the cause of poor acceptance, it is not easy to introduce training in small business management system. Should be strongly recommended, but only when there is a definite need.

All these considerations should be fully discussed with the prospective purchaser along with a better indication of the time and cost implications of the proposed service.

- **Post-purchase activities**

Through the survey of techniques of marketing services is suggested that a good contact must be maintained after purchase in order to monitor progress in the introduction and operation of the new system of safety management at work to deal effectively with the difficulties and complaints. Service levels for post-purchase these activities must be agreed in advance, it will help to reduce the perceived risk to the buyer.

Already discussed the use of relationship marketing in the services market, but may also be of direct relevance to the discussion of their marketing tools in security management for small businesses. In this sense, conventional detailed intervention by security consultant can be replaced by a series of shorter interventions and therefore less costly, spread over several periods (PEREIRA et al., 2009).



A good alternative would be to start with advice on the initial purchase of the necessary equipment, then go for the provision of safety standards at work, subsequently, develop and formalize the management system since the company was fully established and then make occasional visits to monitor the established standards (QUINTAL, 2012).

Thus, the basic information is provided to managers of small businesses to help them conduct risk assessments produce policy statements of job security and simple management systems. The reactions found managers of small companies for this kind of approach were positive in several respects. The effectiveness of this approach is being evaluated by the authors at the time.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the current practice of marketing in order to see how the experience of security work management for the managers of small businesses can be enhanced. There are a number of indications that can be usefully derived from this debate.

Small businesses represent a clearly identifiable segment of the market that can be targeted by security consultants at work. In order to develop an approach that tends to prove compelling for small firms, security consultants would benefit from a greater understanding of some characteristics of small businesses. They might then be in a position to offer small businesses a better service that suits your needs.

Small businesses have characteristics that are generally centered around the owner or manager who, in addition to using the expertise related to the product or service, also participates in all aspects of the business. They often adopt an informal approach to managing and working in an environment where time and money are scarce.

It is important to develop a clear and effective strategy to get in touch with small businesses. The previous discussions have identified appropriate marketing techniques that can be used by security consultants' work. Personal recommendation and personal selling, for example, are susceptible to a high return on this strategy.

A personal recommendation from a previous customer, a colleague or an intermediary organization, such as business and trade associations are often useful



in creating customer confidence. The notion of personal recommendation is somewhat important in this market, because it can be perceived as an element of endorsement of the organization therefore recommends would be particularly powerful if the recommendation came from a great organization.

The personal selling may be effective or as an initial or as an immediate follow-up to a recommendation approach, once the initial contact with a potential customer has been reached. Create a perceived or motivate the manager of small business needs at an early stage is important. This is likely to be best achieved through the adoption of positive arguments, as the potential reduction in improving the welfare of officials, absence of disease, maintaining good reputation and improve control. A positive approach can be compared with the negative involving non-compliance with legislation or the cost of accidents. Experience suggests that the negative arguments are commonly used by security consultants' work.

The service provided by these consultants would be more successful if tailored to the needs of the owner or manager. This may include an uncomplicated approach to providing documentation that is short and easy to understand and implement, representing a less expensive intervention.

Experience in other areas of services marketing suggests that an ongoing relationship with small businesses can be attractive. This can be promoted by a careful and continuous approach, which also has the merit of spreading costs over time. These systems and service quality can only be achieved where the consultants develop the appropriate skills. However, little is known about how consulting firms are established and operate, as well as training and qualification of consultants.

A large number of them gained knowledge and experience by working in a large company or government organizations. Many have professional qualifications in the area, however, the initial research of the authors stressed that the courses leading to qualifications in Brazil safety at work usually contains little or no training is in safety requirements for small businesses or appropriate marketing techniques.

It seems that specific training can be used to solve this problem. Furthermore, the guidelines of the competent authorities of the Ministry of Labor could well be useful for consultants who have been working with small businesses. However, to define the detailed training for programmers and the development of guidance



requirements, more studies need to be conducted on the theme of characterization of those consultants and about the ways they come into contact and interact with small businesses. These research themes are being addressed by the authors.

Finally, the marketing subjects discussed in this research were presented in the context of the management and implementation of work safety in Brazil. However, the authors feel that the discussion has relevance in other countries and could be useful once adjustments are made for different work environments.

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